



Updated June 2017

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

**CARLISLE
FRINGE**

THE
WASHING LINE
PROJECT

Queer Flaggis

**HIGH
TEA**
A VISUAL
EXPERIENCE

**TRANSFORM
DUMFRIES**

DUMFRIES



LE HAGGIS

DUMFRIES



Approved by board June 2017

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Policy Statement

Electric Theatre Workshop is a registered charity in Scotland No. SCO42897. The organisation is a Theatre and community Arts organisation working with the public in a range of different settings. The work is carried out in a range of venues, with large and small groups, and individuals.

The organisation aims to provide quality experiences and outcomes for all participants and personnel, at all applicable times. As such, Electric Theatre Workshop is committed to uphold it's legal and ethical obligations to safeguard the safety and wellbeing of all participants, staff, volunteers and freelance employees, whilst engaged in Electric Theatre Workshop Activities.

This document will set out the organisations commitment to ensure Children and Protected groups enjoy a safe and happy environment across all operational sites. This policy has been approved by the board of trustees and will be reviewed annually.

It is the responsibility of all personnel, full time, seasonal, freelance, or as a volunteer make themselves familiar with this policy, and their duty to uphold the code of conduct described herein. Where is reasonably practicable, training will be provided by the organisation for new personnel.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

The policy is written in accordance with Guidance and principles set out or sought from NSPCC, The Scottish Government legislation The Children (Scotland) Act 1995, Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007, Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007, Sexual offences (Scotland) Act 2009, Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011, Children And Young people (Scotland) Act 2014, National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014) and national policy frameworks, GIRFEC; Getting it Right for Every Child, Creating safety: Child protection guidance, [Creative Scotland](#), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child. Further information relating to the guidance outlined in this document and supporting Legislation, can be found [here](#)

PRINCIPLES

This policy document uses the following four principles as guidance:

1. The best interests of the child and adult-at-risk must always be a primary consideration
2. All children, young people and adults-at-risk should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect
3. All children, young people and adults-at-risk have the right to protection from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation
4. All children, young people and adults-at-risk have the right to express their views on matters that affect them.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Child

Throughout these guidelines we refer to 'child'. By this we mean anyone under the age of 18.

A child can be defined differently in different legal contexts. The individual's circumstances and age will dictate what legal measures will be applied but legislation is favouring the age of 18 in the majority of definitions i.e. The United Nations on the Rights of the Child, Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) 2005

Adults-at-Risk

An adult is defined as anybody over the age of 18. This policy uses takes its definition of 'Adults-at-Risk' from the Adult and Support Protection (Scotland) Act 2007: Code of Practice. An adult-at-risk is,

- unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests;
- at risk of harm; and
- because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

Staff

For the purposes of this document, any references made to "staff" refers to an individual or group of individuals who are undertaking working on the behalf of Electric Theatre Workshop Theatre Company, either in a paid or voluntary basis. By contracting these individuals to work with children, young people or adults-at-risk, Electric Theatre Workshop takes responsibility for ensuring they have a PVG certificate. This will be checked by a member of senior management through recruitment vetting procedures.

Appropriate Adult:

For the purposes of this document, any references made to "appropriate adult" refers to an adult person who has responsibility for a child, young person or adult-at-risk. This includes but is not exclusively: parents, other family members, school teachers, care workers, support staff.

Code of Conduct

Physical Contact

This policy accepts that 'physical contact' is an inherent part of theatre practices and that 'physical contact' covers a wide spectrum of actions. In general, these actions can be categorised two ways: activities; care and comfort.

Activities

When physical contact is required for an activity it must follow these guidelines:

- An individual must always be aware of why they are being touched, with an explanation of why if necessary
- If extensive contact is required for an activity, an explanation of why this is necessary will be provided to the individual's parents/appropriate adult in advance
- The activity must take place in an open and public space, with other appropriate adults present
- The contact is limited to the amount necessary for the work outlined in the activity
- Other staff present at the activity remain vigilant for any concerning behaviour

Care & Comfort

As is the case for everyone we work with, physical contact to comfort, reassure or empathise with an individual should only take place if initiated by the individual and is taking place in an open and public place with other staff members present. It should also be agreeable to both the individual and the staff member and should be limited and appropriate to the child's gender, age, religious, ethnic and cultural background.

It should be borne in mind that some individuals who have been sexually abused might seek inappropriate physical contact or shy away from any kind of physical contact. If an individual is not comfortable with any form of physical contact, other ways of working with them will be explored. The primary consideration will always be to act in the best interests of the individual.

Respecting an individual's individuality

Children, young people and adult-at-risks may have particular needs due to their religious, cultural or ethnic background, illness or disability, or emotional and behavioural difficulties. Because it will not always be the case that Electric Theatre Workshop know the full background of every individual they work with, steps will always be taken when planning activities that they are accessible and considerate of an individual's potentially sensitive personal history. If work is being undertaken for a third party, for example in a school, Electric Theatre Workshop will ask a member of staff who knows the children in advance, whether there are any individuals in the group who have particular needs. Where possible Electric Theatre Workshop will endeavour to involve the individuals it works with in decision making processes.

Bullying

Children can also be at risk of harm from other children. If bullying does take place during the activities, there is a chance that the child will also be getting bullied in other settings. The Electric Theatre Workshop recognises that bullying can take many forms

and including verbal abuse as well as physical intimidation. The Electric Theatre Workshop makes it clear that bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated.

Discipline

While Electric Theatre Workshop does not foresee a situation where it will enact strict disciplinary procedures with individuals it is working with, there may be times when the behaviour of one individual is impacting on the ability of the planned activity to continue effectively. Before an activity involving children, young adults or adults-at-risks begins, those leading the activity from Electric Theatre Workshop will consider the rules for the activity with some consultation with the young people involved; agreeing how they should be enforced, and establish any sanctions for their infringement. Any sanctions agreed upon should be implemented fairly across all individuals involved in the activity. If a member of staff suspects that an individual is being bullied by another member of the group, they will be prepared to use their own judgement to manage the situation properly. In some cases, it may be necessary for the staff member to involve the appropriate adults responsible for the individuals concerned in the bullying, such action will be up to the discretion of the staff member. If work is being undertaken for a third party, e.g. in a school, Electric Theatre Workshop will defer to the disciplinary methods of that third party.

Staff: Individual ratios

In most instances, when Electric Theatre Workshop is undertaking activities with children and young people, often they will be accompanied by a parent or an appropriate adult, so the adult: child ratio will be met by this third-party adult. If there is a situation Electric Theatre Workshop is leading an activity with children and there are not enough accompanying adults Electric Theatre Workshop will provide enough staff to comply with the adult: child ratios set down in the National Care Standards. In these instances, Electric Theatre Workshop will gather as much information, regarding access or behavioural requirements, about the children ahead of the activity to ensure the correct ratios are achieved.

When Electric Theatre Workshop is undertaking activities with adults-at-risk and there are not enough appropriate adults accompanying the individuals, Electric Theatre Workshop will undertake an assessment of the individuals it is working with, consulting with those familiar with the needs of the individuals, to work out a staff: individual ratio suitable for specific groups.

Internet safety

Electric Theatre Workshop recognizes that the Internet is an important and useful resource but it is open to abuse and can pose dangers to children, young people and

adults-at-risk. If an activity being led by requires the use of the Internet, staff will be required to follow these guidelines:

- provide adult supervision for children aged twelve and under
- monitor a child's use of the internet wherever possible
- using filters and mechanisms to restrict access
- setting different levels of access where possible

If an activity requires extensive use of the Internet, individuals will be given tips on how to safeguard themselves which include:

- never giving out their personal information including email addresses;
- never agreeing to a face to face meeting with anyone they have contacted via the Internet
- reminding them that people can and do lie about themselves over the Internet
- never allowing photos of themselves to be posted on the Internet in a way which could easily identify them
- asking them to immediately exit any chat room or shut down from a site that has obscene or suggestive messages and to report immediately such instances to a supervisor.

Photographs and images

Photographs can be used as a means of identifying individuals when they are accompanied by personal information. This information can make individuals vulnerable to those who may wish to abuse them. Visual content can be used or adapted for inappropriate use.

Electric Theatre Workshop will therefore endeavour, where appropriate to follow the following protocols:

- if a visual record (photo or video) of a child, young person or adult-at-risk is to be taken, Electric Theatre Workshop will require a consent form to be signed by an appropriate adult (or the individual if appropriate). The uses of this content will be laid out in the consent form
- if a visual record of an individual is to be published (online or in print) that individual's name will not be used
- if group work is undertaken and certain individuals in the group do not have signed consent forms, we will blur their image.

Using appropriate material

Electric Theatre Workshop recognises the right for children, young people and adults-at-risk to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. Electric Theatre Workshop also recognises that the content of some artistic materials may not be suitable for all individuals and these individuals should be protected from inappropriate materials. As such all

materials used when working with children, young people and/or adults-at-risk will be assessed for suitability. The suitability of material will change depending on the individuals within a group and it will be the responsibility of the activity leader to assess the suitability of any materials used. Factors to consider when assessing the suitability of materials include:

- Offense it may cause, in relation to any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act or an individual's class or social status
- Sexual appropriateness
- Explicit language or images depicting violence or other adult themes
- Potential for physical harm to self or others

If materials being used may be considered to be inappropriate but are deemed important within the context of the activity, approval - in the form of a signed consent form explaining the context of the materials - from a parent/appropriate adult should be sought.

Assessing risks

Risk assessment is undertaken by Electric Theatre Workshop before beginning any activity. Electric Theatre Workshop will also ensure that when conducting activities with children, young people or adult-at-risks, either the building the activity is taking place have a first aider, or that there is a staff member present who has a first aid qualification. In the case of an accident resulting in an injury an incident report will be completed and an appropriate adult will be informed.

Dealing with disclosures and suspicions of abuse and neglect

Electric Theatre Workshop recognises that there are five primary categories of child abuse or neglect:

Physical Injury: Any deliberate act of physical harm to a child or young person by the person having care or charge over the child. This could also include a deliberate failure to protect a child from physical danger.

Emotional Abuse: Persistent and/or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection of a child or young person. This may include degrading name-calling, complete absence of affection towards the child, or unrealistic demands for achievement being placed on a child and being intimidated by threats. This is often the most difficult to recognise, but it can have a profound effect on children and young people.

Neglect: Failure to provide care, or exposure of a child to danger that seriously affects his or her health and/or development. This could include starvation and prolonged exposure to cold.

Sexual Abuse: Where children are forced or persuaded to participate in any form of sexual activity by another person. This may include activities that children do not fully understand and cannot give their consent; and/or they have been coerced into participating against their will. Sexual abuse includes a wide range of actions including people indecently exposing themselves to children, asking children to touch their genitals, viewing pornography and penetrative sex.

Non-Organic Failure to Thrive: Children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones – physical growth, weight gain, social and intellectual development – and there is no reasonable medical or organic explanation for this.

There are, in addition, several specific activities that the Scottish Government defines as child abuse and which may not be so obviously linked to the primary categories. These are:

- The sexual exploitation of children and vulnerable adults for example, children involved in prostitution and ritual abuse

- Munchausen's syndrome by proxy/ fabrication or induction of illness in a child by a carer
- Foetal abuse, for example, through maternal abuse of alcohol or drugs
- Domestic abuse (primarily of mothers) which causes physical or emotional abuse of children
- Children affected by parental drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Racial abuse
- Female genital mutilation (circumcision)
- Forced marriage
- Children who need protecting from harming themselves, through self-inflicted injuries or reckless behaviour.

Concerns about actual or potential harm to a child, young person or vulnerable adult may arise over a period of time or in response to a particular incident...

If a disclosure of abuse is made to staff, they should take it seriously and follow these guidelines of how to proceed.

- **Never promise an individual that you will not tell anyone what he or she has told you.** Explain that in concern for his or her wellbeing you have to pass this information on but that it will be to as few people as possible. Tell them who will be told and, to the best of your knowledge, explain to them what will happen next.
- **Be neutral and non-judgmental.** If an individual is telling you about abuse they may have suffered, this can be difficult to hear but is important that any reactions you might have are kept to a minimum. Remember that this individual may be telling you about something scary or frightening that has happened to them and your calm, neutral and supportive reaction is important.
- **Do not press the child for more information.** You should not ask any leading questions, for example "did your Uncle Sam do this you?" Allow the individual to tell his or her story. You only need to establish the basics of what happened and whether the child is at immediate risk. For example, is the adult the individual is talking about the one that they will be going home to today? You just need to establish how urgent any action taken must be.
- **Keep in mind that the child may have been told not to tell anyone.** Sometimes people who abuse children will threaten them, or someone they care about, with further harm if they tell anyone. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you and that you and others are going to help them. There are lots of reasons why children may be afraid to tell. They may have been bribed not to tell, made to feel that they are to blame for what has happened, threatened with, or experienced, actual violence from the abuser, and/or made to feel afraid of what might happen to the abuser as they could be someone that they know and care about.
- **Write down what a child has told you as soon as possible.** Be careful to ensure that your recording accurately reflects what the child said and the circumstances in which the child told you about it.

The Electric Theatre Workshop recognizes that concerns may also arise as a result of direct observation or reports from a third party. If a disclosure has been made or a concern generated, the applicable staff member should then consult the company's designated Child, Young Person and Adults-at-Risk Protection Worker. The information should not be given to any other staff members as it does not concern them. It is the responsibility of the designated Child, Young Person and Adults-at-Risk Protection Worker to pass it onto the relevant authorities. In all instances, the fact that a concern has been raised a record will be logged whether or not further action has been taken.

If the disclosure concerns the person nominated as the individual's appropriate adult or the company's designated Child, Young Person and Adults-at-Risk Protection Worker then individuals should speak to local social work services details of which can be found at <http://withscotland.org>. Before any activities begin, children, young people and adults-at-risk will be made aware of how they can make a complaint about a staff member and will be given the option of reporting to multiple people to safeguard against the possibility of a complaint being made to the subject of the complaint.

Storing Information

If sensitive information about a child, young person or adult-at-risk, to do with a disclosure or anything else, is recorded it will be stored in a locked drawer in the registered office. When it is deemed a suitable time to stop storing the information, it will be destroyed using a secure shredding service.

Disclosures Against Staff

If a child discloses that someone in the Electric Theatre Workshop has caused them harm, this will be treated in the same way as any other disclosure a child may make. The information will be passed onto the designated child protection worker and handled in the same fashion. This will ensure that the allegations are treated in a consistent and fair manner.

Staff and volunteers will be made aware of the procedure that will be followed in the event of an allegation being made against them. These procedures and processes are in place, first and foremost, to protect and promote the wellbeing of children, but they also provide staff and volunteers with the assurance that there is a consistent and predictable response to allegations of child abuse.

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer, the Electric Theatre Workshop will consider suspending the individual from work with the organisation until the situation has been investigated. If the Electric Theatre Workshop is not sure of what action to take, it will seek guidance from the police and/or local authority.

To protect staff from fear of defamation in the case of reporting a disclosure which turns out to be untrue Electric Theatre Workshop follows the guidelines laid out in the Guidelines on Child Protection prepared for the independent schools in Scotland.

“Concerned adults are sometimes reluctant to report suspicions of abuse for fear that the person suspected will sue them for defamation if the allegation turns out to be unfounded. To be defamatory, a statement must first of all be untrue. Even if subsequently shown to be untrue, the statement will be protected by “qualified privilege” if it is made to the appropriate authority ‘in response to a duty, whether legal, moral or social or in the protection of an interest’. Unjustified repetition of the allegations to other persons will not be protected by privilege. The qualification on privilege refers to statements motivated by malice. If a statement, even to the appropriate authority, can be shown to be not only untrue, but motivated by malice, then an act of defamation could be successful.”

Recruiting and supervising staff and volunteers

Electric Theatre Workshop takes every precaution to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults-at-risk are suitable to do so. Before commencing work of this kind Electric Theatre Workshop requires all staff working directly with children or adults at risk, to have a PVG certificate. Staff new to the organisation will be periodically supervised to ensure they are providing the best possible service