Oriel Davies Gallery

Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy

Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy Statement

This document is a statement of the aims and strategies for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst they are visiting Oriel Davies Gallery (“ODG”) and participating in Gallery arranged events, and also in undertakings organised by ODG offsite.

ODG is committed to the safety and well-being of every child and vulnerable adult we work with, and this Policy outlines the principles we work to. It is supported by a series of procedures which cover every aspect of ODG’s work which involves children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Policy and Procedures apply to all staff and artists who work for ODG whether on permanent, fixed or freelance contracts, or working as volunteers.

This policy should be read in conjunction with ODG’s Health and Safety Policy.

The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and the responsibility will rest with the ODG Board of Management.

Principles

* The well-being and safety of each child, young person and vulnerable adult is our primary concern
* We treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect.
* Children, young people and vulnerable adults are treated equitably and sensitively, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation or religion, in line with ODG’s Equalities and Diversity Policy and Welsh Language Policy.
* We recognise that abuse can include physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect.
* All ODG staff and artists who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to prevent the abuse of any child, young person or vulnerable adult with whom they come into contact.
* Any suspicions or allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
* The feelings and concerns of any child or their parent / carer or guardian are listened to and acted upon.
* Training in child protection will be offered to staff whose job involves working closely with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
* Organisations who wish to work in partnership with ODG are required to have their own Protection Policy and Procedures in place.
* Staff recruitment and selection processes will include Criminal Records Bureau checks where appropriate.
* All staff will be made aware of the principles of the Protection Policy and must read the policy and updates.
* Photographs of children, young people or vulnerable adults will not be used in any ODG publications, or be released for use by any other organisations without prior (written) consent from a parent or carer or guardian.
* The person with lead responsibility for protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults at ODG is the Director.

Legislation

**Definition of a Child**

ODG uses the word ‘child’ to refer to anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989.

**Definition of a Young Person**

In this policy, a Young Person is in the upper age of the official definition of a child. The term has no legal status – it acknowledges that people aged 16 or 17 may not think of themselves as children.

**Definition of a Vulnerable Adult**

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of, or who may need, community care services, by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

This policy is in the context of all UK legislation that relates to child protection:

* The Protection of Children Act 1999
* The Sex Offenders Act 1997
* Part V of the Police Act, 1997
* Nuffield Council on Bioethics report, Dementia: Ethical Issues (Oct 2009)
* Department of Health – ‘No secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse’
* Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
* NSPCC https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/wales
* We support the work of the Children’s Commissioner for Wales and actively promote and support the rights of children under the UNCRC http://www.childcomwales.org.uk

PROCEDURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE

AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

ODG is to provide a learning environment where all children, young people and vulnerable adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected and this applies to education and all other arts activities organised by ODG which happen both on and off ODG’s premises.

1. Code of Conduct for Staff and Freelance Artists

* ODG staff to share information on participants’ access/support needs with freelance artists where appropriate to ensure participants are adequately safeguarded.
* Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect.
* Provide an example of good conduct that you wish others to follow.
* Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children, young people or vulnerable adults or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.
* Respect an individual’s right to personal privacy.
* Be aware that even physical contact with a child or young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted.
* Recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people or vulnerable adults.
* Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.

2. Project planning

ODG staff will always ensure knowledge of and contact with the person/s with legal responsibility for the children, young people or vulnerable adults they are working with.

The following good practice guidelines should be followed by ODG staff and anyone working on behalf of ODG, including freelance artists and volunteers:

* Create a suitable physical environment.
* Ensure that someone from the school / educational establishment, youth organisation or care setting is present and therefore meeting their responsibility for ensuring the safety of those in the setting. Note that this also applies when working with another organisation off-site.
* ODG staff should not supervise toilet breaks - the legally responsible adult (i.e. teacher etc.) should take responsibility for this.
* 2 adults will remain with the children, young people or vulnerable adults at all times, except for toilet breaks which will be unsupervised.
* In the event of a child/young person/vulnerable adult being accidentally left alone on the premises, then two members of staff should remain with them until the responsible person can be located.
* For events at ODG which children, young people or vulnerable adults attend without parents/carers, an emergency contact number for the parent/carer should be provided at the start of the day.
* Children, young people or vulnerable adults will not be able to leave the activity unattended without written permission from their parent/carer.

3. Good practice in physical contact:

* Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from participants.
* Always ask the child, young person or vulnerable participants whether they are comfortable with any necessary physical contact.
* Ensure that artists or ODG staff do not lift or move children, young people or vulnerable adults: this should always be done by the carer / teacher / responsible person from the school, youth or care setting.

4. Good practice in interpersonal dealings:

* Treat all children / young people / vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
* Always put the welfare of each participant first, before achieving goals.
* Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children/ young people/ vulnerable adults to share in the decision-making process.
* Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
* Make the arts fun, enjoyable and promoting equality.
* Be an excellent role model for dealings with other people.
* Recognise that children or young people with disabilities may be even more vulnerable to abuse than other children or young people.

5. Recruitment

The engagement of all ODG staff including freelance staff and volunteers who have or are likely to have direct contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults (whether paid or unpaid) are subject to:

* An enhanced CRB check.
* Previous/employment record check.
* A proof of identity check.

All ODG permanent staff undergo Enhanced Disclosure CRB Checks through a scheme administered by Powys County Council or a suitable alternative organisation.

If these checks reveal cause for concern or if the individual reveals any convictions or cautions which give rise for concern, the Gallery Administrator will consider the appropriate action to be taken, in conjunction with the Director. Applicants will be assured that this information will be treated as confidential

All applicants will be interviewed to assess their experience of working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

At least two references will be sought, at least one of which must comment on the applicant’s experience of paid or voluntary work with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Paid and voluntary personnel will be conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period

ODG will continue to ensure that a suitable member of staff is always present as an additional adult when workshops or other arts activities with children, young people and vulnerable adults take place.

6. Adopting Clear Guidelines for Staff & Volunteers

Clear guidelines will be given to staff and volunteers which set out the steps they are expected to take to ensure the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults they are responsible for. These guidelines will include:

* A reminder of their duty to prevent abuse and guidance on what constitutes abuse.
* Health and safety procedures.
* Procedures for minimising any risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
* Adherence to recognized good practice.

All staff and volunteers who work with or have a responsibility for overseeing work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will participate in child protection training, which will include;

* Awareness of abuse
* Health & Safety
* Skills Training

7. Responding to possible abuse and to disclosure

ODG or anyone working for ODG should not under any circumstances assume sole responsibility for a child, young person or vulnerable person. There should always be a contact person with

legal responsibility for the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

What is abuse?

The government guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, categorises abuse as:

* Physical abuse
* Emotional abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Neglect

See below for Information and guidance about the forms of abuse.

Suspicions

If you see or suspect abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, you should make the person with legal responsibility for the child, young person or vulnerable adult (eg the teacher, youth or care worker) aware of the problem.

If you suspect that the person with legal responsibility ie: the teacher, youth or care worker is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to another member of staff employed at the site.

Make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, and make the Director aware of the situation, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.

If someone discloses to you

It is possible that a child, young person or vulnerable adult who is or has suffered abuse will confide in you. This is something you should be prepared for and must handle carefully. The following action should be taken if there are concerns of abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult:

* Remain calm and in control but don’t delay acting.
* Listen carefully to what is said.
* Allow the person to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification.
* Don’t ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
* Inform the child / young person / vulnerable adult what you are going to do next.
* Don’t promise to ‘keep it a secret’.
* Use the first opportunity you have to say that you will need to share the information with others.
* Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
* Reassure the child, young person or vulnerable adult that ‘they did the right thing’ in telling someone.

Record the details:

* As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child’s/young person’s/vulnerable adult’s own words.
* Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Take action:

* Speak immediately to the person in the school/educational setting, youth or care setting who has designated responsibility for protection of children, young people or vulnerable adults. (This is likely to be the headteacher for a school or the director of the youth or care setting.)
* It is that person’s responsibility to liaise with relevant authorities, usually social services in confidence. Make the Director and the project manager aware of the situation.
* Possible follow-up could involve informing the police, and this should be carried out by the person in the school/educational setting, youth or care setting who has designated responsibility for protection of children, young people or vulnerable adults. It is the responsibility of the authorities to determine whether abuse has occurred.

1. What is physical abuse?

Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning or misuse of medications, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child, young person or vulnerable adult who they are looking after.

2. What is emotional abuse?

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on that person’s emotional development. It may involve making the individual feel or believe that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may also involve causing the person to often feel frightened or in danger. It may involve exploitation or corruption.

3. What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person or vulnerable adult is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Sexual abuse also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children or young people or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Sexual abuse of vulnerable adults can be rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person does not consent or cannot consent or is pressured into consenting.

Sexual abuse may be same sex or opposite sex, may be by other children, young people or adults. People from all walks of life may be sexual abusers.

4. What is neglect?

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s, young person’s or vulnerable adult’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the severe impairment of the person’s health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child, young person or vulnerable adult from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of a child’s, young person’s or vulnerable adult’s basic emotional needs.

More information about the types of abuse and dealing with concerns from The Arts Council of Wales <https://arts.wales/sites/default/files/2019-11/Supporting-Documents-and-Useful-Information.doc.pdf>

**Reporting Suspicions or Allegations of Abuse**

Initial Assessment

Contact Social Services Department or Police

Concerns on-going

Assessment of need

All factors & information considered & recorded

Report to: Director

You have a suspicion or concern…

About a child, young person or vulnerable adult

About the behaviour of staff, volunteer, other worker, parent, guardian or carer

Report to: designated child/young person /vulnerable adult protection person (headteacher, parent, guardian, carer etc.)

Child/young person/vulnerable adult protection investigation

No further action

Keep record

Concerns allayed