



JANUARY 2017

## ATLAS ARTS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

ATLAS Arts believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. It is our policy to ensure that all participants in workshops, projects, events and other ATLAS activities are protected from physical, sexual and emotional harm whilst taking part.

In order to achieve these safeguards, ATLAS Arts requires all staff, including the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, artists and anyone working on behalf of ATLAS Arts working with children and young people to follow the Code of Good Practice set out below.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

## CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

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As an adult working with children and young people for ATLAS Arts

**You should:**

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour
- Plan activities which involve more than one person being present, or ensure that other adults are within sight or hearing whenever possible
- Respect everyone's right to privacy
- Be available to listen to the concerns of young participants, and to refer them to other sources of help where appropriate
- Try to ensure that your actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence
- Encourage young people to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues and recognise that caution is required when discussing such issues

- Be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person can be misinterpreted

**You should not:**

- Permit abusive behaviour e.g. bullying, taunting, racist behaviour
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children and young people
- Jump to conclusions about others without first checking the facts
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour, such as crushes or tantrums
- Show favouritism to an individual
- Exaggerate or trivialise any child abuse issues
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest
- Deliberately place yourself or others in potentially compromising situations
- Believe it could never happen to me

**What to do:**

If you have any reason to suspect a child or young person in an ATLAS Arts workshop, event or other activity is being abused:

- Inform ATLAS Arts director, or another member of core staff in the absence of the director
- Make a written record of all details of the facts known to you as soon as possible and give a copy to the ATLAS Arts core staff member with whom you have spoken

If a child or young person tells you about abuse by someone else:

- Stay calm, do not be shocked, and try to act normally
- Allow the individual to speak freely, without interruption, but do not question them or investigate yourself
- Offer support and reassurance; assure them that you believe what they say
- Explain that you cannot keep it a secret and that you will speak to a member of ATLAS Arts core staff about it. Never promise a child that you will keep it a secret
- Report the matter as detailed above

**In all cases you must refer the matter to a member of ATLAS Arts core staff – do not try to deal with any possible cases of abuse on your own.**

**Contact**

Emma Nicolson, Director

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## ATLAS ARTS CHILD PROTECTION PROMISE

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All of us at ATLAS Arts promise to make sure that you have the best time possible while you are taking part in our activities. We all believe that you have the right to feel safe and comfortable while you are with us. We will do our very best to live up to the promises that we make to you.

### **We promise to:**

- Make you feel welcome
- Always think about your needs
- Treat all children and young people fairly
- Make sure that all our staff and volunteers know what they are supposed to be doing
- Make our activities as safe as possible
- Listen to what you want to tell us
- Do our best to make sure you have fun
- Do what we say we will do!

*We will review this policy every three years.*