

EntertainArts Child Protection Policy



Introduction

All organisations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

1. the welfare of the child is paramount
2. all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
3. all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
4. EntertainArts Ltd staff (paid & unpaid) have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate manager or director.

Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.

Policy statement/aims

EntertainArts Ltd has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in EntertainArts Ltd from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. EntertainArts Ltd will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in EntertainArts Ltd through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by EntertainArts Ltd.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Policy aims

The aim of the EntertainArts Ltd Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

1. Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of EntertainArts Ltd staff.
2. By Allowing all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Promoting good practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and various environments. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with

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young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where protection is needed. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters an activity (having been subjected to child abuse), it can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the teacher/supervisor must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

1. Always working in an open environment where possible (e.g. Keeping curtains open, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
2. Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
3. Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
4. Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with pupils (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
5. Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
6. Making activities/lessons fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
7. Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the Coach Education Programme.
8. Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
9. Ensuring that if children/adults are taken away on a trip, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same sex gender abuse can also occur.
10. Ensuring that adults do not enter children's/adults rooms alone if children are taken away on a trip.
11. Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
12. Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
13. Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
14. Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

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15. Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
16. Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars or take photographs/create videos.

Practices to be avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

1. Avoid spending time alone with children away from others.
2. Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event or activity.

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

1. Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
2. Share a room with a child
3. Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
4. Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
5. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
6. Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
7. Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
8. Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves
9. Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

Please Note: It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the people involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

1. If you accidentally hurt someone

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2. If he/she seems distressed in any manner
3. If a person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
4. If a person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All staff should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the EntertainArts Director who will report to a child protection officer.

Videoring as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent companies and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and their consent obtained, and such films should be stored safely.

Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers

EntertainArts Ltd recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Pre-selection checks must include the following:

1. All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
2. Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.
3. Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
4. Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

Interview and induction

All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive an induction, during which:

1. A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures)
2. Their qualifications should be substantiated.
3. Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.
4. They should sign up to the organisation's Code of Ethics and Conduct and Child Protection policy.

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EntertainArts Ltd Requires:

1. Coaching staff to read adhere fully to this policy.
2. Relevant personnel recognised first aid training (where necessary).
3. Attend update training when necessary. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from Sports Coach UK, the NSPCC, and the Sport Council.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in EntertainArts Ltd in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

EntertainArts Ltd will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

1. A criminal investigation
2. A child protection investigation
3. A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Concerns About Suspected Abuse:

1. Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the EntertainArts Ltd Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
2. The EntertainArts Ltd Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police.
3. The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
4. The EntertainArts Ltd Child Protection Officer should also notify the relevant (Sport Governing Body) officer who in turn will inform the (Sport Governing Body) Child Protection Officer who will deal with any media enquiries.
1. If the EntertainArts Ltd Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Manager or

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in his/her absence the (Sport Governing Body) Child Protection Officer who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

1. the Child Protection Officer
2. the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
3. the person making the allegation
4. social services/police
5. The EntertainArts Director, and relevant staff

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Information for Social Services or the Police about Suspected Abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

1. The child's name, age and date of birth of the child, home address and telephone number.
2. Whether or not the person making the report is expressing town concerns or someone else's.
5. The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
6. Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
7. A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
8. Details of witnesses to the incidents.
9. The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
10. Have the parents been contacted?
11. If so what has been said?
12. Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
13. If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
14. Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

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15. Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.

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