



Creative Royston Policy Statement for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Creative Royston is entirely run by unpaid volunteers and the annual Royston Arts Festival takes place each year in September, using venues in and around the town and features events, exhibitions and workshops in art, craft, music, dance and other creative arts. The Creative Royston Management Committee (CRMC) also runs and organises other occasional events throughout the year. Four 'Officers' of the CRMC, Chairperson, Vice-Chair Treasurer and Secretary are elected annually at Creative Royston's AGM and other members are co-opted as required.

This Policy relates to children under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults of any age. Creative Royston aims to provide a safe and caring environment for children and vulnerable adults as far as is reasonable and practicable, but it is not a child care organisation in the full meaning of The Protection of Children Act 1999.

Creative Royston believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/ vulnerable adult is paramount;
- all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse;
- working in partnership with vulnerable adults, children, their parents, carers and their agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Event attendees are asked to consider the following:

- Carers are reminded that the safety of young people and vulnerable adults together with their belongings remains their responsibility during any Creative Royston events. When attending events, carers must ensure that children and vulnerable adults are adequately supervised by themselves or by another responsible adult acting on their behalf. CRMC members are not able to undertake this task.
- All those who assist in running Creative Royston events are volunteers and will be easily identifiable wearing a name tag and often the organisation's purple polo shirt.
- In the event of a problem, anyone who is identified as a volunteer may be approached and, if not able to deal with the problem themselves, will contact somebody responsible to act for them. All problems will be dealt with sympathetically and discreetly, and will be properly documented.

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- All Creative Royston volunteers are familiar with this Policy and the guidelines and definitions that follow.
- Carers may photograph their own children as long as this causes no delay or disturbance. Anyone participating in the festival will have given their permission to be photographed or videoed by official representatives of the Festival or local press for publicity purposes.
- It is not possible to record any performance.
- It is not our policy to take mobile phones from children or stop them using these to photograph or video, but carers are asked to ensure they are used responsibly.
- This Policy is kept under review by the Management Committee and will be improved or enhanced from time to time as may be deemed necessary.
- All CRMC Members and volunteers are given a copy of this Child Protection Policy with the following Code of Good Practice and Definitions of Abuse. They will pass any concerns to one of the nominated officers (listed at the end of this document), and are expected to observe all the agreed procedures.

Code of Good Practice for Creative Royston Volunteers

- Good practice includes valuing and respecting children/vulnerable adults as individuals and the adult adoption of appropriate conduct. Appropriate conduct excludes bullying, shouting, inappropriate language, racism, sectarianism, sexism or other form of discrimination.
- It is important to avoid having physical contact with children/vulnerable adults who attend Creative Royston events.
- It is not good practice to take children/vulnerable adults home alone in a car however short the journey may be.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child/vulnerable adult, even in fun, as these could be misinterpreted.
- Those who abuse children/vulnerable adults can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background or class. It is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent the appropriate action being taken.
- It is the responsibility of every adult to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and vulnerable adults wherever they can and to report any actual or suspected abuse that comes to light.

Note - scope for abuse will be minimised if Creative Royston events are run with the safety of all its members in mind and sensible steps are taken in dealings with children/vulnerable adults. If an allegation is made, or concerns are raised, they should – with minimum delay – be brought to the attention of one of the persons named at the end of this document.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

The following definitions of child abuse are taken from the HM Government publication “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2006.

PHYSICAL ABUSE. Physical abuse may involve hitting, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may be the result of a deliberate act, but also could be caused through the omission or failure to act to protect.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the 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 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, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at, or taking part in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child’s basic emotional needs.

ADVICE ON RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION.

The following information is intended to assist you should you become involved in a potential child protection situation:

- a) Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse, and stay calm. Take what is said seriously: it is rare for children to make false allegations.
- b) If you can, write brief notes of what they are telling you while they are speaking – these may help later if you have to remember exactly what was said. Keep your original notes however rough: it is what you wrote at the time that may be important later, not a tidier and improved version you wrote up afterwards. If you don’t have the means to write at the time, make notes of what was said as soon as possible afterwards.

- c) Never make a promise that you will keep what is said confidential or secret. If you are told about abuse you have a responsibility to report it so that action can be taken. Give reassurance that only those who need to know will be told.
- d) Do not ask leading questions that might give your own ideas of what could have happened (e.g. "Did he do XX to you?"), just ask: "What do you want to tell me?" or "Is there anything else you want to say?"
- e) Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace and reassure the child he/she has done the right thing in telling you.
- f) Inform the child what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- g) Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected or alleged abuse by interviewing people etc. yourself; you could cause more damage and spoil possible criminal proceedings. That is a task for a professional person working with a Child Protection agency, and would follow a referral from Creative Royston's nominated Officer.

NOMINATED OFFICERS

The Festival Officers who need to know about any allegation of child abuse and who are responsible for taking any necessary action are:

Hannah Theobald and Andy Tunnicliffe

If you suspect for any reason that a child is not being treated correctly, please contact the following numbers:

The Police **999**

Hertfordshire Children, Schools & Families Team (including out of hours):

0300 123 4043

The Child Abuse Investigation Unit: **101**. This is a specialist team with countywide responsibility for undertaking child protection investigations.

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: **0808 800 5000**

Dept. for Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-safeguard-children-revisions>