# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES Chilli Studios

Chilli Studios promotes the well-being of all people and aims to make life a fulfilling and enjoyable experience through the provision of a wide range of services. We do this through a range of direct services, working with volunteers and staff of all ages.

Although our service users and staff and volunteers are predominantly adults/older people, we occasionally come into contact with children who are related to our service users.

Due to our occasional involvement with children and young people we must therefore take the responsible action to adopt the following Children’s Safeguarding policy which will sit alongside our Adult safeguarding policy.

# POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

“Children” for the purposes of these guidelines are defined as those under 18 years of age.

Chilli Studios recognises that all children have a right to protection from all forms of abuse and takes its responsibilities seriously to protect and safeguard the welfare of children. We will:

* Respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse
* Have a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
* Maintain good links with statutory child care authorities.

The Policy

Chilli Studios recognises that many children and young people today are the victims of neglect, and physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Accordingly Chilli Studios has adopted the policy contained in this document (hereafter “the policy”). The policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to responding to allegations of abuse, including those made against staff and volunteers. Chilli Studios recognises the need to build constructive links with the local appropriate child care agencies. These guidelines have been prepared in accordance with the Newcastle Council Child Protection Procedures. They will be kept under review and be supported by appropriate training.

The policy applies to all staff and volunteers who act on behalf of the organisation and who come directly into contact with children and young people. Every individual has a responsibility to inform the designated person in respect of child protection or their deputy of concerns relating to safeguarding children. The designated person must decide if the concerns should be communicated to Newcastle Council’s Children’s Advice and Assessment Service.

# DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

ABUSE

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting; by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child . Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child or that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or “making fun” of what they say or how they communicate.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or young people. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

* Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
* Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
* Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
* Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
* It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

# What you should do if you suspect abuse

You must report concerns as soon as possible to Christine Dalton who is the Designated Child Protection Person (0191 2094058), who is nominated by Chilli Studios to act on their behalf in referring allegations of suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of the designated person, the matter should be brought to the attention of the deputy designated person Bob Malpiedi on the same phone number.

If it is an emergency, and the designated persons cannot be contacted then Children’s Advice and Assessment Service or the police should be contacted at the numbers given below.

If the suspicions relate to the designated person, then the deputy or Children’s Advice and Assessment Service should be contacted.

Suspicions should not be discussed with anyone, other than those named above.

It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. We would hope that an individual would use this procedure. However, if you feel that the organisation has not responded to your concerns, it is open to you to contact the child protection agencies direct.

# Allegations of physical injury, emotional abuse or neglect

If a child has an injury which may be a non-accidental injury, or symptoms of neglect and a referral is to be made then:

The designated person should contact Newcastle Children’s Advice and Assessment Service. If there has been a deliberate injury or where there are concerns about the child’s safety the child’s parents should not be contacted before first consulting with social services.

Where emergency medical attention is necessary it should be sought immediately. The designated person should inform the doctor of any suspicion of abuse. If a referral is being made without the parent’s knowledge and non-urgent medical treatment is required, Children’s Advice and Assessment Service should be informed. Otherwise speak to the parent/carer and suggest medical attention be sought for the child.

If appropriate the parent/carer should be encouraged to seek help from the Children’s Advice and Assessments Service prior to a referral being made. If they fail to do so in situations of real concern the designated person will contact Children’s Advice and Assessment Service directly for advice.

# Allegations of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations of sexual abuse the designated person will:

Contact the Children’s Advice and Assessment Service or Police Child Protection Team directly. The designated person will not speak to the parents.

Under no circumstances should the designated person, or any other member of the organisation, attempt to carry out an investigation into the allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse. The role of the designated person is to collect the exact details of the allegations or suspicion and to provide this information to the child protection agencies that will investigate the matter under the Children Act 1989.

# What to do once a child has talked to you about abuse

Make a note immediately of what the child has said, writing down exactly what the child has said, write down what you said in reply, when they said it and what happened immediately beforehand.

Report your discussion as soon as possible to the designated person.

Once a child has talked about abuse the designated person must consider if it is safe for the child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On a rare occasion it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact Newcastle Council’s Children’s Advice and Assessment Service and/or the police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.

# Recording Information

When making child protection notes or records it may not be possible to know who will eventually have access to it or when. It may be consulted months or even years after it was written. Always bear in mind that someone who is a complete stranger to you and your organisation may need to read your record at some stage in the future.

Ideally, logs of incidents should be typed. Hand written notes should be clearly legible and written in ink. All notes and reports must contain the following:

* Date of the incident
* Date and time of the record being made
* Name and date of birth of the child(ren) concerned
* A factual account of what happened and the location where the incident took place (include the actual words spoken by the child where possible)
* A note of any other people involved e.g. as witnesses
* Action taken and any future plans e.g. Monitor and review
* Any other agencies informed
* Printed name of the person making the record
* Job title of the person making the record
* Signature (please print the name alongside)

All records will be kept in a file specifically labelled and kept in a locked file.

# Allegations against staff or volunteers

Allegations against staff or volunteers will always be investigated. Where there are concerns that a child has been put in danger of abuse, or has suffered abuse owing to the actions of a member of staff or volunteer, a Local Authority Designated Officer or the police will be contacted. Details of any allegation which has not resulted in a referral will be kept securely in the same way as described in the above paragraph.

Newcastle City Council Children’s Advice and Assessment Service

Initial Response Service
Children's Social Care
Wellbeing, Care and Learning
Civic Centre
Barras Bridge
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8QH

Phone: 0191 277 2500
Fax: 0191 277 2477
Email: ​IRSADMIN@newcastle.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Social Work team 0845 349419

Phone: 0191 278 78 78
Fax: 0191 211 4947
Email: edt@newcastle.gov.uk

Deaf community: 18001

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