



Safeguarding Policy



Safeguarding Policy for Work with Children, Young People and Parents/Carers

Karen Wicks Artist / Out of the Box Project

Reviewed: February 2026

Next Review: February 2027

Safeguarding Lead Contact: *Karen Wicks karen-wicks@outlook.com*

1. Policy Statement

I am committed to ensuring that all children, young people and adults at risk who engage with my creative workshops, mentoring sessions, exhibitions or participatory arts activities are safe, respected and protected from harm. As stated in the Arts Council's safeguarding policy:

"The welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse is paramount."

"All children, young people and adults at risk of abuse have the right to protection from harm..."

My safeguarding approach is proactive, proportionate and tailored to the nature of my work as an artist and creative mentor. I follow statutory guidance including **Keeping Children Safe (2026)**, **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** and the **Care Act (2014)**.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all activities delivered as part of my Arts Council-funded project, including:

- Workshops with children, young people and families
- One-to-one or small-group creative mentoring
- Participatory arts sessions in community venues
- Online or hybrid creative sessions
- Exhibitions, events or public-facing activities involving under-18s

It applies to myself and to any volunteers, collaborators or contractors I engage.

3. Definitions

Using the Arts Council's definitions:

"Children and young people at risk of abuse refers to any person who has not yet reached the age of 18..."

"An adult at risk of abuse is someone aged 18 or over who... is unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect."

Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, psychological, neglect, exploitation or radicalisation.



Safeguarding Policy

4. Safeguarding Lead

Safeguarding Lead: *Karen Wicks*

Email: *karen-wicks@outlook.com*

Qualifications and checks:

- I hold an **Enhanced DBS check**, renewed and up to date
- I have completed **recent safeguarding training in education**, including child protection, safer working practice and reporting procedures

Responsibilities:

- Promote safe environments
- Receive and respond to concerns or disclosures
- Liaise with external agencies where required
- Maintain safeguarding records securely
- Ensure policy review and training

5. Roles and Responsibilities

As the Lead Artist and Grant Holder, I will:

- Uphold this safeguarding policy in all project activities
- Ensure safe, inclusive environments for children and adults at risk
- Maintain my safeguarding training and DBS status
- Follow safer recruitment procedures for any collaborators
- Conduct risk assessments for all sessions and venues
- Respond appropriately to concerns, disclosures or allegations
- Report serious concerns to Arts Council England as required:

“You should report any serious or significant concerns or incidents... to us in line with the terms and conditions of funding.”

Any volunteers or collaborators will:

- Be briefed on this policy
- Provide DBS checks where required
- Follow all safeguarding procedures
- Report concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Lead



Safeguarding Policy

6. Safer Recruitment

Where additional practitioners or volunteers are engaged, I will ensure:

- Enhanced DBS checks for anyone with direct, unsupervised contact with under-18s
- Identity and reference checks
- Clear role descriptions
- Induction covering safeguarding, conduct and boundaries

7. Creating Safe and Inclusive Environments

I will ensure:

- Clear boundaries and expectations for behaviour
- No unsupervised 1:1 work with a child unless agreed with parents/carers and risk-assessed
- Parents/carers are encouraged to remain present
- Safe ratios appropriate to the activity
- Accessibility and inclusion for SEND and neurodiverse participants
- Safe online practice (no private messaging, use of professional accounts only)
- Secure storage of personal data

8. Risk Assessment

In line with Arts Council expectations:

Grant holders must “demonstrate how robust risk assessment processes are carried out...”

I complete a risk assessment for every venue and activity. Parents/carers will review this risk assessment with me **before sessions begin**, ensuring shared understanding and joint responsibility for safety.

Safeguarding Policy

Generic Community Room Risk Assessment

Identified Risk	Who May Be Harmed	Control Measures in Place	Responsibility
1. Child leaving the room during the activity	Children and young people	- Parents/carers remain responsible for their child's safety at all times. - If a child leaves the room, the parent/carer will follow immediately to ensure their safety. - Clear expectations shared at the start of the session.	Parent/carer
2. Art activities involving scissors or sharp tools	Children and young people	- Artist will check with parents/carers on admission whether there are any self-harm concerns or additional risks she needs to be aware of. - Artist will monitor the use of scissors throughout the activity. - Scissors will be collected back in at the end of the activity or when no longer required. - Only age-appropriate scissors will be used.	Artist (Karen)
3. Children who become dysregulated or overwhelmed	Children and young people	- Parent/carer will offer a time-out, walk, or familiar regulation strategy they normally use. - Artist will support by reducing verbal input, sensory load or demands. - A quiet space will be identified where possible. - Parents/carers remain responsible for their child's emotional regulation and wellbeing.	Parent/carer with support from Artist
4. General community room environment (doors, furniture, trip hazards)	All participants	- Room checked before each session for hazards. - Furniture arranged to allow safe movement. - Any hazards removed or minimised. - Emergency exits identified and shared.	Artist (Karen)

9. Responding to Concerns or Disclosures

If a child or adult at risk discloses harm, I will:

- Listen without judgement



Safeguarding Policy

- Reassure them they have done the right thing
- Not promise confidentiality
- Record the concern factually and securely
- Report to **Staffordshire First Response** or **LADO** as appropriate
- Seek advice if unsure

I will escalate immediately if a child is at immediate risk of harm.

10. What I Will Do If / Need to Raise a Concern

If I personally become aware of:

- A safeguarding concern
- A disclosure from a child or adult at risk
- Concerning behaviour from a volunteer, collaborator or parent
- A breach of safe practice
- A situation where a child is at risk of harm

I will:

1. **Record the concern immediately**, using factual, objective language
2. **Contact Staffordshire First Response** for advice or referral
3. **Contact the LADO** if the concern relates to an adult working with children
4. **Inform Arts Council England** if the concern is serious or significant
5. **Follow up in writing** and store records securely
6. **Continue to monitor the situation** if advised to do so

This aligns with the Arts Council requirement that:

“All incidents you identify should be reported, logged, managed and, if applicable, escalated to appropriate agencies...”

11. Reporting to External Agencies

Staffordshire First Response (Children's Services)

Telephone: 0800 1313 126

Out of Hours: 0345 604 2886

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Staffordshire

Telephone: 01785 895836

Police (Emergency): 999



Safeguarding Policy



Police (Non-Emergency): 101

12. Reporting to Arts Council England

In line with the uploaded policy:

“You should report any serious or significant concerns or incidents... to us in line with the terms and conditions of funding.”

I will notify Arts Council England of:

- Serious safeguarding incidents
- Allegations against staff/volunteers
- Police or social care involvement
- Any incident that may breach funding conditions

13. Whistleblowing

I am committed to a culture where concerns can be raised safely.

Whistleblowing applies when:

- A practitioner, volunteer or collaborator is concerned about unsafe practice
- There is suspected misconduct or failure to follow safeguarding procedures
- Concerns cannot be raised safely within the immediate working relationship

Whistleblowing routes:

1. **Raise the concern with the Safeguarding Lead (Karen)**
2. If the concern involves the Safeguarding Lead, report directly to:
 - **Staffordshire LADO** (01785 895836)
 - **NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285**
3. If the concern relates to Arts Council-funded activity, concerns may also be raised with **Arts Council England**.

Whistleblowers will not be penalised for raising concerns in good faith.

14. Code of Conduct

I commit to:

- Respectful, inclusive communication
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Never using personal devices to contact children
- Never transporting children alone



Safeguarding Policy

- Avoiding physical contact unless necessary for safety
- Ensuring photography/video consent is explicit and documented

15. Record Keeping

I will keep:

- Written records of concerns or disclosures
- Risk assessments
- Attendance registers
- Consent forms
- DBS and training records

All records will be stored securely and retained in line with GDPR.

16. Transparency and Accessibility

As required by the Arts Council:

“Your safeguarding policy and procedures should be publicly available and promoted to the beneficiaries of your work.”

This policy will be:

- Shared with parents/carers
- Available on request
- Provided in accessible formats where needed (please request by email)

17. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Statutory guidance changes
- There is a safeguarding incident
- Arts Council England updates its requirements

Next review: **February 2027**