



SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to all paid staff, trustees, volunteers, freelance staff, sessional workers, trainees, students or anyone working on behalf of Art Refuge (hereafter referred to as “staff”), or coming into contact with service users (directly or indirectly) for the purpose of Art Refuge business.

2. PURPOSE

Art Refuge recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children (defined as anyone under the age of 18) and vulnerable adults accessing the Art Refuge programme. The organisation believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or adult to experience abuse of any kind. All decisions made by Art Refuge in relation to a child or adult will be made in their best interest.

This policy outlines Art Refuge’s commitment to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. It provides staff with a safeguarding procedure that should be adopted in the event that it is suspected that a child or vulnerable adult may be experiencing or be at risk of experiencing any form of harm. This policy and procedure should also be observed alongside Art Refuge’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Our legal responsibilities

With regards to safeguarding children, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children’s best interests should be prioritised in decisions that affect them, and they should be protected from abuse. In accordance with this Convention, Art Refuge will share information about a child (in relation to child protection) with relevant authorised agencies. Any such decision will be made after careful consideration of the risk of harm, the young person’s age and circumstances, their best interests, safety and welfare. Art Refuge’s decisions in this regard will also be informed and guided by relevant legislative requirements such as set out in the Children’s Act 1989, the Working Together to Safeguard Children guidelines (HM Government, 2018) in England, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018, as well as mandatory

reporting guidance such as those concerning female genital mutilation (Home Office, 2016). With regards to safeguarding vulnerable adults Art Refuge will act according to various pieces of legislation (e.g. Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Mental Capacity Act 2005) and statutory guidance. The definition of vulnerable adults adopted by Art Refuge will include adults 'at risk' as defined by the Care Act 2004, as well as other adults with vulnerabilities not included in the legal definition. Such vulnerabilities are manifest among those seeking refuge who have experienced conflict and displacement.

Art Refuge staff will also be aware of key whistle-blower legislation such as the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which allows the individual to share concerns about the organisation or other organisations in relation to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe.

3. OUR COMMITMENT

Art Refuge's commitment to protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and neglect will be demonstrated through:

- **Awareness** – We will ensure that all staff are aware of the risks and consequences of harm to children and vulnerable adults, as well as safeguarding procedures adopted by the organisation.
- **Prevention** – We will ensure through awareness and good practice that all staff minimise the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults in the services we deliver. This includes ensuring that all staff consider the **context** in which they are working, and ensure their practices align with the environment and type of service provided to minimise risk of harm to both the service user(s) and provider(s).
- **Reporting** – We will ensure that staff clearly understand and can confidently follow safeguarding reporting procedures where concerns arise regarding the safety of a child or vulnerable adult.
- **Responding** – We will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children and vulnerable adults where concerns arise regarding their safety and wellbeing.

The above will be achieved through ensuring all staff read and sign this Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. Appropriate training will also be provided to staff dependent on their levels of engagement with children and vulnerable adults (direct and indirect). Confidential reporting and response systems are in place, led by Art Refuge's CEO and trustees. Art Refuge will maintain a working culture in which safeguarding is treated seriously.

4. OUR VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Our work with children and vulnerable adults is based on core values about the rights of all to:

- Have their best interests and welfare considered *paramount*.
- Have their welfare and development promoted and safeguarded so that they can achieve their full potential.

- Be valued, respected and understood within the context of their own cultural background and life experiences, and to have their needs identified and met within this context (and within the context of their family wherever possible).
- Be listened to and have their views carefully considered, and to be encouraged and helped to participate in decisions which affect them.
- Have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse regardless of any protected characteristics (age, disability, gender identity and reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) and any other socio-cultural characteristics (including but not limited to nationality, country of birth, place of origin, ethnicity, language, colour, socioeconomic position, immigration status, trade union membership).

In order for these rights to be respected, Art Refuge staff will at all times:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Value children and vulnerable adults as individuals who have specific needs, rights, and important views to share.
- Work in partnership with children and vulnerable adults to develop mutual trust and respect.
- Work with children and vulnerable adults in ways that enhance their inherent capacities and develop their potential.
- Strive to understand children and vulnerable adults within the context in which they live.
- Not tolerate any forms of harm or abuse.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT

A. ALL STAFF ARE REQUIRED TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS BY:

1. Providing a safe environment in which all individuals can participate in Art Refuge activities.
2. Working in partnership with children, vulnerable adults, their parents/caregivers/family and other agencies to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
3. Adopting Art Refuge's safeguarding reporting procedures and acting in accordance with Art Refuge's Code of Conduct.
4. Sharing information about safeguarding good practice with other staff and the Art Refuge community where appropriate.
5. Sharing information about safeguarding concerns *where appropriate* with agencies *who need to know*. In the case of children, staff will involve parents and/or caregivers and/or other responsible adults *where possible and appropriate* in the context of work in the field.
6. Ensuring maintenance of their own Professional Indemnity Insurance, and attending clinical supervision with an experienced art therapy supervisor relevant to their caseload (art therapists only).

B. ART REFUGE CEO AND BOARD WILL FULFIL ITS DUTY TO PROTECT CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS BY:

1. Providing written guidance and incident reporting forms for staff, and responding to all safeguarding reports in line with best practice.
2. Carrying out thorough recruitment processes and reference checks for all staff appointed to the organisation, including ensuring that all freelance workers maintain an up-to-date enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, and that all freelance art therapists working for Art Refuge are actively registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
3. Maintaining up to date knowledge and sharing of best practice in safeguarding.
4. Reviewing the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure annually and revising its contents to align with current best practice.
5. Providing effective management of staff through supervision, support and training.

6. REPORTING PROCEDURE

A. CONCERNS, DISCLOSURE OR WITNESSING OF HARM

In all circumstances, the initial steps of the reporting and response procedure will be adopted by Art Refuge:

1. Following concerns regarding or disclosure/witnessing of harm/risk of harm, the relevant staff member(s) will listen to the child/vulnerable adult, offer reassurance without leading, and explain the actions that will occur next. Parents and/or caregivers and/or other family members should only be informed *if this does not place the individual at further risk*.
2. If the matter is deemed an emergency, staff should call 999. If the matter is deemed non-urgent but requires police action, staff should call 101.
3. If the health, wellbeing or safety of the individual concerned is not in immediate danger and police action is not required, the following additional actions should be undertaken.

B. ART REFUGE STAFF WORKING WITHIN A HOST ORGANISATION

1. The host organisation's Safeguarding Reporting Form will be immediately completed, signed and dated by the member(s) of staff who have concerns or were directly involved in the witnessing of harm or in receipt of disclosure of safeguarding concern(s) via verbal/written/any other communication means.
2. The form will be given to the host organisation's named Child Protection Office/Safeguarding Officer for checking, countersigning and storage.
3. A countersigned copy should be emailed immediately to Art Refuge's Safeguarding Officer. If the form is emailed by the member(s) of staff directly involved, the host organisation's Child Protection Office/Safeguarding Officer should be copied into the email.
4. Art Refuge's Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the host organisation's named Child Protection Office/Safeguarding Officer to decide on subsequent actions in accordance with the host organisation's safeguarding policies.

C. ART REFUGE STAFF WORKING COLLABORATIVELY OR INDEPENDENTLY

1. Art Refuge's Safeguarding Reporting Form will be immediately completed, signed and dated by the member(s) of staff who have concerns or were directly involved in the witnessing of harm or in receipt of disclosure of safeguarding concern(s) via verbal/written/any other communication means.
2. A signed copy of the form should be immediately emailed to Art Refuge's Safeguarding Officer, or in her absence, to the CEO.
3. Art Refuge's Safeguarding Officer or CEO will determine the next course of action.
4. Actions may involve liaison with support services already in place for the child/vulnerable adult (e.g. social worker).
5. If this is not an appropriate course of action in the given circumstance, or support services are not already in place, Art Refuge's Safeguarding Officer or CEO will contact the First Response Team (children) and Care Direct Team (adults).

D. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ART REFUGE STAFF

1. In the case of allegations against Art Refuge staff, the Art Refuge Safeguarding Reporting Form will be immediately completed, signed and dated by the member(s) of staff who have concerns or were directly involved in the witnessing of harm or in receipt of disclosure of safeguarding concern(s) via verbal/written/any other communication means.
2. The signed form should be provided to the Art Refuge CEO immediately.
3. The CEO will notify the Board as well as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
4. The LADO will oversee investigations of an allegation against a staff member.

E. BOARD NOTIFICATION AND RECORD STORAGE

In all circumstances:

1. Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of all actions undertaken while a safeguarding investigation is underway.
2. Where appropriate, every effort will be made to ensure that the parties involved are provided with timely information and kept informed about current and future actions.
3. All actions undertaken will be documented, provided to the Art Refuge CEO and Board for review at the next scheduled Board meeting (or sooner if their input is required).
4. Notifications appropriate to each situation (e.g. DBS; Charity Commission in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) will be made in a timely manner.
5. All safeguarding records will be stored in a confidential manner and retained for the period of time appropriate to the circumstance as per relevant legislation before the record is destroyed.

7. SAFEGUARDING CONTACT INFORMATION

Safeguarding Officer: Sarah Robinson, sarahrobinson@artrefuge.org.uk, 07 939 764 152

CEO: Bobby Lloyd, bobbylloyd@artrefuge.org.uk, 07 932 809 816

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy and procedure is fully supported by the Board of Trustees and the CEO of Art Refuge. It will be disseminated to all staff. The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.