

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **Aim of this policy**

This policy aims to ensure the safety of individual children, young people and vulnerable adults and promote their well being in the activities of Digital:Works.

This Safeguarding policy applies to all volunteers, helpers, staff, including senior managers, sessional workers and freelancers or anyone working or volunteering on behalf of Digital:Works.

The purpose of this policy:

- to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who attend Digital:Works projects and events
- to provide volunteers and staff with the overarching principles that guide Digital:Works' approach to safeguarding and child protection

Digital:Works usually works in partnership with schools and/or other organisations. Where this is the case, staff for DW will follow the safeguarding policy of the school, and ensure they are familiar with the host organisation's policy and procedures. This safeguarding policy covers situations where there is no policy in place, such as working in community settings or with individuals.

### **What is safeguarding?**

**Safeguarding** is the broader preventative and precautionary approach to planning and procedures that need to be in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from any potential harm or damage. It is more than child protection, although child protection is one important aspect of safeguarding.

**Child protection** involves recognising signs of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect and acting on it.

### **Digital:Works' Commitment**

Digital:Works believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind, that they should be supported to feel comfortable and confident when participating in our activities and the wider society.

Digital:Works have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all the people they work with and to keep them safe.

Digital:Works will not tolerate any behaviour which may harm children or young people emotionally, physically or psychologically. Such behaviour includes physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse, bullying, harassment, undue or harsh criticism or violence directed towards individuals or groups. Digital:Works will take serious measures against any volunteer or staff member found in violation of this policy.

## **Safeguarding Principles**

Digital:Works recognise that:

the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989 all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse

some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Digital:Works' underlying safeguarding principle is that children and young people should be protected at all times from behaviour and attitudes they find uncomfortable. To achieve this aim:

Open communication and effective planning will support safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults

Anyone has the right to speak out about behaviour and attitudes they find uncomfortable, they know who they should speak to in advance and be confident they will be listened to

Appropriate screening and checks need to be undertaken by all adults regularly working with children, but these are only effective when supported by good communication, training and ongoing observation

All volunteers and staff receive appropriate Safeguarding training relevant to their role in Digital:Works \*\*\*

Risk assessments must be completed for all venues and activity types \*\*\*

Personal details of participants are held securely in accordance with Digital:Works' data protection policy

Digital Works are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

## **Responsibility of DW staff and volunteers**

All staff and volunteers have a duty of care for children and vulnerable adults that are involved in the projects. If a child or participant tells them he/she is being abused or neglected, or the behaviour of the child or vulnerable adult gives the staff any reason then this must be reported to the relevant professionals such as the designated safeguarding lead and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about an allegation - as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

## **What staff should look out for**

**All** staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of '**it could happen here**' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about

the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the **best** interests of the child.

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure they should always speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

### **Record keeping**

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing, as soon as possible after the event. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead.

## **Whose responsibility is it?**

All staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Being familiar with safeguarding policy and child protection procedures
- Ensuring parents, carers, children and young people are aware of the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures

Lead Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- Being familiar with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures

- Acting as the first point of contact for volunteers concerned about the safety and welfare of a child

- Contacting children's social care in cases where a child is at risk of harm

- Ensuring that all volunteers know where they can find the safeguarding policy, local safeguarding plan and child protection procedures

- To support volunteers after they have shared their concerns about a child

- To liaise with appropriate local agencies for support and advice and keep a list of local contacts

- Developing safeguarding policy and procedures

- Advising and providing guidance to staff and volunteers concerned about a child protection issue

- Communicating to staff and volunteers any changes in policy and procedures

- Training staff and volunteers about how to respond to child protection concerns

- Keeping accurate records of concerns about children and actions taken

- Collecting monitoring data on all safeguarding activities across the organisation

- Ensuring that the organisation meets the requirements of its insurers regarding its safeguarding responsibilities

- Promoting the importance of safeguarding across the organisation

- Managing complaints about poor practice of either staff or volunteers

- Making decisions about appointing someone who has a criminal record

## **Protecting DW staff and volunteers**

All DW staff working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults will be DBS checked on a regular basis.

DW staff and volunteers should avoid situations where they are left alone with a group or individuals. This is to protect both participants and staff should any incident occur.

Interviews with individuals should take place wherever possible in a neutral situation. Interviewing in a person's home should be avoided.

## **Safeguarding Declaration**

I confirm that I have read and understand my responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children and young people taking part in Digital:Works activities.

I confirm that I have never received criminal convictions for offences involving abuse against children, nor am I subject to any such investigation. I have no other criminal convictions which might render me unsuitable to work with young people or pose a risk to the welfare of children and young people.

I confirm that I am not barred from working with children and young people or barred by association.

I understand that any such proceedings or convictions could result in suspension or expulsion from the Digital:Works subject to the organisation's procedures.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated:

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