



## **Dorchester Community Plays Association Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Concerning Children, Young People & Adults at Risk**

### **1. Introduction**

Dorchester Community Plays Association (DCPA) believes that every child and adult deserve to be safe and secure. We will ensure that our activities are safe for our staff, volunteers, and users. Unfortunately, people may pose a risk to children or adults at risk and may wish to harm them. Also, accidents can happen unless steps are taken to minimise them. Therefore, safeguarding children, young people and adults is everybody's business.

DCPA has put in place safeguards to protect those who work and volunteer for us and our users including children, young people, and adults at risk. DCPA has also put in place safeguards to avoid putting their workers and volunteers in positions where harm might be alleged, and to ensure that all workers and volunteers know exactly what to do should harm be suspected. DCPA believes it is important to not only protect the vulnerable from harm but to actively promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk - not just to protect, but to safeguard. Therefore, we also have a responsibility to take action if we know, or suspect, that a child or adult at risk is at risk of harm.

### **2. Definitions**

- **A child/young person** is defined as anyone under 18.
- **An adult at risk** is defined in the 'No Secrets' government report as a person aged 18 and over "who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation."

### **3. DCPA Values for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk**

- All users including children, young people and adults at risk have the right to a friendly, secure, caring, and safe environment whilst with DCPA.
- The needs of the child/adult at risk are paramount and should underpin all safeguarding work, working to the policy and procedures agreed by the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board.
- The primary duty of staff and volunteers, whatever their nominated role, and organisations contracted by DCPA is to protect children, young people, and adults at risk from significant harm.
- It is not DCPA's responsibility to investigate suspected abuse but to report concerns to the local contacts (see Section 8).
- Responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk must be shared as they can only be protected effectively when all the relevant agencies and individuals accept responsibility and co-operate with one another.
- DCPA has a responsibility to inform children and young people, and adults at risk, and their parents and/or carers as appropriate, of its duty to follow up any safeguarding concerns and report suspected cases of harm when disclosed or observed.

#### 4.1 Preventing Opportunities for Harm

DCPA aims to:

- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of appropriate staff and volunteers to work with children, young people, and adults at risk. Including the use of criminal record checks (DBS) where permitted to do so.
- Ensure that our activities are safe for those who work and volunteer for us and those who use our services
- Provide appropriate safeguarding training to our staff and volunteers
- Develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of harm
- Make our Safeguarding Policy available
- Designate an appropriately trained and informed individual/s to be the person/s with whom safeguarding concerns are discussed initially

#### 4.2. Safer Practice in Direct Work

- No DCPA member of staff or volunteer will be alone with a child or adult at risk without alerting others to the reason.
- Members of staff or volunteers must not use inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Any concerns of harm or disclosure will be acted on **IMMEDIATELY**.
- All allegations of abuse against a worker/volunteer, however minor, are reported to the Nominated Safeguarding Officer and the procedure to be followed will be in line with the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership or Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board.
- Safeguarding also means reducing the risk of injury. Therefore, we will carry out appropriate risk assessments before undertaking events/activities. This will include balancing the danger of injury against the benefits for participants.
- When undertaking events/activities we will arrange for appropriate first aid cover and other health and safety measures e.g., fire fighting.

#### 4.3. Recruitment of Staff

- The DCPA will ask for up-to-date DBS clearance from all professionals who are employed by DCPA for a community play.
- Child performers will be chaperoned during performances by licensed chaperones organised by the DCPA in liaison with Dorset Council.

#### 5. Types of Harm

There are various forms of harm that can be evidenced by physical and behavioral indicators:

- Physical Harm
- Neglect
- Emotional Harm
- Sexual Harm
- Financial and Material Harm
- Discriminatory Harm
- Radicalisation

Further information is available from [Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) or [Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board](#) and [www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse](http://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse).

## 6. How to Report Suspected Harm

Those working for DCPA may suspect someone is being harmed, or is in danger of being harmed, by observing their appearance and/or behaviour or be told directly (i.e., a disclosure). If anyone involved with DCPA has a suspicion or receives a disclosure, then they **MUST** act.

The first priority for all those working for DCPA (trustees, staff, volunteers, contractors, etc.) should be to ensure the safety and protection of any child or adult at risk. Therefore, if there is any concern it is an individual's responsibility to act in a timely manner, if necessary, immediately where there is an urgent need for medical treatment or immediate risk of harm.

Where a worker or volunteer suspects a child or adult at risk has or is being harmed, they will follow the process below:

1. Person has concerns about a child or adult at risk's welfare. If the child or adult at risk disclosed information you should:

- Stay calm, treat them seriously, offer them support and listen to them but not press for more details
- Explain that you cannot guarantee confidentiality and that you have a duty to report to your line manager (inform parent/carer unless it would increase risk of harm)
- Write down what they tell you using their own words as soon as possible
- Keep any evidence safe
- Do not attempt to discuss this with the person alleged to have caused the harm



2. If the person believes the child or adult at risk is in immediate danger - call the police and /or an ambulance on 999. If not go to 3.



3. Person discusses with Nominated Safeguarding Officer (NSO) as soon as possible and within the same working day and a decision is taken whether to take further action (if the person is unable to discuss with the Nominated Safeguarding Officer, they should decide whether to take further action). If yes then go to 4.



4. NSO records concerns using as much information as possible such as what was said, what was observed, when, where and who else was there, date, time and place of disclosure/concerns.



5. NSO makes appropriate referral (see **Contacts**) within 24 hours of disclosure or concern raised.



6. Followed up in writing within 48 hours with copy kept in DCPA Incidents file.

## 7. Whistleblowing

DCPA is dedicated to the highest standards of operation, probity, and accountability. In line with this commitment, employees, volunteers, and others with serious concerns about any aspect of our work are encouraged to come forward and voice those concerns. In the first instance if you have safeguarding concerns, or want to complain about a lack of action on a safeguarding concern, speak to the Nominated Safeguarding Officer or to the Lead Trustee. However, if you have continuing concerns, e.g., your concerns are not acted on, you are encouraged to contact the appropriate authorities (the local safeguarding boards and/or Police). Advice is available from Protect - free confidential advice for people who witnessed wrongdoing in their workplace but are not sure how to raise their concerns (<https://protect-advice.org.uk> 020 3117 2520) and NSPCC National Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

## 8. Contacts

DCPA Nominated Safeguarding Officer: FIONA CRATE SCOTT

Trustee with safeguarding responsibilities: DAVID MCGAREL

**For concerns about an immediate risk or harm to a child/young person or adult at risk ring the Police on 999**

If you suspect that a child/young person is being abused or neglected then contact **Children's Advice and Duty Service: Professional's Telephone Number: 01305 228558** Daytime service is available Monday to Friday between 8am and 10pm, Saturday and Sunday 9am to 10pm and On-Call Out of Hours Service 24/7. This is a professionals-only number to discuss your concerns, you will no longer complete a referral form. Families and Members of the Public **Number: 01305 228866**

If you suspect that an adult is being abused or neglected, then contact Dorset Council

- on **01305 221 016** during office hours
- on **01305 858 250** for the Out of Hours Service

## 9. Other organisations that could help

- Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership <https://pdscp.co.uk>, 01305 221196
- Keeping children and young people safe in the voluntary and community sector ([NSPCC](#))
- [Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board](#), 01305 221016
- Ann Craft Trust [www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org)
- NCVO Safeguarding <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/>

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Board of the Association and will be subject to annual review.

Agreed by the DCPA Board

Date: 26 July 2022