

# CREATION FEST

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## **Safeguarding Policy 2017**

*Short Version*

**To be read and understood by all applicants**

### **Safeguarding the Welfare of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

Creation Fest Ltd exists in order to share the good news of the God who has created us and loves us, of His Son, Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us, and of the Spirit who guides us. Our desire is that Christians would know and love Jesus more as they stand on the authority of Scripture, and that churches would come together in greater unity.

The Festival has a growing children's and young people's ministry. Creation Fest Ltd takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults entrusted to its care.

The highest standards of behaviour towards children, young people and vulnerable adults will be maintained in all circumstances. All workers may have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults and therefore all volunteers will be asked whether they have been subject to criminal or civil proceedings.

Clear recruitment procedures, training and supervision are essential for achieving a high quality service to children, young people and vulnerable adults participating in Creation Fest activities. It is the duty of all people working with children, young people and vulnerable adults to prevent abuse and unsafe situations from occurring. All volunteers are also required to report any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected, in line with these procedures.

Creation Fest will collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary authorities concerned with investigating abuse. It is important to note that it is the responsibility of the Social Services or the Police (not Creation Fest) to investigate the truth of any allegation of abuse.

### **Good Practice Guidelines:**

Please be aware that your words and actions may be open to misinterpretation, and therefore you should take great care to avoid situations in which your actions could be misunderstood.

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- You should never pray with a child, young person under 16, or vulnerable adult in an unsupervised situation.
- You should never be alone with a child or young person under 16 or vulnerable adult outside an organized activity.
- You will be responsible for ensuring that abusive peer activities (such as bullying etc) do not occur.
- It is essential that any child abuse issues are not trivialized or exaggerated and that the proper steps are followed.
- All steps must be taken to ensure that the site is safe for children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Any concerns that you may have should be reported to your Team Leader immediately.

## **Creation Fest guidelines to recognizing signs of abuse:**

The following signs of abuse are guidelines to help workers who may have a concern that a child or young person or vulnerable adult is suffering from abuse.

**Abuse falls into four broad categories:** (some young people may suffer from more than one)

### **Physical Abuse:**

Any injury that does not fit with the explanation given or within what is considered normal for a person of that age should be treated suspiciously. Not seeking medical attention for an obvious injury may be a cause for concern.

### **Neglect:**

The lack of adequate food, lack of appropriate clothing, lack of supervision, lack of protection and/or being left alone.

### **Emotional Abuse:**

Lack of confidence and self-esteem, being withdrawn and anxious; being demanding and attention seeking; poor communication skills.

### **Sexual Abuse:**

Sexual knowledge inappropriate for the age of the child or young person; sexualized behaviour, play or drawings.

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If signs of abuse are recognized it must be immediately reported to the Safeguarding Officer and documented as a concern. The Safeguarding Officers will then discuss and agree a decision and document the reasons clearly on the form, taking action accordingly. If uncertain, advice will be immediately sought from the relevant agencies (CCPAS , Social Services or Police).

## **If a child or young person or vulnerable adult begins to tell you about abuse it is vital that you do the following:**

- Do NOT promise not to tell anyone or say you will keep it a secret
- Listen carefully but do not ask questions (a trained professional will do this)
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing by disclosing the abuse.
- Let the child or young person or vulnerable adult know that you will need to let someone else know about what they have said.
- Immediately report the child, young person or vulnerable adult's disclosure to your team leader, who will alert a Creation Fest Safeguarding Officer.
- As soon as possible write down what you were told by the child, young person or vulnerable adult using his or her own words to describe the abuse and pass this report form immediately to the Creation Fest Safeguarding Officer.
- It is important not to discuss the disclosure with anyone other than your team leader or Safeguarding Officer.

## **Guidelines for dealing with an allegation:**

- For all volunteers the most important consideration is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact.
- Any allegation of abuse must be taken seriously. Creation Fest has a duty and a legal obligation to report all allegations of abuse to the relevant statutory authorities.
- Allegations may come directly from a child or young person or vulnerable adult, or from a fellow team worker, or from an adult.
- Allegations may refer to a family member or to someone outside the family such as a teacher, youth leader or pastor, etc. No groups of people are exempt from being abusers or from being abused.
- If the allegation concerns the Safeguarding Officer then the allegation must not be reported to them, but must be immediately reported to the Festival Coordinator, who will follow the procedures below.

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## **Creation Fest procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse:**

- Report all allegations of abuse to your team leader immediately. They will inform the Safeguarding Coordinator, who will take up the matter with the relevant voluntary or statutory authorities (CCPAS, Social Services or the Police), which are responsible for investigating allegations of abuse, they will also direct all action that is required.
- The first person to be told of the abuse may be asked to give a statement to Social Services or to the Police.
- It is important to remember that what has been disclosed is confidential and should only be shared with designated staff.
- After the telling of abuse, child, young person or vulnerable adult can be distressed and concerned about what will happen next. They should be reassured that they have done the right thing and an appropriate adult should stay with them until the relevant agency arrives.
- It is important to remember that the best interests of the child, young person or vulnerable adult, and the need for the abuse to stop come before the interests of Creation Fest or the abuser.
- The Safeguarding Coordinator will deal with all child protection incidents reported.
- Creation Fest recommends that if abuse is disclosed to you, you seek the comfort and support of the Prayer Ministry Team, without disclosing the details of the situation.