



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of The Nucleo Project's safeguarding policy is to ensure every child at our organisation is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to:
- Protect our children and young people from maltreatment
 - Prevent impairment of our children's and young people's health or development while they are in our care
 - Ensure that the circumstances in which we place our children and young people are consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - Provide a safe environment for all children and young people involved in The Nucleo Project
 - Endeavour to offer our children and young people improved life chances and equip them to enter adulthood successfully
- 1.2 This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about the expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at The Nucleo Project.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Nucleo Project fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and support and promote their welfare. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.
- 2.2 Our policy applies to all children, staff, volunteers and regular visitors. (Occasional visitors will be accompanied and supervised by a member of staff, volunteer or regular visitor at all times while visiting The Nucleo Project.)

3. OUR ETHOS

- 3.1 The Nucleo Project will establish and maintain an ethos where our children feel secure, are encouraged to voice concerns, are listened to and are safe. Children will be able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular volunteer or visitor to The Nucleo Project if they are worried or concerned about something.
- 3.2 All staff and volunteers will, either through training or induction, know how to recognise a disclosure from a child and will know how to manage this. We will not make promises to any child and we will not keep secrets. Every child will know that their chosen adult will know what to do with whatever they have been told.

- 3.3 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 When new staff and volunteers join The Nucleo Project they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of The Nucleo Project's safeguarding policy.
- 4.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer, where possible, will have an induction period that will include essential safeguarding information. This programme will include basic safeguarding training relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child, how to record and issues of confidentiality. The induction will also remind staff and volunteers of their responsibility to safeguard all children.
- 4.3 Parents will sign a consent form at the start of their child's involvement with The Nucleo Project, which includes who collects children from the activity, any vital health and otherwise notable information. It also requests permission for photographs to be taken for promotional purposes only.

5. TRAINING

- 5.1 Every member of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training.
- 5.2 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance.
- 5.3 The Director should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in The Nucleo Project.

6. SAFE STAFF

- 6.1 All adults who come into contact with our children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children are competent, confident and safe to do so.
- 6.2 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment that secures our children's wellbeing and promotes the very best outcomes for them. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.

- 6.3 Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children.
- 6.4 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children and to ensure that the adults in The Nucleo Project are safe to work with our children.
- 6.5 All staff members and volunteers who come into contact with children will be made aware of the steps that will be taken if an allegation is made. We will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- 6.6 Staff will not investigate these matters. We will seek and work with the advice that is provided. Should an allegation be made against the Director, this will be reported by the staff member or volunteer raising the concern, who will liaise with the LADO.
- 6.7 Every adult should take sensible steps to ensure the welfare of our children in their daily professional conduct with children.

7. RECORDS AND MONITORING

- 7.1 If we are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child in The Nucleo Project we will record their concern in writing on the agreed report form and give this to the Director.
- 7.2 Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure place. These files will be the responsibility of the Director and Programme Co-ordinator, and information will only be shared within the organisation on a need-to-know basis for the protection of the child.
- 7.3 Any safeguarding information will be kept in the file into which relevant information will be added. Copies of referrals will be stored in the file.
- 7.4 Reports of a concern to the Director must be made in writing and signed and dated by the person with the concern.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.1 The Designated Safeguarding Leads are the Director and the Programme Co-Ordinator. There is a designated Safeguarding Trustee.
- 8.2 The Director will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals to Children's Services.

- 8.3 Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the Director who will be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow.
- 8.4 The Director will ensure that all staff and volunteers have received appropriate child protection information during induction and if necessary have received training.
- 8.5 The Director will ensure that the safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually.
- 8.6 At all times the Director will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed.
- 8.7 The Director will ensure that recruitment practices are safe and compliant with statutory requirements.
- 8.8 All job offers – to staff and volunteers - are subject to satisfactory references. We will undertake enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children. We will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates.
- 8.9 The Nucleo Project undertakes to remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to our attention.

9. WHAT IS ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

- 9.1 Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger, for example via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or

valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

10. OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

10.1 To underpin the values and ethos of The Nucleo Project and our intent to ensure our children/young people are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella, and are as appendices to this policy;

- Bullying
- Safer Working Practice/Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality
- Whistle Blowing
- Complaints
- Steps to safer Recruitment
- Induction Programme
- Adults Code of Conduct
- Flowchart of response to disclosures/suspicious and allegations
- Health and Safety (separate to this policy)

11. CONTACT DETAILS FOR REPORTING CONCERNS

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Director: Lucy Maguire, 07802 235 083

Programme Co-Ordinator, Sharon O’Sullivan, 07525 839 793

Safeguarding Trustee: safeguardingtrustee@thenucleoproject.org

12. POLICY REVIEW

12.1 This policy will be reviewed in June 2022 and annually after this

13. USEFUL CONTACTS

Kensington Police Station:- 101 - In an emergency please call 999
72-74 Earls Court Rd, W8 6EQ

Hammersmith Police Station:- 101 - In an emergency please call 999
226 Shepherd’s Bush Rd, Notting Hill, W6 7NX

Consultation and Advice about a child/young person resident in The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea:

Kensington and Chelsea Duty Line – Tel: 020 7361 3013 (Out of hours – 020 7361 3013)

For LADO consultations and referrals please contact the duty Child Protection Adviser on:

Telephone: 020 7361 3013
Email: KCLADO.Enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk

A full list of Safeguarding contacts for RBKC is available at:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/lscb/information-professionals-and-volunteers/contacts-safeguarding-kensington-and-chelsea>

Consultation and Advice about a child/young person resident in Westminster:

Children's Services Team: 020 7641 6000

Further information for both Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster is available from the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership at:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/lscb/>

Bi-borough PREVENT

Telephone: 020 8753 5727 Email: prevent@lbhf.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is deliberate behaviour that is offensive, intimidating, malicious, abusive or insulting behaviour which makes the individual feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable.

Any child who has been subjected to bullying will be supported and staff or volunteers will undertake a risk assessment, written and/or verbal to ensure that the victim, other children and the perpetrator are kept safe.

Procedures:

- Report bullying incidents
- Serious incidents will be recorded by staff and volunteers
- In serious cases the parents/carers should be informed and invited to discuss the problem
- If necessary, the police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- An attempt will be made to help the bully change their behaviour

Outcomes:

- The bully may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion from the group will be considered
- If possible, the children will be reconciled
- After the incident/s have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure there is no repeat of the bullying behaviour

Appendix 2: Safer Working Practice

The Nucleo Project's Code of Conduct for working with Children and Young People

OVERVIEW

All adults 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, places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people. This includes the need to ensure that all adults 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 adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment that secures the well-being 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 adults 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 adults 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 adults working with them are safe to do so.

In this area of work, there have been concerns about the potential vulnerability of adults. This guidance has been produced to give clearer advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct and is for anyone who works with, or on behalf of children and young people regardless of their role, responsibilities or status. It 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.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this guidance cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by The Nucleo Project. It is expected that in these circumstances adults will always advise the Director of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

It is also recognised that not all adults who work with children and young people work as paid staff. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by all adults e.g., freelancers, volunteers etc. whose work brings them into contact with children and young people.

The guidance contained in this document has due regard to current legislation and statutory guidance.

PURPOSE OF GUIDANCE

It is important that all adults working with children understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it place them in a position of trust. This document provides clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts. The guidance aims to:

- keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided;
- assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with children and young people;
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

DEFINITION

Employee/Adult: refers to adults, staff and volunteers who are contracted to work for The Nucleo Project with children and young people, in either a paid or unpaid capacity.

UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults, whether employed or volunteers, who work with children and young people.
- Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Adults should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way and should not treat any child less favourably than any other children.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

- Adults should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.
- Individuals should follow this guidance in their day-to-day practice. It should also be referred to when taking on new work, different duties or additional responsibilities.

1. CONTEXT

All adults who work with children and young people have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help to establish safe and responsive environments that safeguard young people and reduce the risk of adults being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

2. 'UNSUITABILITY'

The guidance contained in this document is an attempt to identify what behaviours are expected of people who work with children and young people. Adults whose practice deviates from this guidance and/or their professional or employment-related code of conduct may bring into question their suitability to work with children and young people.

3. DUTY OF CARE

Any person in charge of or working with children and young people in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care.

All adults who work with and on behalf of children are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and safeguard children and young people.

Whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity, adults have a duty to keep children and young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that as trusted adults reasonable steps are expected to be taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.

The duty of care is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships between adults and children and young people. It is also exercised through the behaviour of the adult, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Everyone expects high standards of behaviour from adults who work with children and young people. When individuals accept such work, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

Employers also have a duty of care towards their staff, both paid and unpaid, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This requires them to provide a safe working environment for adults and provide guidance about safe working practices. Employers also

have a duty of care for the wellbeing of staff and volunteers and to ensure that staff and volunteers are treated fairly and reasonably in all circumstances. The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out important principles regarding protection of individuals from abuse by state organisations or people working for those institutions. Adults who are subject to an allegation should therefore be supported and the principles of natural justice applied.

The Health and Safety Act 1974 also imposes a duty on staff and volunteers to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. An employer's duty of care and the adult's duty of care towards children should not conflict. This 'duty' can be demonstrated through the use and implementation of these guidelines.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Nucleo Project may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake the organisations responsibilities. In some circumstances The Nucleo Project may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in interests of the child to do so. Any information sharing must be done in a confidential and discreet manner.

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

If in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, staff and volunteers should seek guidance from the Director. 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.

Staff and volunteers need to be aware of the need to listen to and support children and young people, and must also understand the importance of not promising to keep secrets. Neither should this be requested of a child or young person under any circumstances.

Additionally, concerns and allegations about an employee should be treated as confidential and passed to the Director or a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay.

5. MAKING A PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not appropriate behaviour for everyone in all circumstances. There may be occasions and circumstances in which staff and volunteers have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Staff and volunteers are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge. Such judgements, in these circumstances, should always be recorded and shared with the Director. Staff and

volunteers should report to the Director any actions which could be misinterpreted, and any misunderstandings, accidents or threats. Reasons why actions have been taken, and any discussions thereof, must be recorded. In undertaking these actions individuals will be seen to be acting reasonably.

Staff and volunteers should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate and safe, and applied equitably.

6. POWER AND POSITIONS OF TRUST

As a result of the knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, when working with children and young people staff and volunteers are in positions of trust in relation to the children and young people in their care. Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those in their care and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship. Staff and volunteers must not use their position to gain access to information for their own or others advantage, or use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce, or undermine children or young people.

A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff and volunteers should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others. An employee should report and record any incident with this potential.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

7. PROPRIETY AND BEHAVIOUR

When working with children and young people, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is therefore expected that staff and volunteers will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.

There may be times, for example, when the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer, or his/her actions in his/her personal life, come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because such behaviour is considered to compromise the person's position in his/her workplace or indicate an unsuitability to work

with children or young people. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

When in contact with children and young people staff and volunteers should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.

The behaviour of the partner or other family members of a member of staff or volunteer may raise similar concerns and require careful consideration by Children's Services as to whether there may be a potential risk to children and young people in the workplace or voluntary setting.

8. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, adults should dress in ways that are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work.

When working with children and young people, staff and volunteers should ensure that they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work that is undertaken. If an employee has been given a 'uniform' e.g., t-shirt, hoodie etc. to wear specifically for their job then they must wear it.

Those who dress in a manner that could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations. Staff and volunteers should wear clothing that is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative, does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding, and could not be considered to be discriminatory and/or culturally sensitive.

9. PERSONAL LIVING SPACE

No child or young person should be in or invited into the home of a member of staff or volunteer unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and the Director.

The Nucleo Project would not expect or request that private living space be used for work with children and young people.

Under no circumstances should children or young people assist with chores or tasks in the home of a member of staff or volunteer. Neither should they be asked to do so by the friends or family of a member of staff or volunteer.

10. GIFTS, REWARDS AND FAVOURITISM

The giving of gifts or rewards to children or young people should be part of an agreed plan for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. In some situations, the giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of children, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual child or young person will be part of an agreed plan, recorded and discussed with the Director and the parent or carer.

It is acknowledged that there are specific occasions when an employee may wish to give a child or young person a personal gift. This is only acceptable practice where, in line with the agreed plan, the employee has first discussed the giving of the gift and the reason for it, with the Director and/or parent or carer and the action is recorded. Any gifts should be given openly and not be based on favouritism. Staff and volunteers need to be aware, however, that the giving of gifts may be misinterpreted by others as a gesture either to bribe or groom a young person.

Staff and volunteers should exercise care when selecting children and/or young people for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection should always be transparent and subject to scrutiny, and where practicable undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff.

Care should also be taken to ensure that staff and volunteers do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when children, young people, staff and volunteers or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to adults e.g., on special occasions or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

11. INFATUATIONS

Occasionally, a child or young person may develop an infatuation with an employee. The employee should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries. Staff and volunteers should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach.

When a member of staff or volunteer becomes aware that a child or young person is developing an infatuation, he/she should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the Director or parent/carer so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment. Any incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) of infatuation should be reported and recorded.

12. COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ***(Including the Use of Technology)***

Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs. Staff and volunteers should not share any personal information with a child or young person. Staff and volunteers should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their role. Staff and volunteers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny and that permission has been sought from the parent/carer for this form of communication to be used.

Staff and volunteers should also be cautious in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour that could be construed as grooming. Staff and volunteers should not give their personal contact details to children and young people including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with the Director and parents/carers. E-mail or text communications between a member of staff or volunteer and a child or young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based web sites and social networking sites.

13. SOCIAL CONTACT

Staff and volunteers should not seek to have social contact with children and young people or their families, unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and agreed with the Director. If a child or parent seeks to establish social contact or if this occurs coincidentally, the employee should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response but should always discuss the situation with the Director. Staff and volunteers should be aware that social contact in certain situations can be misconstrued as grooming. In the event of any social contact an employee may have had with a child or parent/carer that may give rise to concern, place a child at risk or compromise The Nucleo Project or the staff-member's or volunteer's own professional standing, the Director must be advised of the incident and it must be recorded.

Where social contact is an integral part of work duties, e.g., pastoral work in the community, care should be taken to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries. This also applies to social contacts made through interests outside of work or through the adult's own family or personal networks.

14. SEXUAL CONTACT

Staff and volunteers should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with children and young people. Intimate or sexual relationships between children/young people and the adults who work with them will be regarded as a grave

breach of trust. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way that might lead to a sexual relationship is also unacceptable.

Any sexual activity between an adult and the child or young person with whom they work may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

Children and young people are protected by specific legal provisions, regardless of whether or not the child or young person gives consent. The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material - whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff and volunteers should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process and as such will give rise to concerns about their behaviour. This includes any communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative e.g., verbal comments, letters, notes, texts, emails etc. Staff and volunteers should not make sexual remarks to or about a child or young person or discuss their sexual relationships with or in the presence of them. Language used when working with children or young people must not give rise to any comment or speculation, and attitudes and demeanour all require careful care and thought.

15. PHYSICAL CONTACT

Many jobs working with children require physical contact with children as part of their role. There are also occasions when it is entirely appropriate for adults to have some physical contact with the child or young person with whom they are working. However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children in ways that are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities.

Not all children and young people feel comfortable about physical contact, and adults should not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to use touch as a means of communication. Permission should be sought from a child or young person before physical contact is made.

When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff and volunteers, nevertheless, should use their professional judgement at all times, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

Physical contact that occurs regularly with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless there is explicit agreement on the need for, and nature of, that contact. This would then be part of a formally agreed plan or within the parameters of established, agreed and legal professional protocols on physical contact e.g., musical activities, medical procedures etc. Any such arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If staff and volunteers believe that their action could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed by another as being inappropriate or possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be reported to the Director and an appropriate record made. Parents/carers should also be informed in such circumstances.

Where a child seeks or initiates inappropriate physical contact with an adult, the situation should be handled sensitively and care taken to ensure that contact is not exploited in any way. Careful consideration must be given to the needs of the child and advice and support given to the adult concerned.

It is recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff and volunteers should be particularly aware of this when it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to some actions being misinterpreted. In all circumstances where a child or young person initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the employee's responsibility to sensitively deter the child and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with the Director and the parent/carer.

If staff and volunteers work in certain settings, for example performances, musical activities, etc. they will have to initiate some physical contact with children, for example to demonstrate technique in the use of a particular piece of equipment, adjust posture, or perhaps to support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury. Such activities should be carried out in accordance with existing codes of conduct, regulations and best practice.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e., one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear to the parent/carer and once agreed, should be undertaken with the permission of the child/young person. Contact should be relevant to their age or understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

It is good practice if all parties clearly understand at the outset what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities. Keeping parents/carers, children and young people informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.

16. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

All children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. Staff and volunteers should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children and young people is not acceptable in any situation. The use of corporal punishment is not acceptable and whilst there may be a legal defence for parents who physically chastise their children, this does not extend, in any circumstances, to those adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people.

Where children display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff and volunteers must follow the behaviour procedure set down by the Director, and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

Where a child has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan may be drawn up and agreed by all parties.

17. USE OF CONTROL AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

The use of physical intervention should be avoided. It should only be used to manage a child or young person's behaviour if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child, other children or an adult, to prevent serious damage to property or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances. When physical intervention is used it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned.

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they may cause. The minimum necessary force should be used.

Under no circumstances should physical force or intervention be used as a form of punishment. The duty of care that applies to all adults and organisations working with children and young people requires that reasonable measures are taken to prevent children being harmed. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

In all cases where physical intervention is employed, the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported. This should include written and signed accounts of all those involved, including, if possible, the child or young person. The parents/carers should be informed the same day.

18. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN DISTRESS

There will be occasions when a distressed child or young person needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact. Young children, in particular, may need immediate physical comfort, for example after a fall, separation from parent, etc. Staff and volunteers should use their professional judgment to comfort or reassure a child in an age-

appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries, and never touch a child in a way that could be considered indecent. Staff and volunteers should not assume that all children seek physical comfort if they are distressed.

Where staff and volunteers have a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, or are concerned that an action may be misinterpreted, this should be reported and discussed with the Director and parents/carers.

19. INTIMATE CARE

Intimate physical contact with children should be avoided. Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible.

20. PERSONAL CARE

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care. There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people and/or satisfy health and safety considerations. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. If there is a need to enter a changing room or toilet block, staff and volunteers must announce their intention of entering.

Staff and volunteers need to be vigilant about their own behaviour and be mindful of the needs of the children and young people with whom they work.

21. FIRST AID AND ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

When administering first aid, wherever possible staff and volunteers should ensure that another adult is aware of the action being taken. Parents should always be informed when first aid has been administered and a record made. Only staff and volunteers who have been first aid trained may administer first aid.

In circumstances where children need medication regularly a health care plan should have been established to ensure the safety and protection of children and the adults who are working with them. Parental consent for the administration of first aid or the administration of medicine must be given. Depending upon the age and understanding of the child they should, where appropriate, be encouraged to self-administer medication or treatment including, for example, any ointment, use of inhalers, etc.

22. ONE-TO-ONE SITUATIONS

It is not realistic to state that one-to-one situations should never take place.

One-to-one situations have the potential to make a child/young person more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Adults working in one-to-one settings with children and young people may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Both possibilities should be recognised so

that when one-to-one situations are unavoidable, reasonable and sensible precautions are taken. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security of children and young people and the adults who work with them. Keeping doors open, informing colleagues beforehand to assess the need to have them present or close by, avoiding the use of 'engaged' signs (or equivalent) (which could create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy), etc. are good practices when working one-to-one with children. If there is a need to walk a child home (e.g., if parents are unable to collect the child), consent must be given by the parent and two adults must accompany the child at all times. This must also be recorded.

Staff and volunteers must be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to the parent/carer.

Meetings with children and young people outside agreed working arrangements should not take place without the agreement of the Director and parents/carers, who will assess if such meetings are necessary. Such meetings should not take place in remote or secluded areas.

23. HOME VISITS

There should be no need to visit a child or young person in their home. Should any staff or volunteer feel there is a need, this must be discussed with the Director and the parent/carer prior to the visit and a clear justification for such arrangement be agreed and recorded.

Under no circumstances should staff or volunteers invite a child to their own home or that of a family member, colleague or friend.

24. TRANSPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

There may be occasions when staff and volunteers are asked to transport children as part of their duties. This must be agreed with the parent/carer prior to the journey and consent given. If staff and volunteers are expected to use their own vehicles for transporting children, they should ensure that vehicles are roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. It is a legal requirement that all passengers should wear seat belts and it is the responsibility of the staff-member or volunteer to ensure that this requirement is met. Staff and volunteers must be fit to drive and be free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine that is likely to impair judgment and/or ability to drive.

It is inappropriate for staff and volunteers to offer lifts to a child or young person outside their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the Director and has been agreed with the parents/carers.

There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to the Director and parents/carers.

25. TRIPS AND OUTINGS

Staff and volunteers should take particular care when supervising children and young people on trips and outings, where the setting is less formal than the usual workplace. Staff and volunteers remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries.

Care must be taken in planning and executing trips and outings to ensure safe staff/child ratios and the gender mix of staff, especially on overnight stays.

26. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOS

Working with children and young people may involve the taking or recording of images. Any such work should take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Informed written consent from parents or carers and agreement, where possible, from the child or young person, should always be sought before an image is taken for any purpose. All parties should be made aware of how photographs and videos will be used and all parties should be informed about how the images will be stored and who will have access to them. Staff and volunteers need to be clear about the purpose of taking the images.

Staff and volunteers need to remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable for any reason, and should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings. Staff and volunteers should avoid taking images in one-to-one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context. Images should not be used which could cause distress and no images should be taken 'in secret' or taken in situations which could be misconstrued as being secretive.

It is not appropriate for staff and volunteers to take photographs of children for their personal use, or to put images of children with whom they work on personal social networking sites.

27. ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE IMAGES AND INTERNET USAGE

There are no circumstances that will justify adults possessing indecent images of children. If staff and volunteers access and possess links to such websites, this will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children on the internet is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and the individual being barred from working with children and young people, if proven.

Staff and volunteers should ensure that children and young people are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links and that any films or material shown to children and young people are age appropriate. Organisations and adults need to ensure that internet equipment used by children has the appropriate controls with regards to access e.g., personal passwords should be kept confidential.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the police and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be immediately informed. Staff and volunteers should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material

themselves, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated, which in itself can lead to a criminal prosecution.

28. WHISTLE BLOWING

‘Whistle blowing’ is the mechanism by which staff and volunteers can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. If staff and volunteers use the whistleblowing procedure, they should be made aware that their employment rights are protected.

Staff and volunteers should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

29. SHARING CONCERNS AND RECORDING INCIDENTS

Any allegations will be taken seriously and properly investigated in accordance with local procedures and statutory guidance. Adults who are the subject of allegations are advised to contact their professional association.

In the event of any allegation being made, information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to the Director without delay.

Staff and volunteers should always feel able to discuss with the Director any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with children and young people so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

Accurate and comprehensive records will be maintained wherever concerns are raised about the conduct or actions of adults working with or on behalf of children and young people.

Appendix 3: Confidentiality & Information Sharing Policy

- In general, all personal information will be treated as confidential
- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Confidential information may be disclosed to Children's Services or the Police if a child's health and welfare needs protecting, or when a crime has been or may be committed
- In cases of medical or other sensitive information being held, members of the group will only be informed on the 'need to know' basis
- If a disclosure of abuse is made by a child or young person it is important for everyone to understand that they may not promise confidentiality
- A young person of 16 years or younger (if they can understand and make their own decisions) may give or refuse consent. If in doubt, seek professional or legal advice

Appendix 4: Complaints Procedure

This procedure also links in with 'whistleblowing' and handling allegations policies and procedures to ensure decisions are made appropriately, especially when the welfare of children/young people is implicated.

In the case of complaints relating to any issue covered in the safeguarding and child protection policy, The Nucleo Project will ensure that:-

- Any complaint will be taken seriously and referred to the Director.
- The person making the complaint will receive written acknowledgement of their complaint within five working days including details of how it is being dealt with.
- Within 30 working days the person making the complaint will receive resolution or details of what has happened so far.
- If there are delays to resolving the issues, the person making the complaint should be kept as fully informed as possible.
- There may be a need to identify a third party or higher authority to approach if the person making the complaint is unhappy with the outcome to their complaint.

Appendix 5: Steps to Safer Recruitment Policy

The Nucleo Project will always seek to prevent inappropriate people from seeking employment or volunteering to work with children and young people.

Define the role

We will consider the tasks and skills necessary for the job or voluntary position and what kind of person is most suited to the job.

Selection criteria

We will decide how the person should behave with children and what attitudes we want to see.

We will develop a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience and select people against this

Recruitment publicity

Where costs allow, we will circulate all vacancies widely, for example, by putting them on our website, or job specific websites (e.g., Musicians Union). We will ensure any advert contains a commitment to safer recruitment and safeguarding children.

Where people are approached directly, i.e., headhunted, we will ensure that they are informed that The Nucleo Project has a commitment to safeguarding children.

CVs

We will request a CV. This should include personal details such as name, past and current work and volunteering experience. It should also include explanation of all gaps in employment.

If appropriate we will ask for a covering letter asking the applicant to outline why they are interested in the job and their suitability for the post.

Written Declaration

We will ask for a statement in writing that they have no past or current convictions, cautions or bind-overs and no pending court cases.

Identification

We will ask for photographic documentation to confirm identity, such as passport or driving licence, and a utility bill that contains their address.

Qualifications

If appropriate we may ask to see evidence of qualifications – we will need to see the original documents.

Interview

We will interview face to face. We will discuss with the applicant information contained in their CV and/or covering letter and explore their attitudes towards working with children.

This also provides an opportunity to discuss our child protection policy and to ensure that the applicant has the ability and commitment to meet the standards required.

We will talk about the application including:

- Areas in which we want to know more details
- Gaps in employment history
- Vague statements or unfamiliar qualifications
- Frequent changes of employment
- What their motives are for wanting to work with children

References

Two written references will be obtained, where possible to include current or most recent employer.

DBS Checks

We will always gain enhanced DBS disclosures as appropriate to the role. When the results of the DBS check and all recruitment checks have been completed and we are satisfied the applicant is suitable for the role we will allow the member of staff or volunteer to have contact with children. Until all checks have been done the new member of staff or volunteer will work with children under the supervision of a DBS checked existing member of staff or volunteer.

Appendix 6: Induction Programme Policy

Induction of all staff and volunteers will be carefully and specifically planned to ensure that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities. We will make sure that induction includes:

- Any specific information as provided by any governing body or funders
- A clear job description including tasks, times, responsibilities
- All procedures in place, including incident recording, health and safety and first aid arrangements
- Information about future or necessary training needs

In addition, staff and volunteers need to sign that they have received and understood the following:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality Statement
- Complaints Procedure
- Health and Safety Procedures
- Allegations and “Whistle Blowing” statement
- Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure

We agree a probationary period and then identify a suitable monitoring and support process.

Appendix 7: Adults Code of Conduct

I WILL

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity
- Ensure that their welfare and safety is paramount at all times
- Always act in a professional way and not accept bullying, swearing or other disruptive behaviour
- Liaise openly with parents and carers
- Adhere to Safer Working Practices at all times
- Listen to, and act upon, any disclosures, allegations or concerns relating to child abuse or the welfare of children

Appendix 8: Responding to disclosures, suspicions and allegations

