



Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy

Restoke is an arts organisation that engages with the community in artistic activity through workshops and performance. The work of Restoke is driven by the desire that all children, young people and adults should have access to creative arts activity therefore Restoke has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in their activities.

The term **child** is used to refer to anyone under the age of eighteen years. While people between the age of sixteen and eighteen are often referred to as 'young people' the term itself has no legal status, and those under the age of eighteen involved with Restoke are regarded as children in line with the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

In law there is no standard definition of **vulnerable adult**. Restoke uses the following definition taken from the 1997 consultation paper *Who Decides?* issued by the Lord Chancellor's department: Vulnerable adults are people who are or may be in need of community care services because of mental disability or other disability, age or illness, and who are, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Restoke has designated its Co-Artistic-Director Clare Reynolds as the member of staff with primary responsibility for child protection and safeguarding of vulnerable adults. This ensures that policies and procedures can be co-ordinated effectively and offers a first point of contact for any staff or freelancer who wishes to discuss an issue concerning protection of children or vulnerable adults. All staff and freelancers will also be provided with relevant child/vulnerable adult protection information when beginning work with Restoke. Co-Artistic Director Paul Rogerson can be contacted in the absence of the designated person, largely for emergency situations, or who should be contacted if the concern arises about the designated person themselves.

Risk assessments are carried out by one of Restoke's management team prior to a project commencing. This will include assessing the venue and the overall project itself.

Restoke staff will ensure that they are never put in a situation where they are alone on a one to one basis with a child involved in Restoke activities. This is both to protect the child, and to protect staff against unwarranted allegations of abuse.

The ratio of adult to child/vulnerable adult varies depending on the age and nature of the group that are being worked with. Sessions involving these groups are always accompanied by at least two adults both of whom are DBS checked. Where possible this should consist of

two Restoke staff members or freelance workers (either appropriately trained youth leaders or registered chaperones).

One adult to every fifteen children will work with groups of older participants (secondary school age and above), with younger groups the ratio increases, for primary school age there should be one adult to every 10 children, with higher ratios for early years groups often provided by the presence of parents in a session.

Restoke as part of their registration system requires the parents and guardians of all children and vulnerable adults involved with a project/production to provide information concerning any medical conditions as well as emergency contact details. Restoke staff members and freelancers should record any noticeable injuries a child arrives at a session with (for further details see sections **Dealing with disclosure of abuse** and **Accidents and Injuries below**).

i) Criminal records checks

- It is the policy of Restoke that all permanent, freelance and volunteer staff who work on their own with children or vulnerable adults must have passed an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

i) Dealing with disclosure and suspicion of abuse

Adults have a legal responsibility to report any information disclosed by children/ vulnerable adults concerning abuse and it is therefore important to communicate to the child/vulnerable adult that any information given cannot remain confidential. In the event of a Restoke employee, freelancer or volunteer working on a project or production receiving allegations of abuse from a child involved in the project, Restoke expects the worker involved to report the allegations, as appropriate, to a member of the management team and also if working with a partner organisation, to a responsible person within that organisation. If none of these people are available, the staff member should report their concerns immediately to Staffordshire or Stoke on Trent Social Services and then inform an Artistic Director as soon as possible thereafter.

ii) and to as follows.

- Initially information should be disclosed to the member of the management team responsible for the project and to a responsible person within the organisation we are working with (if applicable).
- This member of staff will raise the concerns with the Co-Artistic Director who has responsibility for ensuring the abuse has been adequately reported.
- Where a child/vulnerable adult discloses abuse this must be reported by Restoke and/or the partner organisation on the project by contacting the Staffordshire County Council's Children and Lifelong learning Department (children), Social Care and Health Department (vulnerable adults) or Stoke on Trent City Council Social Services Department.

Where abuse is suspected

- Restoke staff members and freelancers should record any evidence of suspected abuse and follow disclosing information procedures if they feel abuse may be occurring away from the venue.
- Restoke encourages peer support and communication between staff and freelancers to ensure that any suspicions of abuse can be monitored properly and where appropriate reported to external agencies.
- The Social Services department at Staffordshire County Council or Stoke on Trent City Council may be used as an initial advice point to help decide if a concern warrants Social Services involvement. Concerns should always be raised with the relevant Head of Department so that they may be party to the Social Services advice and any subsequent decisions.

In both cases:

The member of staff or freelancer should keep careful contemporaneous notes in order that an accurate record is available should the disclosure lead to further investigation by external agencies. Restoke staff members and freelancers must record any disclosed information or suspicions of abuse in written form, and details of any further action taken should also be noted.

While abuse disclosed must be reported, it is important to remember that children have their own right to confidentiality. Disclosure of abuse must be treated with absolute confidentiality and any written records must be safely secured as with documents related to DBS disclosure.

In addition information concerning children/vulnerable adults provided to Restoke by external organisations (such as referral information) must be handled discretely and only given to staff members and freelancers working with the children/vulnerable adults if it is deemed imperative to the running of the project or performance or for the express welfare of the child/vulnerable adult.

Guidelines for handling a disclosure

If a child/vulnerable adult discloses that s/he has been abused, the member of staff should:

- Listen carefully to what they say without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child/vulnerable adult to talk freely.
- Reassure them but do not make promises which it may not be possible to keep.
- Do not promise confidentiality - it may well be necessary to inform Social Services.
- Reassure the child/vulnerable adult that it is not his or her fault.
- Stress that it is right to tell.
- Listen, do not ask direct or leading questions.

- Do not criticise the perpetrator - the child may well still love him or her.
- Thank him or her for confiding in you.
- Explain what you have to do next.

iii) Bullying

Restoke will not condone bullying inflicted on children/vulnerable adults. This procedure dictates that any physical violence by children/vulnerable adults on their peers during sessions with Restoke will be stopped immediately. Any sexist, racist or other derogatory remarks will be highlighted as unacceptable. In addition, and where other forms of bullying are present, the worker and supporting adults (e.g. youth worker) will address the issue directly with the children involved. Where bullying, wherever it happens, is highlighted by a child the practitioner will discuss the issue with the child in order to explore possible action. Where considered appropriate the practitioner will notify the parent or worker of the issue.

iv) Accidents and Injuries

The parents, guardians or carers of all children/vulnerable adults involved with a project/production at Restoke are expected to provide information concerning any medical conditions as well as emergency contact details.

Staff members and freelancers should record any noticeable injuries a child arrives with (by raising it with a second member of staff and if appropriate with the parent/carer themselves), to ensure that it is not possible for a parent/carer to ascribe any injury or abuse as having happened within the session in error.

All accidents and injuries that take place in Restoke workshops/projects will be recorded in one of 2 accident books which will be available to any staff or freelancer running sessions.

v) Photography & Video

Children/vulnerable adults cannot be photographed or videoed without prior written permission from their parent or guardian and Restoke's use of these images is controlled by written consent forms. Where photographs are taken with a digital camera they are stored securely on the Restoke's computer system.

To ensure children/vulnerable adults cannot be traced through information provided by Restoke, children/vulnerable adults involved in projects are credited through first names or initials only, and where possible are not linked in our information to any specific organisation. Those involved in a performance, may be named in any programme produced, but those under 16 years of age are only under exceptional circumstances and with the express agreement of parent or guardian will have their full name used in any press or more widely disseminated information.

Performances By Children/Vulnerable Adults with Restoke

When projects involve performances, Restoke will take care to ensure that children are provided with suitable care during the performance. Numbers in dressing rooms will be agreed on a project by project basis by the management team in accordance with The Children (Performances) Regulations 1968. Where necessary additional spaces will be

provided for the provision of additional dressing room and 'green' room space. Drinking water will be provided in a suitably accessible space.

Attending Performances

Restoke sets suggested age limits for performances and will be advised by the box office at time of booking whether the show is appropriate for their child. It is the parent or guardian discretion whether the child can attend the event.

Restoke will review and update the policies and procedures in light of developments in our own practice and in legislation relating to protection issues.

Appendix 1

Definitions of the four kinds of abuse and what to look for

- Physical abuse

May include 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

What to look for:

- Any injuries, bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which are not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries, which occur to the body in places, which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.
- Injuries which appear to have been caused by a weapon e.g. cuts, welts etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Instances where children are kept away from the group inappropriately or without explanation
- Self-mutilation or self-harm e.g. cutting, slashing, drug abuse.

- Emotional abuse

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects of the child's/adult's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children/vulnerable adults 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 over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploration or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

What to look for:

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression.

- Nervousness/inappropriate fear of particular adults e.g. frozen watchfulness.
- Sudden changes in behaviour e.g. under achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults e.g. excessive dependence.
- Attention seeking
- Persistent tiredness
- Wetting or soiling of bed or clothes by an older child

- Neglect

Is the persistent failure to meet a child/vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy a result of maternal substance abuse. 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 takers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical treatment or care.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child/vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

What to look for:

- Regular poor hygiene
- Persistent tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Excessive appetite
- Failure to thrive e.g. poor weight gain
- Consistently left alone and unsupervised

- Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child/vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children/vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

What to look for:

- Any direct disclosure made by a child/vulnerable adult concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play.
- Pre-occupation with sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Other emotional signs may be indicative of sexual or some form of abuse.

Appendix 2

- i. **Designated protection person**
Clare Reynolds – Co-Artistic Director 07989989018
- ii. **Deputy designated protection person**
Paul Rogerson – Co-Artistic Director 07779792424
- iii. **Staffordshire Council Social Services**
01785 277088
- iv. **Stoke on Trent City Council Social Care Services**
01782 235985
- v. **Shropshire County Council Social Services**
0845 678 9000
- vi. **Cheshire County Council Social Services**
01606 76611
- vii. **Derbyshire County Council Social Services**
08 456 058 058
- viii. **Staffordshire Police**
08453 30 20 10
- ix. **Staffordshire First Response (day),**
08001313126 and
- x. **Staffordshire Emergency Duty Team (out of hours)**
01785 354030.
- xi. **NSPCC child protection helpline**
0808 800 5000

Appendix 3

- General Guidelines for Employees Working With Children and Young People
- Code of Good Practice for Vulnerable Adults

General Guidelines for Employees Working With Children and Young People

Work with client groups of children and young people is part of the artistic policy of Restoke. The term “client groups” includes children and young people working with Restoke in projects and workshops.

These guidelines are intended to protect, not only the young people, but also Restoke employees who come into contact with them.

For the purposes of this policy, the term ‘employees’ is deemed to include all staff, free-lance workers and volunteers.

- Young people should be treated with respect at all times.
- Employees should treat the personal possessions of young people with respect at all times.
- The privacy of young people should be respected. For example, employees should knock before entering rooms where young people are changing.
- No young person should be asked to perform a task that is potentially dangerous, illegal or otherwise unreasonable.
- Employees working with young people should be punctual for every session and should inform the individual or group if there is to be a change in working times.
- All spaces used by young people should be clean and tidy before use and adequate bins provided.

Code of Good Practice for Working with Vulnerable Adults

Work with client groups including children, young people and vulnerable adults is part of the artistic policy of Restoke. The term “client groups” includes those working with Restoke in projects and workshops.

These guidelines are intended to protect, not only the vulnerable adult, but also Restoke employees who come into contact with them.

For the purposes of this policy, the term ‘employees’ is deemed to include all staff, free-lance workers and volunteers.

You should:

- Value and respect vulnerable adults as individuals, and the adopt appropriate conduct - which would exclude bullying, aggressive behaviour, racism, sectarianism or sexism
- Be well informed about legislation and policies for protection of vulnerable adults and participate in the training available to you to support you in your work with vulnerable adults
- Keep up-to-date with health and safety in artistic practice.
- Under normal circumstances never work alone. It is recommended that you work alongside another adult or ensure that other adults are on the premises while you are leading a workshop and that you are therefore meeting your responsibility for ensuring the safety of those in your charge.
- Avoid being left alone with a single vulnerable adult. Ensure at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.
- Do not take a vulnerable adult alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Do not take a vulnerable adult to the toilet, unless another adult is present or another adult is aware.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact. Be aware that physical contact with a vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted. You should maintain a safe and appropriate distance from participants. Only touch participants when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity. For example, If physical contact is required as part of warm-up or other drama exercises, you should explain before you make physical contact,

what you are about to do.

- Not show favouritism to any individual.
- Respect the privacy of vulnerable adults. For example, employees should knock before entering rooms where vulnerable adults are changing.
- Not ask vulnerable adults to perform a task that is potentially dangerous, illegal or otherwise unreasonable.
- Remember that you are not in working in a 'disciplinary' capacity. Never tell off or shout at a vulnerable adult. This is different to 'maintaining order'.
- Without being dismissive try to avoid becoming involved if a vulnerable adult approaches you with their personal problems. Do not agree to keep the issue secret and encourage them to discuss the matter with their carer while another adult is present. This situation may arise particularly if work you are doing is issue based (e.g. bullying or drugs).
- Avoid personal relationships with a vulnerable adult.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism. Inform the designated person if you become involved in any situation with a vulnerable adult that concerns you.
- Discuss immediately with the designated person any suspicions or concerns regarding possible child abuse, or if there is anything, with which you feel uncomfortable.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse immediately to the designated person and follow Restoke's standard procedure as detailed in the Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy this includes accusation made towards Restoke Staff. If you are the recipient of any complaint or accusation from a child or vulnerable adult, it is important to listen without making or implying any judgment as to the truth of the complaint or accusation.
- Remember that those who abuse vulnerable adults can be of any age, gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.