**CURIOUS SEED**

**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

Curious Seed recognises the value of encouraging and empowering children and young people to enjoy and take part in our work. We work with and engage children and young people in our projects and productions as creative collaborators, participants, and audience. The welfare and safety of children and young people should be a matter of concern for us all and Curious Seed is responsible for ensuring that this responsibility is shared by all paid staff, freelancers, volunteers, and Trustees. We have a shared duty to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and protect children and young people from all forms of harm, abuse and exploitation.

This requires that all paid staff, freelancers, volunteers, and Trustees follow the guidance outlined in this Policy.

**The purpose of this Policy is:**

* To ensure safety and well-being for all children and young people who watch or participate in our work.
* To provide staff, freelancers, and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing or be at risk of harm.
* For the purpose of this Policy anyone aged under 18 years should be considered a child.

**The key legislative framework for this Policy includes:**

• United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

• Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014)

• Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act (2007)

• General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2018)

• Data Protection Act (2018)

• Human Rights Act (1998)

• Equality Act (2010)

The Designated Child Protection Lead (DCPL) for Curious Seed is Artistic Director, Christine Devaney. If you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, please contact the DCPL at christine@curious-seed.co.uk or on 07957 922143.

The DCPL is supported by Nicholas Barton-Wines and Isabel Moura Mendes, Curious Seed Trustees.

If the DCPL is unavailable, or if an allegation is against the DCPL, please contact:

* Nicholas Barton-Wines at nickbartonw@hotmail.co.uk or on 07584 242320
* Isabel Moura Mendes at isabel.moura.mendes@gmail.com or on 07958 040476

Overall responsibility for the implementation of Curious Seed’s Child Protection Policy and Procedures rests with the Board of Trustees and with the Designated Child Protection Lead, Christine Devaney.

It is agreed that this policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

**CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF PRACTICE**

Everyone who comes into contact with children and young people in their work with Curious Seed has a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. Everyone should follow best practice guidelines when working alongside children and young people. Below is a general guide to the code of conduct expected of all Curious Seed paid staff members, freelancers, volunteers, and Trustees:

**YOU SHOULD:**

* Contribute to a safe working and learning environments for all
* Treat everyone fairly, with respect, dignity and as an individual
* Put the welfare of children and young people first, before achieving goals
* Engage with children and young people in a meaningful way, valuing their contribution and encouraging them to be involved in making choices which affect them
* Ensure that language used is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory
* Be aware of any additional vulnerabilities that some children and young people may face
* Be aware that someone might misinterpret their actions
* Respect children and young people’s rights to privacy
* Ensure that activities are run as safely as possible with risks minimised
* Ensure there is more than one adult present during activities [Curious Seed will structure activities involving children, young people to ensure that more than one adult is present or at least within sight and hearing of others]
* Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children, young people [Curious Seed will structure activity to ensure that if any form of physical contact is necessary, it should be provided openly, and children and young people should always be consulted, and their agreement gained]
* Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report any concerns or allegations
* Respect personal space at all times

**YOU SHOULD NOT:**

* Ignore, exaggerate, or trivialise any concerns
* Promise confidentiality to a child or young person
* Develop relationships with children, young people, or their families outside of work
* Make sarcastic, offensive, or sexually suggestive remarks or gestures directly to, or in

front of, children and young people

* Be drawn into any derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children. You should lead by example and wherever possible comply with the rules that govern the organisation you are in (e.g., school).
* Act in a way that could be perceived as threatening or intrusive
* Allow bullying to take place without challenge
* Allow children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged
* Take unnecessary risks when assessment or policy suggest a different approach
* Share toilets with children or young people – where toilet facilities are shared by children/young people and adults [Curious Seed will agree a system with supervising staff, freelancers, or volunteers to ensure that adults do not inadvertently find themselves in the toilets alone with children and young people].
* Share or enter dressing rooms with / where children and young people getting changed
* Travel with a child or young person [Curious Seed will ensure that only in exceptional circumstances and with parental consent should a young person be given a lift home by a member of staff, freelancers, volunteer or Board Member – except when accompanied by an authorised chaperone].
* Socialise with young people. It is not appropriate to initiate or accept social invitations, including online invitations such as Facebook friends.
* Be alone with a child or young person

**ALWAYS REPORT/RECORD:**

* If you accidentally hurt someone
* If a child or young person seems distressed in any manner
* If a child or young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
* If a child or young person misunderstands/misinterprets something you have done
* If you have concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person

**MANAGING CONCERNS AND DISCLOSURES**

**Contact Details for the Child Protection Officers**

The Designated Child Protection Lead (DCPL) for Curious Seed is Artistic Director, Christine Devaney. If you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, please contact the DCPL at christine@curious-seed.co.uk or on 07957 922143.

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If the DCPL is unavailable, or if an allegation is against the DCPL, please contact:

Nicholas Barton-Wines at nickbartonw@hotmail.co.uk or on 07584 242320

Isabel Moura Mendes at isabel.moura.mendes@gmail.com or on 07958 040476. In an emergency situation contact social services (Edinburgh) on 0131 200 2324 / 0800 731 6969 or the police.

The Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPL) monitors child protection issues for the organisation and ensures that they are aware of the person at any partner organisation or venue with designated protection responsibility and may liaise with them about any concerns if appropriate.

The following procedures must be completed if you have any concerns relating to the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person or if a young person makes any disclosures relating to potential situations of abuse or neglect.

**DEALING WITH CONCERNS OF ABUSE**

The following actions should be taken if you suspect a child or young person may be suffering abuse in some way:

* Do not attempt to investigate the concern.
* If you have a concern, you must immediately report this to the Designated Child Protection Lead who will contact the relevant authorities.
* As soon as possible after becoming aware of the concern, you should take notes

about what has happened.

* Pass on your handwritten record to the Designated Child Protection Lead.
* Do not discuss the incident with anyone else.
* Ask for support for yourself if you feel you need it.

**DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES**

The following actions should be taken if a child or young person confides a Child Protection concern to you:

* Listen attentively to what the child or young person is saying
* Do not promise confidentiality. The child or young person must understand that you

will have to pass on information and why that is important.

* Ask open non-leading questions which help to clarify what the child or young person

is saying but not lead into an investigative situation. Intrusive questioning could

contaminate a subsequent child protection investigation.

* Reassure the child or young person that they have been courageous in speaking to

you about this.

* Do not make judgments about what is disclosed or about the alleged abuser.
* Explain the next step, the child or young person should know that they will be kept

informed and supported as appropriate.

* Write down exactly what was said using the form attached to this document.
* Treat the allegation seriously and report it immediately to the DCPL.
* Ask for support for yourself if you feel you need it.

**PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMING & RECORDING POLICY**

Curious Seed works with children and families as part of its activities, including participatory activities, as audience members and as creative contributors to our work. As part of our work, we occasionally take photographs, film, and record of the voices of children and young people we work with.

In conjunction with our Data Protection Policy, the purpose of our photography, filming and recording policy is:

* to protect children and young people who take part in Curious Seed’s projects and events, specifically those where photographs, videos or recordings may be taken
* to ensure that we operate within the law when creating, using and sharing images and/or recordings of children and young people

This policy statement applies to of all Curious Seed paid staff members, freelancers, volunteers, and Trustees.

We recognise that:

* sharing photographs, films and/or recordings of our activities can help us share and celebrate the creative contributions of the children and young people involved, to provide a record of our activities, and to raise awareness of Curious Seed and our work
* the welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount.
* children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images and/or recordings are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
* consent to take images and/or recordings of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images and/or recordings will be used and stored
* there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

* always asking for written consent, using a form, from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child’s image or voice recording.
* always explaining what images and/or recordings will be used for, how they will be stored, for how long and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
* making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image and/or recordings to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published.
* never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (e.g. school uniform with a logo) if the child is participating in a project as an individual (i.e. out with school or other authorised partner organisation).

**RECRUITMENT & PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS (PVG) SCHEME**

Curious Seed is committed to the development of best practice in relation to the recruitment of staff, freelancers and volunteers and Trustees. The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 aims to improve safeguards for children and vulnerable people by preventing unsuitable persons from working with them. Curious Seed is a Disclosure Scotland Registered Body, entitled to submit PVG and Disclosure applications and/or updates for anyone seeking to work with the company on any projects which involve working with children and young people.

**Core staff are required to:**

* complete the NSPCC Introduction to Child Protection in Scotland training module
* join/update their membership of the PVG Scheme if they meet the Scottish Government’s definition of ‘regulated work’. This includes, but it not limited to, those who work directly with or have 1-2-1 work-related contact with children or young people.

**Freelancers and volunteers are required to:**

* sign a declaration which confirms their adherence to the Child Protection Policy guidelines as part of their contractual responsibilities when working with the company on any projects which involve working with children and young people.
* join/update their membership of the PVG Scheme if they meet the Scottish Government’s definition of ‘regulated work’. This includes, but it not limited to, those who work directly with or have 1-2-1 work-related contact with children or young people.
* Curious Seed may request freelancers and volunteers complete Child Protection training if their role involves ‘regulated work’ or if they require further information about recognising signs of abuse, responding and reporting.
* Curious Seed will cover the costs of processing any PVG Scheme applications and/or training, deemed as required, as part of their role.

**MANAGING, SHARING & STORING DISCLOSURE INFORMATION**

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, we will only collect, store and use personal data if one of the six lawful bases for data processing applies (see our Data Protection Policy for full details).

Curious Seed is committed to ensuring best practice in terms of Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme and Disclosure Scotland checks and will ensure the following practice:

* Disclosures will be requested when necessary and would be relevant to a particular post and the information provided on a Disclosure certificate will only be used to assess an individual’s appropriateness to a particular role.
* an individual’s consent is obtained before seeking and using Disclosure information.
* Disclosure information will only be shared with Curious Seed personnel who are authorised to see it in the course of their duties.
* Where additional disclosure information is provided to Curious Seed this will only be discussed with the applicant should the Disclosure information have an impact on the outcome of the recruitment process.
* Disclosure information will be stored securely for a maximum of six months and will be accessible only to Curious Seed authorised personnel. Thereafter, information will be shredded and disposed of through confidential waste.
* No image or photocopy of the Disclosure information will be made however, the following details will be retained:
* Name of subject
* Date of Disclosure
* Disclosure type
* Position for which disclosure was requested
* Reference number of Disclosure
* Recruitment decision taken

**APPENDIX 1**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Remember if the DCPL is unavailable to offer support when a concern is raised staff, freelancers or volunteers are duty bound to act on concerns which may mean contacting Social Work or Police themselves.** Keeping children and young people safe is our first priority.

**Contact Details for the Child Protection Officers**

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**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS**

**Police Scotland**

In an emergency, call 999. If not urgent, call 101.

**Social Care Direct, City of Edinburgh Council**

Call 0131 200 2324 or email socialcaredirect@edinburgh.gov.uk

Open 8.30am – 5pm Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30am – 3.55pm on Fridays.

Out of hours emergency service call 0800 731 6969 or 0131 553 8286.

**NHS 24**

If you are concerned about someone who is ill, call 111.

**The National Child Protection Helpline**

If you are worried about a child, call 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

**Childline**

A free, private and confidential service where children and young people can talk about

anything. Call 0800 1111 or visit childline.org.uk

**APPENDIX 2**

**REPORTING A CONCERN OR DISCLOSURE FORM**

**This form should be completed by the staff member who has witnessed an incident or has had information of concern disclosed to them by a child or young person. Please contact the DCPL if you are unclear about any section of this form.**

**General Information**

Name of Staff Member Reporting: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Name of Child / Young Person: ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Address & Telephone Number: …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

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Date of Birth / Age: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Additional Information (e.g. additional support needs, health conditions): …………………………………………………

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Date of Incident: …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Time of Incident: …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Location of Incident: ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

**Details**

What is the nature of your concern? (e.g., disclosure by child / young person, concerns identified etc.)

Is there an ongoing concern about the child / young person’s safety / wellbeing?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

Was the child / young person considered to be in immediate danger?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

Was the DCPL contacted?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

If yes, please specify who: …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Were the police contacted?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

Were Social Work Services contacted?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

**Please use this space below to describe incident in detail:**

* Note as much detail as possible about the incident
* Record factual information
* Do not make any assumptions about the situation
* Where possible use the words of the child / young person

Reporting Staff Signature: ………………………………………………………………………………… Date: ……………………………………………

Print Name: ……………………………………………………………………………………………………...

Signature Child Protection Officer: …………………………………………………………………… Date: ……………………………………………..

Print Name: ……………………………………………………………………………………………………….