



## First Light Festival C.I.C

### Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

#### 1. General

First Light Festival C.I.C. produces multi-art events, festivals and project work in Lowestoft, including activities intended for adult and family audiences. In addition, children may also perform at the festival and take part in festival-related workshops. Third party venues including libraries, theatres and community centres may be used for workshops and rehearsals. Our Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures have been designed to be responsive, responsible and practical and will be reviewed annually.

First Light Festival C.I.C recognises it has a duty and responsibility for making arrangements to ensure all its functions are discharged having regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/young people in our care. A child is anyone up until their 18th birthday.

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” is defined in Working Together 2015 as:

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

#### 2. Persons affected

- All freelancers, performers and volunteers [contracted by First Light Festival C.I.C.] – [“First Light Personnel”]
- All participants who interact with Events or Outreach [“Participants”]
- All visitors and representatives of third parties who provide services to First Light [“Visitors”]

### 3. Policy

First Light Festival C.I.C. is committed to the safeguarding of all children and young people involved in its work. The Children Act 1989 makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and that everyone involved in the care of children has a responsibility for the protection of those children from harm. It is also essential that First Light C.I.C. honours the trust placed in us to care for children and young people participating in and attending festival and project events.

It has:

- a) A Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead with DBS Certificate and recent safeguarding training who is responsible for ensuring this policy and procedures are up to date and adhered to across the organisation. The Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead will be contacted in the case of disclosure, or to discuss suspicions and doubts relating to any participants in connection with Child Protection issues;
- b) arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information procedures with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- c) safe recruitment practices for individuals whom First Light Festival C.I.C will permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a DBS check; All workshops for children must be run by practitioners with recognised legal status and current DBS certificates. While waiting for a DBS check to arrive the person will never be left alone with children unsupervised.
- d) clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:
  - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
  - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
  - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- e) More than one adult must be present during activities with children and young people and youth and school groups will be accompanied by a named worker from their organisation at all times. First Light Festival C.I.C will always ensure appropriate ratios of leadership to children and young people are observed according to age and gender and reflect the needs identified in the risk assessment for the activity and the group of children and young people involved.
- f) Consent forms including contact details, medical details and photography permissions for children and young people readily available attending any activity relating to First Light Festival C.I.C. These records are to be kept securely, in line with GDPR.
- g) A record of activities including details of any significant incidents.

First Light Festival C.I.C will ensure that festival staff, volunteers and practitioners understand core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals and First Light Festival C.I.C should do to keep children safe. Festival staff, volunteers and practitioners will be expected to sign an acknowledgement form to confirm that have read and understood this document. They will also be provided with appropriate training, briefings, supervision and support for to ensure they are familiar with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare. In doing so, First Light Festival C.I.C seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding systems are those where:

- a) The child's needs are paramount, and the needs and wishes of each child, be they a baby or infant, or an older child, should be put first, so that every child receives the support they need before a problem escalates;
- b) That all staff who come into contact with children and families are alert to their needs and any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- c) The requirement to share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues and local authority children's social care;
- d) The necessity to use their expert judgement to put the child's needs at the heart of the safeguarding system so that the right solution can be found for each individual child;
- e) The necessity to contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a child's welfare and take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans and outcomes;

Key principles will be communicated that;

- a) safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- b) a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

#### **4. Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of staff (paid and unpaid) are required to report any suspected abuse and be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding.

First Light Festival C.I. C's Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead is:  
Genevieve Christie, Director First Light Festival C.I.C.  
Mob: 07443 429876 Email: genevieve@flipsideuk.org

First Light Festival C.I. C's Deputy Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead is:  
Lizzie Hall, Project Manager,  
Mob: 07729474815 Email: lizzie@flipsideuk.org

They are responsible for:

- a) following up any suspected reports of abuse and for informing the Police or other appropriate external bodies.
- b) ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and adhered to
- c) communicating safeguarding policies and procedures to all staff and supporting them to recognise the needs of children, including identifying and responding to possible abuse.

The Co-Directors are responsible for supervision of these activities.

In the case of allegations made against First Light Festival C.I.C Staff (including volunteers) the Safeguarding Lead will work with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and must follow local Suffolk County Council/LSCB procedures.

In cases of actual or suspected abuse by a member of First Light Festival C.I.C staff the Safeguarding Lead in consultation with the LADO will ensure the Police and/or other statutory bodies like Social Services are informed as appropriate. The victim must be protected from further abuse while the Police/ external agencies conduct their own investigation.

If not already aware any allegation must be reported to the Safeguarding Lead unless the Safeguarding Lead is the alleged perpetrator, in that situation the report will be made to the First Light Festival C.I.C Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

Any information held either electronically or in hard copy will be held securely in a password protected document or sealed envelope in a secure, locked cabinet/drawer. Any electronic database used for recording and reporting abuse internally will protect the identity of the child and use an identifying code rather than the name so as to ensure confidentiality.

#### Responsibilities of the First Light Festival C.I.C Board of Directors

The First Light Festival C.I.C Board of Directors have primary responsibility for safeguarding in First Light Festival C.I.C while some responsibilities can be delegated overall responsibility lies with the Board.

To enable the Board not only to support the management and staff team in the organisation, including the Safeguarding Lead Officer, but also to provide an important mechanism for critically evaluating the information presented to the Board by the management team, and, where necessary, challenging and checking it out.

To ensure that First Light Festival C.I.C is taking steps to safeguard and take responsibility for the children with whom it works and is acting in their best interests, taking all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them, assessing and managing risk, ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are in place, undertaking ongoing monitoring and reviewing of policies and procedures including complaints and recruitment, to ensure that safeguards are being implemented and are effective, that First Light Festival C.I.C is responding appropriately to allegations of abuse.

### 5. Safeguarding Procedures (All staff)

Reporting of Safeguarding concerns:

- a) If you are worried about a child, talk to the **Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead** to discuss your concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- b) You can also seek advice from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Professional Consultation Line: 0345 6061499 The MASH consultation line is for you to discuss the most appropriate and effective way of providing or obtaining help and support for a child (or adult) you feel is at risk of abuse. This will include advice and guidance about making a referral where necessary, including how to involve parents.
- c) In Early Help cases no Multi Agency Referral Form should be sent to the MASH without prior discussion with the Practice Lead or Team manager of the relevant Early Help team. Where a child and family have an allocated Social Worker, you will need to contact the named Social Worker Directly to discuss any concerns.
- d) If you have an IMMEDIATE safeguarding concern you should contact customer first on: 03456 066 167 (24 hours) All referrals should be followed up by completion of a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) within 24 hours sent to Customer First via [customer.first@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:customer.first@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk)

- e) Please download the form and view guidance here <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/working-with-children/how-to-make-a-referral/>

## **6. Recognising child abuse**

The term 'child abuse' is used to describe various ways that a child can be harmed or mistreated. Child abuse is generally split into four categories-physical, neglect, sexual and emotional. There may also be other situations that give you concern for a child's safety and wellbeing, such as if a child sees, hears, experiences or is otherwise aware of domestic abuse – i.e. that domestic abuse is part of their experience of family life. This applies regardless of whether they actually witness any particular event or are physically harmed.

If you have a concern follow the reporting flowchart.

If you would like to discuss whether or not a referral is required, please call the Professional Consultation Line on 03456 061 499 to speak with a MASH social worker.

## **7. Allegations of abuse or malpractice against a member of staff including volunteers**

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children and young people including those who work in a voluntary capacity are dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

This procedure applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. It also includes allegations that might indicate that the alleged perpetrator is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. This may be due to concerns about the persons conduct in their personal or professional life that might indicate their unsuitability to work with children.

It must be used in respect of all allegations that are consistent with the guidance in Working Together i.e. cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has: behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

If the allegation is against a First Light Festival C.I.C member of staff or volunteer the allegation must be reported immediately, at least within one working day, to the First Light Festival C.I.C Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Lead then the allegation must be reported to the First Light Festival C.I.C Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

The First Light Festival C.I.C Safeguarding Lead/or Deputy must then report the allegation to the LADO on the same day, **Phone: 0300 123 2044 Email: [LADO@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@suffolk.gov.uk)**

## **8. PREVENT: Vulnerable to radicalisation (VTR) or influenced by Extremism**

Staff may notice a change in a child or young person behaviour that may suggest they are vulnerable to violent extremism. After having discussed concerns with appropriate colleagues, being mindful of confidentiality, where the staff member still has concerns that the individual may be vulnerable to violent extremism, a Vulnerable To Radicalisation (VTR) Referral form is available here <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/safeguarding-topics/preventradicalisation> is to be completed and

sent to the MASH [MASH@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:MASH@suffolk.pnn.police.uk) and relevant CYPS team if under 18. The MASH will notify Special Branch to carry out deconfliction checks and an initial assessment of the VTR prior to any further information gathering on the individual.

For urgent safeguarding concerns call Customer First 0808 800 4005

UNLIKE SAFEGUARDING STAFF MUST NOT DISCUSS CONCERNS WITH THE INDIVIDUAL PRIOR TO REFERRAL

## 9. Referrals forms

Referral to children's social care services should be made using the Multi Agency Referral Form <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/working-with-children/how-to-make-a-referral/>  
<http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/assets/Working-with-Children/How-to-Make-a-Referral/2016-11-01-Managing-Allegations-of-Abuse-version-7.pdf>

Vulnerable to Radicalisation (VTR) referral form <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/safeguarding-topics/preventradicalisation/>

### [VTR Referral Flow Chart](#)

All professionals making telephone referrals to Suffolk's children's social services (including via Customer First) MUST confirm this in writing **within 24 hours**. If you are worried about the immediate safety of a child/young person and cannot contact a Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead call the police on 999. You can also contact the local authority.

Your report must be accurate and where possible use the child's exact words if they disclosed the information to you, not your own.

The report must be signed and dated, including the year. Ensure the form is emailed safely following the directions on the form and ensure a copy is sent to First Light Festival C.I.C's Safeguarding Lead in the same manner marked "Confidential SG".

## 10. Flowchart for referral for actual or suspected abuse

**RECORD, SIGN AND DATE AT EVERY STAGE AS A RECORD OF PROCEDURE FOLLOWED**

### Step 1) Concerns

Suspicion and or allegation of abuse raised by: child disclosure, observation, report by another person, anonymous communication

A Good Practice: How to react when a child / young person wants to talk about abuse

- Keep calm
- Look at the child/young person directly
- Reassure them they are not to blame for the abuse, that they were right to tell you and that you take them seriously (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Be aware that the child/young person may have been threatened
- Never push for information
- Ask questions for clarification only; avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Let the young person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what might happen Immediately report the matter, as per procedures
- Be honest. Let them know you will need to tell someone else – don't promise confidentiality

Helpful things to say or show

- Show acceptance of what the child/young person says - "I am glad you have told me" / "It's not your fault" / "I will help you"
- Avoid saying - "Why didn't you tell anyone before?" / "I can't believe it" / "Are you sure this is true?"
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked!", or "don't tell anyone else"

## **Step 2) Consult**

Speak with the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy in their absence

IMPORTANT: It is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has happened. It IS your responsibility to report it to the Safeguarding Lead, or appropriate authority

## **Step 3) Action**

DO NOT INVESTIGATE

The Safeguarding Lead would normally make the referral. You would only do so if a delay in contacting the Safeguarding Lead would put a child or vulnerable adult at risk. Parents and carers should be advised that you are doing this unless this might put the child at risk or cause any delay in referring. You must notify the Safeguarding Lead asap of any referral you make.

Contact: Customer First 0808 800 4005 or Police 999 if immediate danger

If the allegation is against a First Light Festival C.I.C member of staff or volunteer the allegation must also be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 123 2044 email: [ladocentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ladocentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk)

## **Step 4) Confirm**

DO NOT INVESTIGATE

Referrals must be followed in writing using a Multi-Agency Referral Form within 24 hours. Send copy of notes/referral to Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours.

## **Step 5) Further commitment**

You may be required to provide other information, as required. Remember all notes are disclosable should a formal or criminal investigation occur. Make sure your notes are dated, professional, separate opinion from fact, use the same words used in the disclosure

### **11. Information sharing procedures relating to safeguarding children**

To be read in conjunction with the First Light Festival C.I.C Information Sharing policy and procedure

Through the safe and effective sharing of information it aims to ensure that vulnerable adults and or children get the support they require from external services and that the people it works with are protected from harm, abuse or neglect. It also seeks to prevent them from offending.

In many reviews into deaths of children and or vulnerable adults the lack of information sharing between agencies and organisations is often highlighted as a contributory, if not causal, factor in the

death. It is imperative that First Light Festival C.I.C staff understand the requirement to share safeguarding information in order to protect vulnerable children from harm.

Confidentiality and information sharing must be integrated across all aspects of First Light Festival C.I.C services and management as its users have the right to privacy and confidentiality and to understand when “secrets” cannot be protected for their best interests.

#### Information Sharing Definitions

Confidentiality: Not all information is confidential. Confidential information is information of some sensitivity, which is not already lawfully in the public domain or readily available from another public source, and which has been shared in a relationship where the person giving the information understood that it would not be shared with others.

First Light Festival C.I.C understands confidentiality to mean that no information regarding a service user shall be given directly or indirectly to any third party which is external to the Staff, without that service user’s prior expressed consent to disclose such information.

Breach of confidentiality: Confidence is only breached where the sharing of confidential information is not authorised by the person who provided it or to whom it relates. If the information was provided on the understanding that it would be shared with a limited range of people or for limited purposes, then sharing in accordance with that understanding will not be a breach of confidence. Similarly, there will not be a breach of confidence where there is explicit consent to the sharing.

Even where sharing of confidential information is not authorised, First Light Festival C.I.C may lawfully share it if this can be justified in the public interest.

Seeking consent should be the first option, if appropriate. Where consent cannot be obtained to the sharing of the information or is refused, or where seeking it is likely to undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a crime, the question of whether there is a sufficient public interest must be judged by the Manager with the Co-Director on the facts of each case.

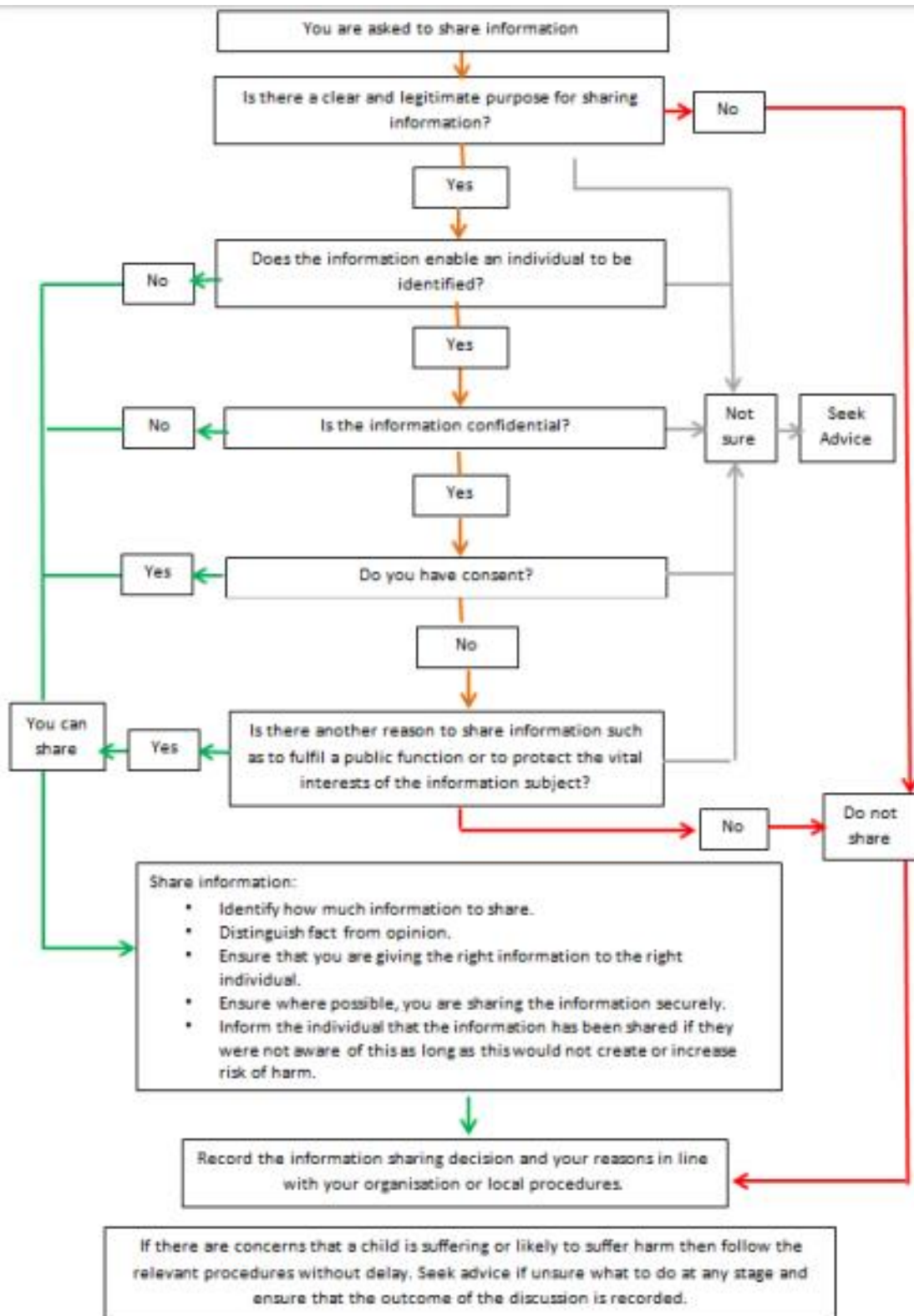
Therefore, where you have a concern about a child or young person, you should not regard refusal of consent as necessarily precluding the sharing of confidential information

Public interest: A public interest can arise in a wide range of circumstances, for example, to protect children or other people from harm, to promote the welfare of children or to prevent crime and disorder. There are also public interests, which in some circumstances may weigh against sharing, including the public interest in maintaining public confidence in the confidentiality of certain services. The key factor in deciding whether or not to share confidential information is proportionality, i.e. whether the proposed sharing is a proportionate response to the need to protect the public interest in question.

Serious crime: This means any crime which causes or is likely to cause significant harm to a child or young person or serious harm to an adult.



## 12. Information sharing flowchart



### **13. Detailed procedures for First Light Festival C.I.C safeguarding officers or staff reporting in their absence**

#### **Allegations Management: Allegations of abuse or malpractice against a member of staff (including volunteers).**

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children and young people including those who work in a voluntary capacity are dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. The framework for managing allegations is set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2006, and Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007.

The framework for managing cases set out in this procedure applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

It also caters for cases of allegations that might indicate that the alleged perpetrator is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. This may be due to concerns about the persons conduct in their personal or professional life that might indicate their unsuitability to work with children. It should be used in respect of all allegations that are consistent with the guidance in Working Together i.e. cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or behaved in a way that indicates she/he/they is unsuitable to work with children. In compliance with the Local Safeguarding Board's Allegations Management guidance, the following procedures will be followed

#### Reporting procedure for Allegations

If the allegation is against a First Light Festival C.I.C member of staff the allegation must be reported immediately, at least within one working day, to the First Light Festival C.I.C Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation is against the Safeguarding Lead then the allegation must be reported to the First Light Festival C.I.C Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

The First Light Festival C.I.C Safeguarding Lead/or Deputy must then report the allegation to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) on the same day. Contact details for LADO's 0300 123 2044 Email: ladocentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk

Please see <https://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/assets/Working-with-Children/How-toMake-a-Referral/2016-11-01-Managing-Allegations-of-Abuse-v7.pdf> guidance from the Suffolk Safeguarding Board regarding Managing allegations for full details.

Initial consideration The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will discuss the matter with the First Light Festival C.I.C Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead and, where necessary, obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child or young person is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the LA Designated Officer should immediately inform

the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion should also involve the employer.

### **Action following initial consideration**

Where the initial evaluation decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence, it is dealt with by the First Light Festival C.I.C Safeguarding Lead. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be instituted within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

Where further investigation is required to inform consideration of disciplinary action, the First Light Festival C.I.C Safeguarding Lead will undertake that investigation with the LA Designated Officer. In some settings and circumstances, it may be appropriate for the disciplinary investigation to be conducted by a person who is independent of First Light Festival C.I.C or the person's line manager to ensure objectivity. In any case, the investigating officer should aim to provide a report to the employer within 10 working days.

On receipt of the report of the disciplinary investigation, the Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead or Board of Directors should decide whether a disciplinary hearing is needed within two working days, and if a hearing is needed it should be held within 15 working days

### **Suspension**

The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person needs to be managed and evaluated. The evaluation will be in respect of the child/ren involved in the allegation and any other children in the individual's home, work or community life. In some cases, it will require consideration to be given to the use of suspension for the person involved in the allegation. This may be until the matter is resolved.

A First Light Festival C.I.C member of staff must not be automatically suspended without careful thought and consideration of the circumstances of the allegation. In making the decision, the Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead must consider whether the person should be suspended from contact with children for the duration of the investigation, or until resolution has been reached. In any case, alternatives to suspension should be explored and advice sought from the LA Designated Officer.

If the allegation has been referred and a strategy meeting is to be convened, it will be a task of the strategy meeting to consider the facts of the allegation, and although a senior manager of First Light Festival C.I.C cannot be directed to suspend, they will be supported in making the decision. This should be done after the views of the designated senior named officer from the police and Area Safeguarding Manager have been canvassed.

If the allegation is reported to a First Light Festival C.I.C staff member against a member of staff (including a volunteer) of another organisation or agency then the member of First Light Festival C.I.C staff should consult with the First Light Festival C.I.C Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Lead and agree who should contact the LADO. However, if any delay in this procedure is likely to put a young person at risk of significant harm then the First Light Festival C.I.C member of staff should contact the LADO directly.

### **Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Procedure**

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a tool that any professional working with children, young people and their families can use to help them identify unmet additional needs. It is intended to be used to support the development of relationships with families and early intervention when it is needed.

CAF is used when we alone are unable to meet all the identified needs and it is necessary to refer a child with whom we are working to another agency for support. In some cases, it may be difficult to establish exactly what the needs are, or how those needs will be met.

Consent from family/young person is required, CAF can only be used when the child or young person and family are happy to work alongside professionals to meet the child's needs.

Read LSCB CAF reporting guidance <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-andlearning/common-assessment-framework-caf/common-assessment-framework-cafinformation-for-professionals/>.

### Children in Need (CIN) procedures

These procedures set out the requirements for agencies in Suffolk to work together to work to achieve good outcomes with children who are 'in need' under the Children Act 1989 and their families. It (has been) agreed by the Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board and is mandatory for all agencies.

In accordance with the Suffolk LSCB's Interagency policy and procedure for children in need under the Children Act 1989 First Light Festival C.I.C is cognisant that it must:

- build and maintain effective partnerships at a strategic and local level to support good outcomes for children in need.
- promote child centred practice where the focus is on the child's safety and welfare
- designate a senior person within each agency to take the lead role for children in need
- give sufficient priority and resources are given to work with children in need to promote good outcomes
- ensure that staff have appropriate knowledge and skills to work effectively with children in need
- ensure they have quality assurance processes in place and participate in multi-agency audits of practice with children in need

In this procedure:

- 'Child' means those 0 -18 years (19 years if disabled) and includes unborn babies.
- 'Parent or carer' includes birth parents, whether or not they live with the child, adoptive and step parents, partners of parents and those with a significant caring role for the child
- CIN means child in need under Children Act 1989 (Section 17)

Who are children 'in need' under this policy?

- Children with multiple and complex needs who, unless services are provided may be at risk of significant harm and poor outcomes. (Defined in Children Act 1989 Section 17)
- Children in need have needs at Level 3 as defined in Meeting the needs of children and families in Suffolk 2010 <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-andlearning/keeping-children-safe/meeting-the-needs>

Principles for work with children in need

- 1) The safety and welfare of the child is central at all times.
- 2) All work with children in need is focussed on achieving the best possible outcomes.
- 3) Help will be given to children in need and their families as early as possible to prevent difficulties escalating.
- 4) Establishing rapport and a constructive working relationship with the child (as appropriate to age and understanding) and their parents and carers will be a cornerstone of the work.
- 5) All relevant agencies have a responsibility to work together to achieve good outcomes for children in need, led by children's social care
- 6) Parents and carers are, as consistent with the child's safety and welfare, supported to parent effectively and the ACCORD Protocol <https://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/assets/Working-with-Children/PoliciesGuidance-and-Protocols/ACCORD/2016-02-03-The-ACCORD-ProtocolPrinciples-and-Guidance-v5.pdf> is used to facilitate support for parents who have a disability or additional support need. (Quick Guide)

#### Domestic Incidents/Abuse procedure

(Refer to Domestic Abuse policy on LSCB website for further guidance <https://www.suffolkscb.org.uk/safeguarding-topics/domestic-abuse> )

A referral must be made direct to Children's Social Care if it seems reasonable to suspect that:

- a) a child sees, hears, experiences or is otherwise aware of domestic abuse – i.e. that domestic abuse is part of their experience of family life. This applies regardless of whether they actually witness any particular event or are physically harmed, and
- b) the non-abusing parent will not be able – for whatever reason – to ensure the safety and wellbeing of their child without significant professional assistance and support.

Referrals should be made with the agreement of a parent unless the child's best interests are not served by seeking or obtaining consent. Non-consent should not be a barrier to referral if there is on the face of it reasonable cause to suspect that the child may suffer significant harm of otherwise not have significant needs met.

A disclosure or allegation by a victim is not a pre-requisite for referral of concerns regarding a child. Concern about the effects of domestic abuse on a child may be triggered in other ways – for example, by hidden or inadequately explained injuries to a parent or carer, or damage to the home or personal property, or by the behaviour of parents, or concerns expressed by the child, or concerns about the child's wellbeing.

The Government defines domestic abuse as;

*“Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality”*

The legal definition of “significant harm” to children was extended in January 2005 to include harm suffered from seeing or knowing of the abuse of another, particularly in the home. This was reinforced by the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

*Child protection referrals where the primary concern relates to a domestic abuse incident may include:*

Verbal Altercation

- Children not present but usually part of the household
- Children in house but not witness to the incident
- Children present
- Children present and victim of abusive behaviour

Damage to Property

- Children not present but usually in the household
- Children present but not witness to the incident
- Children present

Physical Assault

- Children not present but usually part of the household
- Children in house but not witness to the incident
- Children present and witness the incident
- Children present and a victim of assault

Sexual Assault

- Children not present but usually part of the household
- Children in house but not witness to the incident
- Children present and witness to the incident
- Children present and a victim of sexual abuse

**14. Useful Phone Numbers:**

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Professional Helpline: 03456 061 499

LADO Phone: 0300 123 2044 Email: LADO@suffolk.gov.uk

Customer First (Professional Referral Line): 03456 066 167

Customer First: 0808 800 4005

Police (emergency): 999

Suffolk Police Cybercrime Unit: 101

Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children Board [www.suffolkscb.org.uk](http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk)

**Policy Review Table**

The Board will review this policy annually, or as and when there is a change in legislation.

Date	Approved by (print name)	Approved by (signature)	Role in organization
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2018	Clare Matterson		Director
1 December 2019	Genevieve Christie		Director
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2020			
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2021			

A signed and printed copy of this policy is kept on file at our registered office.