



**Crediton Arts Centre
Child Protection Policy**

Draft

This policy has been established in consultation with the Management Committee of Crediton Arts Centre and its formulation has been supported by the Devon Community Foundation. The Arts Centre aims to demonstrate a caring, respectful attitude towards all employees, committee members and users of our facilities. The policy sets out to promote good relations between adults and children that use the Arts Centre. Protecting children and young people from abuse should be an integral part and practice of all activity carried out in the name of Crediton Arts Centre. All our employees and volunteers will be provided with a copy of this document.

This policy is linked to our equal opportunities policy.

Background

The Crediton Arts Centre provides public performances of theatre, dance and music shows and events; workshops and courses in fine art and related arts and crafts activities. The Centre is available for hire to a range of Community groups which offer activities for adults and young people. These activities take place at the Crediton Arts Centre, the Shobrooke Park Amphitheatre, the Town Square and in schools and other community venues. Events at The Arts Centre are generally of a short duration although individuals of all ages may attend for a number of short visits for rehearsals or for a weekly participatory course. Often, young people attending the Arts Centre do so under the auspices of another organisation.

The Policy

In our work with children and young people we respect and defend their individual rights.

We do not countenance any form of physical violence or abuse whether committed by or inflicted upon either adults or young people. It also means that we do not countenance verbal insults or destructive criticism. The Crediton Arts Centre encourages respect for others' background, appearance, personality, abilities, opinions and preferences. Adults working with children under the auspices of the Crediton Arts Centre must



accept responsibility and exercise due care in all activities, so that young people are not exposed to risk through adult negligence or incompetence.

Vetting adults working with children

All adults, whether acting as employees or volunteers for the Credition Arts Centre must declare any criminal convictions they may have which involve abuse against children, however old these convictions may be. Employees will be required to agree to *enhanced disclosure* by the Criminal Records Bureau and must provide evidence of such disclosure. All volunteers will be required to sign an application form including a declaration that they have no convictions or criminal proceedings pending which relate to the alleged abuse of children.

Guidelines to minimise risk to children

Employees and volunteers for Credition Arts Centre will not be permitted to work on their own with groups of children or young people. At all times, a minimum of two responsible adults will be required to supervise a group. Parents and/or carers will always be permitted to stay and accompany children in any activity.

Adults should ensure that the touch and physical contact they use is not exploitative and not open to misunderstanding.

Any material that is collected on children relative to their address, special needs etc. is confidential and should not be shared with others.

Responding to concern about possible abuse of a child

In the event of a young person disclosing or alleging abuse that identifies an adult or another young person connected to the Credition Arts Centre as the alleged perpetrator, it is important that this is responded to quickly and seriously. Parents of the child must be informed in the first instance. The alleged perpetrator must be asked to step down from the group and not to make contact with any member of the group until investigations are completed. In consultation with parents, advice should be sought from local Social Services. A special meeting of the Credition Arts Centre



Management Committee should be called to decide upon action internal to the organisation.

If a child discloses information about abuse that is happening outside of the Arts Centre - in school or the wider community then again parents must be informed.

If the abuse seems to emanate from the young person's home, a consultation with the local child protection services in Social Services should be made in the first instance.

An appropriate external agency should always be contacted and the issue not dealt with internally by the Credition Arts Centre.

It is unlikely that many groups will experience the trauma of abuse disclosed or discovered. However, these circumstances require diplomatic and careful handling. Emotions can run high, and adults will need to be enabled to address their feelings purposefully in formal group meetings. Informal discussions should be discouraged. Advice & support can be made available through the Social Services and can be sought from the Credition Arts Centre Management Committee.

Approved by the Credition Arts Centre Management Committee

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