



Child Protection Policy

This policy applies to staff members, Trustees, sessional and freelance workers, contractors, volunteers, trainees or anyone working on behalf of Cartwheel Arts (from here on 'colleagues'). It should be read in conjunction with our Child Protection Code of Practice, which contains detailed practical guidance.

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1. The purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is:

- to demonstrate our commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who engage with Cartwheel Arts.
- to provide staff, trustees and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection. Cartwheel Arts believes that no child or young person should experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe from harm.

All colleagues who come into contact with children and young people in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. The Children Act 2004, through the Stay Safe outcome of Every Child Matters Change for Children programme, places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people. This includes the need to ensure that all colleagues who work with or on behalf of children and young people in these organisations are competent, confident and safe to do so.

The vast majority of colleagues who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care. However, it is recognised that in this area of work tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of colleagues can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them.

Allegations may be malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all

concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are colleagues who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard children and young people and ensure that the colleagues working with them are safe to do so. This policy seeks to ensure that the duty to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children is in part, achieved by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and inappropriate behaviours of colleagues.

The duty to safeguard children rests upon individual staff, freelancers, volunteers and ultimately the Trustees at Cartwheel Arts to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child or young person involved in any Cartwheel Arts activity, or interaction for which that individual is responsible. Any person in charge of, or working with children and young people in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally, to have a duty to provide them with a duty of care

Whilst every attempt has been made whilst writing this policy to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this guidance cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgments are made in situations not covered by this policy, or which directly contravene the policy guidance given.

It is expected that in these circumstances colleagues will always advise their manager/ colleagues of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

It is also recognised that not all colleagues who work with children and young people work as paid or contracted Cartwheel Arts employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this policy still apply and should be followed by all individuals whose work brings them into contact with children and young people.

2. Key Principles

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991 and the current relevant legislations and associated statutory guidance in place
- all children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, faith, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some children and young people have additional vulnerabilities because of their previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting and protecting children and young people's welfare.
- it is not the responsibility of Cartwheel arts to decide whether abuse has taken place. However, it is the responsibility of staff, volunteers and trustees to act if there is cause for concern, in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any protective action as necessary.

3. Duty of Care

This policy requires all those working for and on behalf of Cartwheel Arts to:

- understand the responsibilities which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour
- Cartwheel Arts as an Employer will:
 - ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are adopted, implemented and monitored
 - ensure that codes of conduct/practices are continually monitored and reviewed
 - ensure that, where services or activities are provided by another body, the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures
 - foster a culture of openness and support
 - ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised
 - ensure that there is in place effective recording systems which confirm discussions, decisions and the outcomes of any actions taken
 - ensure that colleagues are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable
 - ensure all colleagues have access to and understand this policy and related policies, procedures and codes of practice
 - ensure that all job descriptions and person specifications clearly identify the competences necessary to fulfil the duty of care

4. Confidentiality

Individuals may have access to confidential information about children and young people to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances, they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information.

These details must be kept confidential always and only shared when it is in interests of the child to do so.

Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child or young person concerned.

If an adult who works with children is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff or nominated child protection person. Any actions should be in line with locally agreed information sharing protocols.

The storing and processing of personal information about children and young people is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. Check with the Director with regards to your responsibilities under this legislation.

Whilst individuals need to be aware of the need to listen to and support children and young people, they must also understand the importance of not promising to keep secrets. Neither should they request this of a child young person under any circumstances. Additionally, concerns and allegations about individuals should be treated as confidential and passed to the safeguarding officer (Alyson Malach) without delay.

Cartwheel Arts is committed to practice in a way that protects children and young people they work with and in so doing we recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount;
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

5. How we will seek to keep children and young people safe

We will keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of practice for staff and volunteers;
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers;
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

6. Breaches of this policy

All colleagues are required to adhere to this policy, and any breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether is towards Cartwheel Arts participants or not as long as CWA believes there's a questionable ethical/moral behaviour towards a minor that can cause the reputation of the charity or poses a potential threat towards our participants or audiences.

Any colleague suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-operate with any investigation.

Colleagues may be required to remove internet postings in any social media or any other public means of communication which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.

Breaches of the policy, safeguarding code of conduct and related procedures will be taken seriously by Cartwheel Arts and may result in the initiation of performance measures and/or disciplinary procedures/dismissal/termination of contracts and/or a referral out to statutory agencies responsible for child protection.

Signed:

A stylized signature consisting of a large, horizontal, oval-shaped loop on the left, followed by a long, thin horizontal line extending to the right.

Alyson Malach
(Chair of Trustees and Safeguarding Officer)

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rick Walker".

Rick Walker (Director)