GMAC Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (June 2026)

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1/ Policy Statement

Greater Manchester Arts Centre (GMAC) intends that this policy and the contained procedures should apply to all staff. This includes senior managers, the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, freelance artists, sessional workers, agency staff, visiting companies, trainees, students and anyone else deemed to be working on behalf of GMAC.

GMAC recognises our responsibility and prioritises our duty to safeguard all children, young people and adults at risk of harm whilst taking part in activities, attending cinema, theatre or gallery events or any other service that GMAC delivers. GMAC is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all and we will promote a child centred approach, where the best interests of the child are considered at all times

GMAC strongly believes that all children, young people and adults at risk of harm have a right to protection regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion and that this protection should be responsive to their needs and requirements.

GMAC aim to ensure that those children, young people and adults at risk of harm with impaired communication, physical or learning disabilities who connect with the organisation receive the necessary protection and support to keep them safe from harm

GMAC believe that an essential area of keeping all children, young people and adults at risk of harm safe is knowing how to respond in the event of a disclosure or in situations where you have reasons to suspect that a child, young person or adult at risk of harm may be suffering harm or in danger of being harmed.

GMAC is committed to the protection of vulnerable groups and will ensure this through good practice and by following the GMAC Child Protection and Safeguarding guidance and procedures as outlined in this policy.

GMAC will protect children, young people and adults at risk of harm by:

- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm who participate in GMAC events or groups.
- Following clear recruitment practices and providing training for all staff, freelance workers and volunteers and ensuring that all necessary checks are carried out.
- Ensuring that any staff member working directly with children, young people or adults at risk of harm are subject to a DBS Enhanced check prior to any work commencing.
- Providing clear and appropriate information for all staff, including senior managers, the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, freelance artists, sessional workers, agency staff, visiting companies, students and anyone else deemed to be working on behalf of GMAC in order that they understand Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Having in place an accident prevention policy and plan.
- Ensuring that any work that involves children, young people and adults at risk of harm is properly planned, staffed and monitored.
- Ensure that all appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and in place.
- Checking and monitoring equipment used by children, young people, adults at risk of harm and staff in accordance with health and safety guidance.
- Ensuring that we obtain written consent and emergency contact information from a legal Guardian for children's involvement in all activities led by GMAC; along with access and medical requirements, dietary needs,

allergies and specific developmental requirements for those attending regular groups.

- Providing appropriate audience specific information about GMAC child protection, and safeguarding policies to children, young people, adults at risk of harm and their families.
- Working and sharing information with relevant external agencies, families and carers when appropriate or necessary in line with GDPR practice & policies.
- Ensuring that all online activity with children, young people and adults at risk of harm is safe by following procedures outlined in GMAC's Online Agreement.
- Reviewing this policy annually or as and when required by changes in the law.
- Ensuring the board of trustees approve the policy annually.

2/ Policy Aim and Legal Framework

This policy aims:

- to provide protection for children, young people and adults at risk of harm, and anyone with impaired communication, physical or learning disabilities whilst in the care of GMAC and during visits to GMAC.
- to ensure a systematic organisational approach to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk of harm.
- to provide guidance to staff and volunteers on the procedures that they should follow in the event that they suspect or have reason to believe that a child, young person or adult at risk of harm may be experiencing harm or be at risk of harm.

For the purpose of this policy children are defined as young people under the age of 18.

- The Children Act 1989 states the legal definition of a child is "*a person under the age of 18*".
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 also states "*a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday*"

For the purpose of this policy an adult at risk of harm is defined by the Care Act 2014 as a person over the age of 18 who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

Legal Framework and Guidance Children and Young People

This policy has been developed based on the law and guidance in place to protect children. This includes:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 year Statutory Guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 Keeping children safe in education 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children: HM Government 2026 Working together to safeguard children 2026: a guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children

Legal Framework and Guidance Protection of Adults at Risk of Harm

This policy has been developed based on the law and guidance in place to protect adults at risk of harm. This includes:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Care Act 2014
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Making Safeguarding Personal Guide 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2015

3/ What is Child Protection and Safeguarding?

Safeguarding focuses on protecting all children, young people and adults at risk harm. Child Protection is an important area of safeguarding and refers to the process of protecting specific individual children who may be identified as being at risk of suffering harm or who are suffering harm.

Safeguarding children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 as:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding adults at risk of harm is defined in the care and support statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect
- people and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action
- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or wellbeing

4/ Safeguarding – Best Practice – Do's and Don'ts

Everyone who comes into contact with children, young people and adults at risk of harm whilst working for GMAC has a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. Everyone should follow best practice guidelines when working with children, young people or adults at risk.

Staffing in relation to working directly with children

- All staff, freelance practitioners and volunteers working directly and regularly with unaccompanied children, young people and adults at risk of harm should hold an Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check and their DBS details should be logged on GMAC's DBS register – for further information regarding processing DBS checks or logging DBS information please contact tiffany.bowman@homemcr.org
- Staff working directly with children and young people must have Safeguarding Training.
- 2 x DBS checked members of staff must be present for all GMAC activities with unaccompanied children and young people (including online activities, this includes volunteers and freelance artists)
- A licensed chaperone must be present for any public facing performances undertaken by children or young people under the age of 16 (both professional and amateur).
- A teacher must be present for all schools' workshops. Please alert a member of school staff if there is no teacher present and follow the school's safeguarding procedures when delivering activities within schools.
- Staff or freelance practitioners leading activities have access to participants emergency contacts, medical and access needs at all times.
- Staff involved in safeguarding incidents will attend a debrief with GMAC's Designated Safeguarding Officer and will have access to counselling when needed.

NEVER

- Be alone with a child/young person/adult at risk of harm in a closed/ private area
- Offer a lift to, or transport a child, young person or adult at risk of harm in your car– Only in emergency situations when all other options have been explored should this be considered, with approval from the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO detailed in section 8), parent/guardian and with the relevant vehicle insurance in place
- Have contact with a child/young person/adult at risk of harm outside of work
- Interact with children/young people/adults at risk of harm via social networking unless on behalf of GMAC as part of an agreed activity
- Act in a way that can be misinterpreted or behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children/young people/adults at risk of harm
- Accept personal gifts or money from a child/young person/adult at risk of harm
- Give personal gifts or money to a child/young person/adult at risk of harm
- Give your personal telephone numbers, email or social network details to a child/young person/adult at risk of harm
- Show favouritism in any way
- Minimise feelings, concerns or beliefs expressed by a child/young person/adult at risk of harm
- Allow, take part in, encourage or ignore abusive, discriminatory, offensive or violent behaviour
- Share changing and toilet facilities
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person/adult at risk of harm
- Enter an intimate relationship with a child/young person/adult at risk of harm
- Reduce a child/young person/adult at risk of harm to tears
- Fail to act upon and record concerns, disclosures or allegations made
- Invite or allow a child/young person/adult at risk of harm to visit your home
- Allow another person to bully or undermine others

DO:

- Treat all children, young people and adults at risk of harm with respect and dignity
- Listen to their wishes and feelings and create a safe and supportive environment
- Always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries
- Always take concerns, disclosures or allegations of abuse seriously
- Tell the person raising the concern or allegation that you have a duty to report it to the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Be proactive and ensure you adopt the guidance and procedures outlined in GMACs Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Only use equipment (e.g. Phone, iPad, laptop) provided by GMAC to communicate with children/young people/adults at risk of harm. Make sure that parents/guardians have given permission for direct contact

- Only use equipment (e.g. Phone, iPad, camera) provided by GMAC to take pictures or record footage containing children/young people/adults at riskof harm
- Ensure parents/guardians have completed the necessary participant detail forms and consent forms and store all personal data and images in line with GMACs GDPR policy
- Ensure there are UpToDate risk assessment for all activities - Visually and mentally risk assess the situation/environment on an ongoing basis

ALWAYS RECORD and REPORT

- Any disclosure made by a child/young person of a child protection nature
- Any concerns you may have regarding the welfare and safety of a child/young person/adult at risk of harms
- If you accidentally hurt someone
- If a child/young person/adult at risk of harm seems distressed in any manner
- If a child/young person/adult at risk misunderstands/misinterprets something you have done or said.
- Always complete a Safeguarding Report / Concern Form (Appendix A)
- Report all Safeguarding incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Officers listed in section 9

5/ Safeguarding children d/Deaf and disabled children and young people

GMAC's Safeguarding policy and procedures seek to protect and safeguard all children, young people and adults from harm but acknowledges the increased vulnerability of children and young people who are disabled or d/Deaf. This information is taken from the NSPCC guidance in June 2024 to outline the specific nature of the needs of children and young people with a disability or who are d/Deaf.

Please note, the same procedures and processes outlined in this policy apply to the reporting of disclosures & concerns to all children and young people. There is not a separate procedure for disabled or d/Deaf children and young people in relation to Safeguarding.

The NSPCC use the term *special educational needs* and *disabilities (SEND)* to refer to children who have disabilities or additional needs. Other terms may be used including:

- additional needs
- additional support for learning
- additional learning needs

Who do we mean by 'd/Deaf children and children who have disabilities?
Some children may not identify as being d/Deaf or having a disability, and some may use different language to describe themselves and their needs. You should always ask what terms they would prefer and use these when talking to them.

This information is aimed at professionals and volunteers working with children and young people with a range of very different conditions and identities. This includes children who:

- are d/Deaf
- have a learning disability
- have visual impairment
- have a long-term illness
- have a physical disability such as cerebral palsy
- are neurodiverse, such as being on the autistic spectrum or having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Adults who work with children and young people with SEND should be aware of the additional needs children may have that could mean they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to speak out if something isn't right. Some children may be vulnerable because they:

- have additional communication needs
- they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse
- need intimate care or are isolated from others
- are dependent on adults for care

Why are disabled children at greater risk of abuse? There are several factors that contribute to disabled children and young people being at a greater risk of abuse including:

- **Communication barriers:** Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (including those who are d/Deaf, or have a learning disability or physical disability) face extra barriers when it comes to sharing their worries and concerns.
- **Misunderstanding the signs of abuse:** It's not always easy to spot the signs of abuse. In some cases, adults may mistake the indicators of abuse for signs of a child's disability.
- **Increased isolation:** Disabled children may have less contact with other people than non-disabled children, because they have:
  - fewer out of school opportunities than their peers
  - fewer opportunities for spontaneous fun with friends
  - less access to transport
  - less provision for appropriate toilets and changing facilities
  - difficulty finding out about accessible events
- **Dependency on others:** Children with disabilities may have regular contact with a wide network of carers and other adults for practical assistance in daily living including personal intimate care. This can increase the opportunity for an abusive adult to be alone with a child.
- **Inadequate support:** It can be difficult for any child who has experienced abuse to get the support they need. Disabled children are less likely to tell someone about experiencing abuse and more likely to delay telling someone than their non-disabled peers (Hershkowitz, Lamb and Horowitz, 2007). Communication barriers may prevent adults fully understanding what the child is telling them.

Find more information relating to Safeguarding disabled children and young people here: Safeguarding disabled children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and with the NSPCC here: Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people | NSPCC Learning

6/ Recognising Abuse

It is your duty to make yourself familiar with the following definitions and procedures and to ensure that you know the actions to be taken in the event of a concern.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult at risk of harm by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Definitions of Child Abuse taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015:

Physical Abuse
A form of abuse which 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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 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 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. 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
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

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 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-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

Further areas are highlighted by the document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, NSPCC and other sources.

Bullying

Bullying is intentional behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.
It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'.

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone. A person can be bullied online and offline at the same time.
Find further information here: Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying | NSPCC

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. It happens when a child or young person is coerced, manipulated or deceived into sexual activity in exchange for things that they may need or want like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship so the sexual activity may appear consensual. This is called grooming and is a type of abuse. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused. CSE does not always involve physical contact and can also occur through the use of technology.
Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse or blackmail to control them.

Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender or race. The relationship could be framed or viewed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be made to 'find' or coerce others to join groups.

It's important to recognise that although the age of consent is 16 years old, children and young people over 16 can be exploited. Child sexual exploitation is a very complex form of abuse. It can be difficult for parents and carers to understand and hard for the young person to acknowledge that they are being exploited.

The NSPCC have further information and advice here: Child Sexual Exploitation & How to Keep Your Child Safe | NSPCC

County Lines – Criminal Exploitation and Gangs

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, 'County Lines' is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'.

They are likely to exploit children and adults at risk of harm to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. They might be victims of violence or pressured into stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put in dangerous situations.

See NSPCC guidance about what to do if a child is being groomed to join or has already joined a gang: Criminal exploitation and gangs | NSPCC

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Many children and young people are trafficked into the UK from other countries like Vietnam, Albania and Romania. Children and young people can be trafficked into or within the UK for sexual exploitation. They're moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person.

The NSPCC have further information and advice here: What You Need to Know About Child Trafficking | NSPCC

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or have been in a relationship. It can also happen between adults related to one another. It can seriously harm children and young people, and experiencing domestic abuse is child abuse.

It's important to remember that domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- people of all genders can be abused or abusers.

The NSPCC have further information and advice here: How to Protect Children From Domestic Abuse | NSPCC

Grooming

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.
Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked.
Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.
The NSPCC have further information and advice here: What Parents Need to Know About Sexual Grooming | NSPCC

On Line Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including:

- social media
- text messages and messaging apps
- emails
- online chats
- online gaming
- live-streaming sites.

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online.
The NSPCC have further information and advice here: Online abuse | NSPCC

Female Genital Mutilation

The Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation describes this as a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed and there is no medical reason for this. It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother; and/or death.
The age at which FGM is carried out varies enormously. It may be carried out shortly after birth, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy.
Female Genital Mutilation - Prevent & Protect | NSPCC

Modern Slavery

Modern slavery is an umbrella term that covers several different forms of exploitation which can include human trafficking, labour exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude. It can affect children and adults. Criminal exploitation is currently the most common type of exploitation reported for child potential victims. Labour exploitation is currently the most common for adult

potential victims. Protecting children from trafficking and modern slavery | NSPCC Learning

Radicalisation and Extremism:
The government has defined extremism as "vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs". This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces.
People may be drawn towards extremist ideologies because:

- They may be searching for answers to questions about identify, faith and belonging.
- They may be driven by the desire for 'adventure' and excitement.
- They may wish to raise their self-esteem and believe it will raise their status

If you are worried that someone you know is being radicalised, ask for advice as soon as possible:

- visit the ACT Early website

Radicalisation can happen:
Online – social media and messaging sites are useful tools but be aware that there are powerful programmes and networks that use these media to reach out to children/young people/ and can communicate extremist messages.

Peer to Peer – people at risk may display extrovert behaviour, start getting into trouble at school or on the streets and mixing with other people who behave badly but this is not always the case. Sometimes they are encouraged by the people they are in contact with not to draw attention to themselves. Some children/young people's behaviour may improve. They make become quieter, more serious about their studies, they may dress more modestly and mix with a group of people that seem better behaved than previous friends.
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/protecting-children-from-radicalisation/

GMAC's Commitment to Preventing Radicalisation and Violent Extremism
GMAC values the fundamental rights of freedom of speech, the individual right of expression of beliefs and ideology and the tolerance of others. These are the core values of our democratic society. We understand that all rights come with responsibilities and free speech or beliefs designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that advocate harm or hatred towards others will not be tolerated.

GMAC seeks to protect its visitors, participants and staff from all forms of violent extremism, ideologies and messages. These include those linked to, but not restricted, to the following: Far Right/Neo Nazi, White Supremacist ideology, extreme religious ideologies, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights groups.

GMAC views all exploitation and radicalisation as a safeguarding concern and will refer concerns to the appropriate safeguarding agencies via the Designated Safeguarding Officers (listed in section 8).

Definitions of Abuse relating to adults at risk of harm taken from Care Act 2014 include:

Physical abuse including: • assault • hitting • slapping • pushing • misuse of medication • restraint • inappropriate physical sanctions	**Domestic abuse and violence including:** • psychological • physical • sexual • financial • emotional abuse • so called 'honour' based violence
Sexual abuse including: • rape • sexual harassment • inappropriate looking or touching • sexual teasing or innuendo • sexual photography • subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts • indecent exposure • sexual assault • sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting	**Psychological abuse including:** • emotional abuse • threats of harm or abandonment • deprivation of contact • humiliation • blaming • controlling • intimidation • coercion • harassment • verbal abuse • bullying • cyber bullying • isolation • unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks
Financial or material abuse including: • theft • fraud • internet scamming • coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions • the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits	**Modern slavery encompasses:** • slavery • human trafficking • forced labour and domestic servitude. • traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment
Discriminatory abuse including forms of: Harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of: • race • gender and gender identity • age	**Institutional/ organisational abuse** Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one

• disability • sexual orientation • religion	off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
Neglect and acts of omission including: • ignoring medical needs emotional or physical care needs; • failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services; • the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.	**Self-neglect -**This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.

If you notice signs of abuse or you have concerns about anyone, it is your duty to refer these concerns confidentially to the Designated Safeguarding Officer's as detailed in section 8 of this policy.

7/ Responding to Allegations of Abuse

If you experience any of the below – always complete a detailed Safeguarding Report (Appendix A) and contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer's or other agencies listed in section 8.

Allegations Against Staff

Should a child, young person or adult at risk of harm accuse a member of staff or any other individual working with GMAC including senior managers, the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, freelance artists, sessional workers, agency staff, visiting companies and students of abuse or any other kind of threatening or harmful behaviour then it is imperative that you report this immediately to your named Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) (detailed in section 8) who will then take the next appropriate action.

Whistleblowing

Should you have concerns about a colleague or somebody associated with the activities of GMAC with regard to safeguarding of children, young people and/or adult at risk of harm then this should be reported as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Officers (listed in section 8). If these staff members are not available or if the concern is about these staff members then staff should contact the Manchester Contact Centre on 0161 234 5001. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is the person who should be notified if there are concerns that a member of staff has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, young person or adult at risk of harm or committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child.

Any employee or volunteer raising concerns should do so with confidence and the full knowledge that they will not be victimised, discriminated against, or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

Allegations Against Another Child, Young Person or Adult at Risk of Harm
In the event that a complaint is made against another child, young person or adult at risk of harm then you should report this to your named DSO (detailed in section 8) who will decide whether this is a child protection issue or constitutes bullying and will then decide the next action to be taken.

What is a Safeguarding Concern?
A Safeguarding concern is when a person has concerns about the welfare or safety of a child, young person or adult at risk of harm where there have been no specific disclosures or allegations of abuse made. You should never wait until a child, young person or adult at risk of harm tells you directly that they are experiencing abuse, if you have any concerns, you should report this immediately to the DSO.(detailed in section 8).

What is a Safeguarding Disclosure?
A disclosure is a circumstance in which a child, young person or adult at risk of harm may deliberately or inadvertently present information that indicates that themselves or another individual may be suffering from harm or may be in danger of suffering from harm or being radicalised. The individual who hears 'first disclosure' (and this may well be you) has a 'special status' in law and may be a key witness at trial. Staff need to be aware of this and the responsibility that comes with it. Report this immediately to the DSO(detailed in section 8).

What to Do If A Child, Young Person or Adult at Risk of Harm Makes An Allegation or A Safeguarding Disclosure

- Ensure that the child, young person or adult at risk of harm is given the **opportunity to talk to you in a safe and confidential environment.**
- Do **make sure that another member of staff is aware of where you are** and that you are in an area visible to others or whenever possible have another member of staff present.
- In the case of somebody inadvertently disclosing information that suggests that they are at risk of harm or are being harmed, or that somebody else may be at risk of harm or are being harmed then **it is important to ensure that the person disclosing is aware that this information will need to be passed on to the relevant authority or contact immediately.**
- **Listen to the child, young person or adult at risk of harm without interruption**. You can nod or make verbal affirmation that you have heard what the person disclosing is saying.
- As soon as possible after the allegation/disclosure has been made, **write down what was said in the words used by the child/young person/adult at risk of harm**. It is very important not to interpret what the person disclosing is saying. Note the date, time, and any names that were mentioned and who you have passed the information on to. Sign and date your record.

- Write down the facts as you know them using the Safeguarding Report /Concern Form (Appendix A)
- Make it clear that you can offer support BUT **don't promise to keep it secret and make it clear that you must pass the information on**. It is useful to do this as early in the conversation as possible so that the person disclosing is aware of the situation and does not feel that their trust has been broken.
- Accept at face value what you are told.
    - **If you feel the person is at risk of immediate harm and is not safe to leave you, ensure you stay with them until you have spoken to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.** If you cannot contact the DSO and feel the person is at immediate risk of harm, ring the police or Manchester City Council Contact Service (listed in section 8)
    - **Ensure you keep this information between yourself and the Designated Safeguarding Officer**. As the first person to hear an/allegation disclosure, your input could be required as part of an investigation and therefore it is important that this information is recorded & communicated appropriately.
    - If you feel upset or affected by the content of the allegation/disclosure, seek support from the DSO or Deputy DSO who can help and signpost you for support.

What Not to Do

- **You must NEVER speak to other people/members of staff about the issue/allegation/ disclosure/concern apart from the named Designated Safeguarding Officer's (DSO's)** (detailed in section 8). Speaking about the case to others is a breach of confidentiality and could also result in a case being dropped by court at a later date, therefore putting the child at risk. We recognise that an allegation/disclosure can be distressing for those receiving information. GMAC's Designated Safeguarding Officers will provide a follow up with anyone reporting a disclosure to ensure they have the support they need.
- **Do not look shocked by what you are told.**
- **Do not ask leading questions,** ensure that you go at the pace of the child, young person or adult at risk of harm, and ask them to rephrase for further clarification.
- **Do not pass judgement** on what is said but reassure the child, young person, or adult at risk of harm that they 'have done the right thing' by telling you.
- **Do not approach the suspected abuser yourself.**
- **Do not automatically inform the parents or carers** of concerns or disclosures without speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Officers or alternative contacts detailed in section 8.
- **You must not act on the allegation/disclosure/concern yourself** and should refer the information to the DSO (listed in section 8) and complete a detailed Safeguarding Report.
- **Staff Welfare following a disclosure by a child -** Responding to safeguarding concerns often involves listening to and handling difficult, stressful, or traumatic circumstances, as well as empathetically engaging with vulnerable children and

adults. It's normal for safeguarding professionals to experience feelings such as upset, shock, or anger, which may go on to impact general wellbeing over time. Staff at any time can contact their manager, HR or the Designated Safeguarding Officer for support. There will always be a de-brief meeting following a disclosure.

8/ Who to Contact in the Event of Safeguarding Allegations, Disclosures or Concerns - DSO and Other Agencies Contact Information

- You **MUST** refer all allegations, disclosures or concerns, in confidence, to GMAC Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer

- Complete the Safeguarding Report (Appendix A)
- All concerns and disclosures should be emailed to: safeguarding@homemcr.org
- Or contact the Designated Safeguarding Officers via telephone:
- **Designated Safeguarding Officer - Louise Harney - 07880575951**
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer – Emily Oldroyd - 07824438022**

- If the above named GMAC Designated Safeguarding Officers are not contactable you can call the **Manchester City Council Contact Service on 0161 234 5001-** open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- If your concern relates to a child under the age of 18 you can also ring the **NSPCC for advice on 0808 800 5000.**
- If your concern relates to an adult at risk of harm, you can ring the **Action on Elder Abuse helpline on 0800 0699 784**
- **If you believe a child, young person or adult at risk of harm is in immediate danger or in an emergency, call 999** and ask to speak to the Police.
- You must **NEVER** investigate yourself.

9/ Declaration to be signed by all GMAC Employees

On behalf of **GMAC**, I / we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed:
Name:
Date:

10/ Information on Completing the Safeguarding Report / Concern Form

- A Safeguarding Report/Concern Form should be completed as soon as possible following a Safeguarding allegation, concern or disclosure. (See Appendix A)
- Provide as much information as possible, including where, when, what was said and who was there.
- If sharing a disclosure made by a young person ensure you have been transparent and inform the young person that you will need to raise a Safeguarding concern.
- When completing the form make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- Detail any witnesses to the incident.
- Wherever possible Include the individual's account in their own words.
- All Safeguarding Reports will be kept confidentially, all files will be securely stored, password protected and only accessible to the relevant staff members and authorities.
- Information will only be shared on a need to know basis

Consent to share information:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 states " *It is not necessary to seek consent to share information for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of a child provided that there is a lawful basis to process any personal information required. The legal bases that may be appropriate for sharing data in these circumstances could be 'legal obligation', or 'public task' which includes the performance of a task in the public interest or the exercise of official authority.***"**

- In the case of an adult, you must always gain consent, unless capacity means acting in their best interest. You may choose to share without consent, but this must be on a lawful basis. You can find more information regarding the lawful basis for sharing information relating to Safeguarding here: Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) or gain support from the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership

Appendix A

SAFEGUARDING REPORT/ CONCERN SHEET

All safeguarding reports should be emailed to safeguarding@homemcr.org

Information on staff member completing this form	
Your name	
Your job title	
Your contact information	

Tick one of the below boxes to indicate what you are reporting:

☐ A disclosure
☐ A concern
☐ An allegation against someone involved with the organisation
☐ An allegation against another participant

Information on the child/ young person/ adult at risk of harm Complete with as much information as you have	
Their name	
Their date of birth	
Their age	
Name of parent/ guardian	
Home address	
Do they have any communication needs?	
Is English their preferred language – if not please detail their preferred language if known.	

Information on the disclosure/ concern/ allegation/ incident	
Today's date	
Time of disclosure/ concern/ incident	
Location of disclosure/ concern/ incident	
Names and job titles of other staff present at time of disclosure/ concern/ incident	

Detail on the disclosure/ concern/ allegation/ incident Provide details including times, dates, locations and names of individuals. Be clear about what you have witnessed or heard directly and what others have told you. Use the words of the child/ young person/ adult as much as possible.

Description of evidence of any injury observed on the child or adult.

Details on anyone who witnessed the incident.

Action Taken
☐ Reported verbally to HOME Designated Safeguarding Officer ☐ Called the Out of Hours MCC Contact Centre ☐ Called the police - emergency (999) ☐ Called the police – non-emergency (101) ☐ Other action (please give details in this box)
Detail on any responses given or steps taken as a result of the above actions.

Have you spoken to or consulted anyone else about this allegation, concern, or disclosure? Please provide names and details of what was discussed.

Has the child, young person or adult at risk of harm given consent for this information to be shared?
What does the person want to happen now?

Make sure you report this directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officers at HOME – Contact information can be found in section 8 of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All safeguarding reports should be emailed to safeguarding@homemcr.org

To be completed by GMAC's Designated Safeguarding Officer: **Detail any follow up actions and responses given by professional services – ensure appropriate information is shared with the HOME Trustees in the quarterly reports.**

Appendix B

Lost Child Procedure

- **If a child presents themselves as being lost**, or if a lost child is brought to your attention, take the child (preferably accompanied by another responsible adult) to the Box Office where the Customer Service Manager will be informed.
- The Customer Service Manager will try to ascertain the child's name and parent's/guardian's name.
- Ensure that the child is not left unaccompanied at the Box Office, they must be supported by at least 2 members of GMAC staff/volunteers. Staff may move the child to a discreet area.
- If the child has shared their parents name, the Customer Service Manager will make a Tannoy announcement calling the parent/guardian to the Box Office (do not state that their child has been found just request the parent/guardian attends the Box Office)
- Ensure at least two members of GMAC staff/volunteers remain with the child and make sure they are clearly briefed.
- If required the Customer Service Manager will request support of any available staff to do a sweep of the building to locate the parent/guardian.
- The Customer Service Manager will return to Box Office to meet the parent/guardian once located.
- If parent/guardian does not turn up the Customer Service Manager will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or other Senior Members of staff who will ensure the Police are informed.
- **If an adult reports a child lost** at GMAC, the Customer Service Manager must be immediately and discreetly informed. This can be via radio located at Box Office and in the main office.
- The Customer Service Manager/ Staff present will reassure the parent and discreetly ask for a description of the missing child**.**
- All available staff will be notified and actioned to split up and make a sweep of the building including external areas and check CCTV footage if appropriate.
- A member of staff will be asked to remain at the front doors to monitor people leaving the building.

- If required the Customer Service Manager will liaise with other First Street partners.
- Judgment on if/when to contact the Police is made on a case by case basis and in consultation with the Customer Service Manager, Designated Safeguarding Officer and Senior Members of staff.

Appendix C

Unaccompanied Child/Children Policy

GMAC welcomes children and young people as valued members of our audiences and visitors and we are committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone who visits HOME. Unaccompanied children aged 14 and above are welcome to attend GMAC theatres, cinemas and galleries.
We expect all visitors, including children, to display courtesy and respect for other people, and for GMACs property at all times. This includes not using threatening, discriminatory or insulting language or behaviour; not smoking or littering; and not entering areas marked or indicated as being for staff admittance only.

- GMAC cannot accept responsibility for unaccompanied children and reserves the right to refuse admission to the building.
- Children under the age of 14 must be supervised by an adult aged 18 or over at all times.
- GMAC reserves the right to ask to see ID
- Some theatre productions and films have specific age restrictions. Parents or guardians are advised to consult with GMAC staff for advice on age restrictions for productions prior to purchasing tickets for children. Film certificates must be adhered to as per GMACs licencing agreement.
- GMAC reserves the right to refuse admission if a ticket-bearing child is younger than the set minimum age restriction for the production, film, exhibition, event that they're seeking to attend.
- GMAC also reserves the right to request that accompanying adults remove infants or children from the auditorium, or from the galleries, if they are causing a significant disturbance.

Appendix D

CHILDREN IN ENTERTAINMENT GUIDANCE- Child Performance Licences, BOPA's, Chaperones and Restrictions for Child Performers

Child Performance Licences

The law in relation to children in entertainment and performance licences applies to all children from birth until they reach compulsory school leaving age. In England, this is the last Friday in June of the school year when the child reaches the age of 16 and finishes Year 11 at school. Application for Performance Licences

must be made to the **Local Authority** where the child lives, not where the performance is taking place.

Licences are needed for performances where:

- they are taking place at a licensed premises or at a registered club
- the performance is to be broadcast or recorded by whatever means with a view to its use in a future broadcast or film intended for public exhibition.
- the child requires time off school in order to perform

Find more information here: Child employment: Performance licences and supervision for children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)

BOPA – Body of Persons Approval

In some cases each individual child may not require a Performance Licence but for all public facing performances with children in, you must apply to your local authority for a Body of Persons Approval. The application must be submitted 21 days prior to the performance. A BOPA can be granted to an organisation for a single performance or for a series of performances within a specified time providing no payment is made to the child or to anyone else in respect of the child taking part in the performance and the child does not require absence from school. A BOPA is not transferable to another organisation or to individual children taking part in a performance arranged by someone else.
Find further guidance on BOPA's here: Licensing - Body of person approval (BOPA) | Manchester City Council

Chaperones

A child who performs must be supervised at all times, either by their parent/legal guardian, school teacher or an approved chaperone. Grandparents, uncles, child minders, etc are not legal guardians (unless they have been appointed as such by the courts). Parents may only supervise their own child(ren), to supervise other children they must be registered as a chaperone.

Chaperones should register with the local authority where they pay their council tax. The names and addresses of chaperones working on any production must be included in all its children's performance licenses. The maximum number of young people supervised per chaperone is 12.

Find more information here: Chaperones - NNCEE - National Network for Children in Employment & Entertainment and Licensing - Chaperone licence Manchester City Council

Restrictions for Child Performers:	**Age 0 to 4**	**Age 5 to 8**	**Age 9 and over**
Maximum number of hours at place of	5 hours	8 hours	9.5 hours

performance or rehearsal (Reg.22)			
Earliest and latest permitted times at place of performance or rehearsal (Reg.21)	7am to 10pm	7am to 11pm	7am to 11pm
Maximum period of continuous performance or rehearsal (Reg.22)	30 minutes	2.5 hours	2.5 hours
Maximum total hours of performance or rehearsal (Reg.22)	2 hours	3 hours	5 hours
Minimum intervals for meals and rest (Reg.23)	Any breaks must be for a minimum of 15 minutes. If at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours, breaks must include at least one 45 minute meal break.	Any breaks must be for a minimum of 15 minutes. If at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours, breaks must include at least one 45 minute meal break.	If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for more than 4 hours but less than 8 hours, they must have one meal break of 45 minutes and at least one break of 15 minutes If present at the place of performance or rehearsal for 8 hours or more, they must have the breaks stated above plus another break of 15 minutes.

Find further guidance on the Performance Regulations here: NNCEE - National Network for Children in Employment & Entertainment