



Policy and Procedures on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

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1
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1. Aim

The aim of Northern Ireland Screen's Safeguarding Policy is to support the work of Northern Ireland Screen in delivery of programmes linked to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This Policy will inform and guide those involved in projects and programmes funded by Northern Ireland Screen and can be used by staff and external delivery agents in carrying out their work on behalf of Northern Ireland Screen. It will ensure that appropriate procedures are put in place to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Northern Ireland Screen funds external organisations, and those organisations who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be required to demonstrate to Northern Ireland Screen that they have safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

2. Context

Northern Ireland Screen

Northern Ireland Screen is the national screen agency for Northern Ireland. We are committed to maximising the economic, cultural and educational value of the screen industries for the benefit of Northern Ireland. This goal is pursued through our mission to accelerate the development of a dynamic and sustainable screen industry and culture in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Screen has 3 overarching objectives:

- That Northern Ireland will have the strongest screen industry outside of London in the UK and Ireland within 10 years;
- That this industry will be supported by vibrant and diverse cultural voices that are recognised and celebrated equally at home and abroad;
- And that the sector will be underpinned by the most successful screen and digital technologies education provision in Europe ensuring that the education is within reach and of value to the most socially disadvantaged.

Developing the screen industry and its cultural sector has an almost unrivalled fit with the ***Programme for Government*** with the creative and cultural mix of the sector impacting on multiple priorities simultaneously. Northern Ireland Screen's activities make a considerable contribution to ***Growing a Sustainable Economy; Creating Opportunities & Tackling Disadvantage***; and, ***Building a Strong & Shared Future***.

Creating opportunities across the full range of the screen industries is the central theme of Northern Ireland Screen's economic strategy and is the most effective means of ensuring that opportunities in the screen industries are open to the widest possible range of people.

Within this strategy, priority sectors have been pinpointed: Animation; Large-Scale Production; Television Drama; Factual/Entertainment Television; Independent Film; and Gaming.

Northern Ireland Screen is funded by Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) the Department for Communities (DfC); Department for the Economy (DfE);DCMS through BFI; it is delegated by the Arts Council of NI (ACNI) to administer Lottery funding for film in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Screen is involved in a number of outreach programmes and also funds external third party organisations – all of which do/could come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Legal Context

The legislative context within which children and vulnerable adults are protected includes:

A - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The most important articles in relation to child protection are:

- Article 19 provides that children have the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them.
- Article 12 further provides that a child who is capable of forming his/her own views should be assured the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, these views being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
- Finally and most fundamentally Article 3 provides that when organisations make decisions which affect children, the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.

B - The Children (NI) Order 1995 states that the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration and it is this essential principle which underpins this Guidance. Within this legislation a child is a person under the age of 18 years.

C - Data Protection Act (1998). Whilst the Data Protection Act (1984) deals with the right of individuals to obtain copies of individual data held on computer of which they themselves are subject, this legislation which came into effect in 1999 extends the above provisions to manually held data i.e. paper records. Information relating to child abuse or possible abuse is however exempted from disclosure requirements.

D - The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 (POCVA) is there to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups. The Order strengthens the existing system for checking people seeking work with children and vulnerable adults against lists maintained by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and by the Department of Education.

E - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) established a vetting and barring scheme. The scheme protects both children and vulnerable adults by preventing those who are known to pose a risk of harm from accessing these groups through their work.

Principles

Policies, Procedures and services to safeguard children and vulnerable adults should be based on the following principles:

- The child's welfare must always be paramount and this overrides all other considerations;
- Children have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously;
- Parents / carers have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters which concern their families;
- Individuals and agencies concerned with the protection of children must share information and work together in the best interests of children and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding the Welfare of Children and Young People

Through outreach activities, individuals and organisations have the capacity to engage with children, young people and vulnerable adults of all abilities. To enable children and young people to make best use of these opportunities it is important that both individuals and organisations have guidelines which promote safe working practices to safeguard the welfare of the child and vulnerable adults.

Child abuse occurs in a range of contexts, in families from all social classes and cultures and also in agencies and organisations. 'Perpetrators' is an encompassing name for young people and adults who abuse. Perpetrators of abuse do come from all walks of life and occupations / professions. Whilst the motivation of most adults / trainer/ creative specialists is to provide a safe and positive experience for children, young people and vulnerable adults, this Policy will assist them through raising awareness and providing guidance.

However, the underpinning principle behind the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is open communication and sharing of information with all relevant parties.

Good Practice

- Northern Ireland Screen personnel and external service providers need to work within the principles of good Practice
- Northern Ireland Screen personnel and external service providers need to be aware of the legal context within which they work

- Northern Ireland Screen personnel and external service providers need to ensure that they are aware of the specific needs of the group they will be working with and discuss with the contracting group how this will impact on their work and how these needs can be met.
- Prior to working in any setting Northern Ireland Screen personnel and the external service providers should familiarize themselves with both Northern Ireland Screen and receiving organisation's Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adult Policies.

3. Shared Responsibility

The area of safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is a shared responsibility and all organisations should continually review their safeguarding policy and procedures. Northern Ireland Screen takes this responsibility seriously and although rarely operating as a direct provider of services to children it ensures that its staff, and funded third party organisations are aware of and implementing policy and procedures in order that they understand their individual responsibilities and help promote best practice.

Northern Ireland Screen and its Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) are required to have in place a Safeguarding policy/statement, which is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults involved with culture, arts and leisure activities.

All organisations should:

1. Have a safeguarding policy/statement agreed by senior management;
2. Have written procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers;
3. Have safeguarding checks for staff and volunteers (if required);
4. Provide safeguarding training for designated officer, staff and volunteers;
5. Have written procedures for reporting child protection concerns, disclosures and allegations;
6. Communicate contact details of designated officers to staff/volunteers; and
7. Communicate the safeguarding policy statement to staff/volunteers/children/young people/vulnerable adults and parents (if appropriate).

Good Practice

Northern Ireland Screen Personnel / External service providers need to have discussed what will be the process if they have a cause for concern during their work and the use of their own organisation policy / Northern Ireland Screen Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and:

- Ensure that all are fully aware of the organisation's / group's / club's Safeguarding Policy and each individual's responsibility within it. Identity and name of the Designated Officer in the organisation;
- Be familiar with Northern Ireland Screen Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and attend relevant training;
- Be clear that the supervising adult is appropriate i.e. knows the children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and is able to meet their needs and concerns; and
- Be aware of specific and special needs of the children, young people and vulnerable adults and ensure that consideration is given to enabling their full involvement in the process.

4. Responding to Disclosure

If a child / young person confides information to you which gives cause for concern about possible abuse and requests that the information be kept secret, it is important that you tell the child as sensitively as possible that you will need to pass the information on. No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be made to a child or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.

You may be alerted to the possibility that abuse is occurring by:

- A child telling you that something has happened;
- Someone else (another adult or child) telling you about his or her concerns;
- Observing physical or behavioural indicators of the child which cause you concern;
- Observing the practice of another person which causes you some concern.

If an immediate risk or danger is identified then it is important to discuss this with the supervising adult and agree to either make direct contact with the school's / group's Designated Officer or direct contact with the local Health and Social Services Office, the local PSNI Office or the NSPCC.

In responding to the child / young person create a safe environment by:

- Staying calm and not rushing into actions which may be inappropriate;
- Confirming you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you;
- Show you are taking what is being said seriously.

Be honest and do not make promises you cannot keep. Explain you may have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening.

Ensure you are quite clear about what the child says so you can pass it on to the supervising adult. Keep questions to a minimum and avoid closed questions (i.e. ones that can be answered by a single word such as yes or no). Use open questions to encourage the child to use his or her own words. The law is very strict and a child abuse case can be dismissed if it appears the child has been led or words or ideas have been suggested.

Following discussion with the supervising adult record exactly what the child has said to you, in a legible and accurate format, as soon as possible after the incident. Separate the facts from your opinion. Include:

- The child's name, address, date of birth;
- The date and time of any incident;
- Your observations (i.e. a description of the child's behaviour and emotional state);
- Exactly what the child said and what you said;
- Any action you took as a result of your concerns.

Ensure you:

- Sign and date the Cause for Concern Form and send it to the Designated Officer of the school, group, club etc.
- Send a copy to the Northern Ireland Screen designated Officer for Child Protection.
- Maintain confidentiality. Unnecessary breaches of confidentiality can be very damaging to the child, family and any child protection investigations which take place.
- This is not your sole responsibility. Consult with the supervising adult and follow the Policy and Procedure. If working within an organisation you will also need to follow their procedures.

Good Practice

- It is important that children, young people and vulnerable adult feel they are being listened to and taken seriously;

- Be honest and do not make promises you cannot keep;
- If the child / vulnerable adult is in immediate danger then consult with the supervising adult re: immediate action;
- Pass on the information as quickly as possible to the supervisory adult and in writing to the Designated Officer in the school / organisation and, if appropriate, follow your own organisation's policy;
- Record your concerns including the exact words of the child, young person, vulnerable adult and copy to Northern Ireland Screen designated Officer for Child Protection; and
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality and follow the Northern Ireland Screen Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

5. Reporting Procedure

Northern Ireland Screen's designated Child Protection Officer is Bernard McCloskey, Head of Education and the deputy Child Protection Officer is Linda Martin, Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

The reporting procedures must be discussed and agreed at the planning stage for the work. This will assist clarity and ensure that there is no delay in action being taken. The Designated Officer for the school, club, organisation must be named and contact details given.

Organisations that Northern Ireland Screen works with may have their own Safeguarding Procedures and these will need to be discussed in relation to the Northern Ireland Screen Policy and Procedure and a reporting procedure agreed.

The reporting procedures for individual trainer/creative specialists are:

Any Northern Ireland Screen personnel/external service provider who receives information / disclosure, or notices signs of possible abuse must notify the supervising adult attending the session.

If the child / vulnerable adult is in immediate danger then it is important to discuss this with the supervising adult who may contact:

- School's / Group's Designated Officer;
- Duty Social Worker at local Health and Social Services Office, NSPCC or local PSNI Office.

The supervising adult will put into operation their own Safeguarding Procedures – generally this requires reporting the concern to their Designated Officer i.e.:

- In a school setting as set down in ‘Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection’ DENI;
- In a voluntary / community group – as set down in VDA – Our Duty to Care Guidance and own organisation’s Safeguarding Procedures.

The trainer/creative specialist will record their concerns and subsequent action on the Cause for Concern Form (see Appendix One) and forward this within 72 hours:

- To the Designated Officer in the school, organisation or youth club
- And a copy to the Northern Ireland Screen’s designated officer or deputy officer for Child Protection. The individual may also be required to follow their own organisation’s Safeguarding Procedures.

If the individual wishes he/she can make contact with the Northern Ireland Screen’s designated Officer or deputy Officer for Child Protection to discuss their concerns further.

Good Practice

- Always inform the supervising adult of concerns as quickly as possible;
- Be objective and concise on the ‘Cause for Concern Form’ and forward within 72 hours to the Designated Officer of the school, group, organisation (as above) and copy to the Northern Ireland Screen Designated Officer for Child Protection;
- Ensuring the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is safeguarded is a shared responsibility. You can talk with Northern Ireland Screen’s Designated Officer or deputy Officer for Child Protection at any time.

6. Recording

Please give due consideration to how you record your concerns. Information should be written on the presumption that parents and relevant professionals can request access to them. Ensure that your own personal feelings and reactions are not noted but rather the information is factual, neutral in language and concise. The form should be forwarded to the Designated Officer of the school, group, organisation or unit and the **Northern Ireland Screen Designated Officer or deputy Officer for Child Protection within 72 hours.**

It is the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Screen designated Officer and their deputy to consider the appropriate action to take and to record this on the form.

The Northern Ireland Screen designated Officer or their deputy must contact the school / Education and Library Board / voluntary organisation's designated Officer for feedback on actions taken /outcome and record this in writing.

Confidentiality

Whilst it is important to sensitively inform the child / young person that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when there is a cause for concern the following principles should be considered:

- Precautions should be taken to ensure that information is only given to the appropriate person.
- Any disclosure from a young person / adult should be led by the young person at their pace without pressure for detail by Northern Ireland Screen personnel / external service provider.

Good Practice

- Ensure that your recording is factual, in a neutral language and concise;
- Ensure you record the name of the Supervising Adult and Designated Officer of the school, group, organisation or club;
- Ensure the Cause For Concern Form is forwarded within 72 hours;
- Ensure confidentiality of sensitive information.

7. Other Relevant Organisational Policies

Northern Ireland Screen recognises that working with children and young people is both worthwhile and fulfilling, but it is also challenging.

Once Northern Ireland Screen has recruited staff / freelance trainers / creative specialists in accordance with their Recruitment and Selection Policy, they will need to ensure that they are all well informed, trained, supervised and supported, so that they are less likely to become involved in actions that can cause harm or be misunderstood.

This process includes the following:

Induction

Staff and freelance personnel need clear instructions on the tasks and limits that apply to

them as newcomers. They need to be familiar with our Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice, as well as other policies such as on health and safety.

Probationary or trial period

Northern Ireland Screen reviews the development and suitability of new staff and freelance personnel within six months of their taking up the post. For seasonal posts and short-term contracts, this period is usually reduced.

Supervision and support

This focuses on the work that new staff need to do, and how they should do it. Leaders and managers can also comment on any good work that the new recruits have done. Supervision provides an opportunity for new staff and freelance personnel to share concerns about their working environment; it provides an opportunity for both parties to discuss issues of importance and identify training needs. We recommend that everyone involved keeps a note of any agreed action points

Training

Northern Ireland Screen recognises the importance of continual training and development. It is management's responsibility to identify both the individual and common training needs of our staff and freelance personnel.

Training is an ongoing process, and relevant to the roles that people play in our organisation. All staff and freelance personnel who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will participate in safeguarding training, which should include: awareness of abuse, implications for practice and organisational policy and procedures

8. General Code Of Behaviour

The primary goal for organisations / agencies working with children, young people and vulnerable adults is to create a safe environment where they can grow, develop and access new experiences. A Code of Behaviour for trainer/creative specialists and arts organisations not only helps protect children, young people and vulnerable adults but also provides protection for the trainer/creative specialist while working within the school, group, club etc.

A Code of Behaviour gives guidance on a number of areas:

A - Physical Touch.

The use of physical touch will depend largely on the age and stage of development of the children, young people and vulnerable adults you work with, the context of the activities you provide and the physical needs of the children and young people in your care, i.e. you may be offering a service to children and young people with profound physical disabilities.

There are however a number of fundamental principles on the use of touch which should always be adhered to. These are:

- Touching should always be with the child's permission. If a child or young person shows any resistance to touch, i.e. if you put your hand on their arm and they pull away, it is important that this is respected. A staff member or volunteer should never touch a child or young person in the genital area, buttocks or breasts.
- Touch should always be conducted in an open manner. It should never be carried out in 'secret' or in a surreptitious manner.
- Touch should always be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult.

B - Relationships and Attitudes

An individual's contact with children and young people may be limited to one session or may involve a number of sessions. The importance of open, honest and respectful relationships cannot be over emphasized irrespective of how long the contact is. It is essential that trainer / creative specialists NEVER:

- Engage in physical games or horseplay with children which is not part of structured activities.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to children or young people, or about children and young people even in fun.
- Engage in sexually provocative games. Examples of this are 'spin the bottle' or 'strip poker'.
- Use inappropriate language or inappropriate self disclosures.
- Adopt inappropriate behaviour or conversations of a sensitive nature.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language. If this does occur, it is important that this is discussed with the supervising adult.
- Whilst building relationships with the children, young people and vulnerable adults may necessitate one to one interaction, trainer/creative specialists must not:
 - Spend time alone with children or young people.
 - Take children alone on car journeys.
 - Escort children and young people in and out of the buildings.
 - Take children, young people or vulnerable adults to their home.

C - Tasks of a Personal Nature

Children due to their age, disability etc do require assistance with tasks of a personal nature i.e. toileting, changing. However, these tasks must be carried out by the supervising adult/s and never by Northern Ireland Screen personnel / external service provider. Supervision of children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the external organisation/ group. This needs discussed and agreed prior to work beginning. Making arrangements for the effective supervision of the children and young people's care is an essential component of safeguarding.

The following principles should always apply:

- The supervising adult should be someone who knows the group well and is able to observe behaviour and to respond to any changes.
- The level of supervision must always be adequate, i.e. the ratio of staff and volunteers to children should ensure the following points are adhered to:
 - The ratio of staff plus volunteers to children with disabilities is dependent on the individual needs of the child.
 - Children and young people should be supervised at all times with the supervising adult in the room. This does not mean leaving the door open and supervising from another room.

D. Managing Difficult Behaviour

Some of the children and young people in the workshop may at times exhibit difficult behaviour i.e. aggression, sexualised behaviour etc. This behaviour may be a manifestation of abuse which has occurred or it may be a result of other factors in the child's life.

Having a clear strategy to manage difficult behaviour is important and can be discussed with the external organisation at the planning stage. The management of children and young people during the activity will be the responsibility of the supervising adult – although the trainer/creative specialist should support them in this.

- Be aware of your own emotions. Try to appear calm as this may diffuse the situation.
- Treat children and young people with courtesy and respect. If you do overreact to certain behaviour (i.e. shout at the child) then be willing to apologise to them.
- Be consistent. It is important to try to respond in a similar way to similar events and to carry through what you have said you are going to do.
- Always make a distinction between children and their behaviour. Make it clear that it is the behaviour you do not like. Emphasise that you will go on liking them regardless of their behaviour.

- Teach by example. Show by your actions and reactions that adults can be honest, accepting, trustworthy, dependable and willing to listen to children and young people at all times.
- Reward rather than punish. Rewards are a much more effective way of changing behaviour than punishments. Take every opportunity to praise children and young people.

Good Practice

- Having a Code of Behaviour will help protect you and the children and young people you work with.
- The Code of Behaviour should reflect your needs in relation to your creative specialism. It makes sense to also refine the Code of Behaviour in some specific areas.

9. Code Of Behaviour For Specific Art Forms

The following are generic areas to consider across all art forms:

- Children, young people and vulnerable adults must be treated with respect at all times.
- Children, young people and vulnerable adults have a right not to partake in an activity which they feel uncomfortable with.
- The need to seek permissions required from parents / primary carers /children and young people.
- The need to obtain consent / release forms for use of any material produced by participants e.g. film, video, photography etc. These Consent / Release forms must provide as much information as possible for parents / carers to give informed consent.
- The need for the provision of information in advance in relation to the content and requirements of the performance / workshop e.g. methods, touch etc.
- The need for content and material that is age specific and appropriate to the needs of the group.
- The need to be aware of guidance in the Northern Ireland Screen Policy and Procedure regarding adult / child ratios.
- Any creative medium can invoke personal reactions and emotions in participants and therefore sensitivity and awareness is important.

Craft

This covers a wide variety of craft forms and it is important to provide children, young people and vulnerable adults with an opportunity to explore these. In relation to safeguarding good practice issues the following are issues to be aware of:

- Children, young people and vulnerable adults and the supervising responsible adult should be told in advance what, if any, physical touch will be involved.
- Consent from the child / vulnerable adult should be received before any physical touch is carried out.
- Awareness that children, young people and vulnerable adults do not harm or attempt to harm themselves or others with any of the craft materials.
- Good practice in working with crafts would indicate that physical touch is only necessary to guide the person's hands in the activity and therefore this should be a light minimal touch. For example, in teaching pottery that the trainer / creative specialist is in front of the child and places their hands gently on top of the child's hands to demonstrate the craft as opposed to from behind.

Music

The wide variety of music forms and expressions makes the community we live in come alive. It covers the traditional, modern - i.e. electronic, techno, dance, hip hop, jazz, world - classical, opera, rock, pop and orchestral. In relation to safeguarding good practice issues the following are specific areas to be aware of:

- The teaching of specific musical instruments will involve at times the physical touch of children and young people to ensure they are following the teacher's directions. Good practice would highlight the importance of ensuring that children and young people are informed that touch may be involved.
- Physical touch may involve the touching of the diaphragm to enhance / demonstrate breathing techniques. This needs to be carried out firstly with permission and secondly as lightly and as sensitively as possible.
- The importance of recognizing that touch or personal space being invaded is and can be a very threatening experience. Therefore all trainer/creative specialists must be aware of their need to respect personal space and if touch must occur it is carried out in a respectful manner but importantly with consent.
- An example is in teaching the drums, given the difficult task of teaching a child or young person how to co-ordinate four limbs it may be necessary to stand behind the person and lean over them. This can be very threatening and good practice would highlight the importance of a child's comfort with this and if any discomfort / hesitation is shown then it must not occur.

Literature

The art of story telling is to be recognised as an exciting way for children and young people to allow their imagination to expand.

In relation to safeguarding good practice issues the following are specific areas to be aware of:

- The importance of recognising the need for language to be respectful and not to be abusive, degrading or exclusive.
- That a literature facilitator needs to recognise the special needs within the group and ensure that these are given due consideration to ensure inclusivity.
- It is important that the material is age specific and appropriate to the age group/special needs of those undertaking the workshop.
- Given the nature of creative writing in encouraging and enabling a person to explore their imagination and feelings it will inevitably trigger within people their hidden thoughts and emotions. Trainer/creative specialists must therefore be aware of the experiential nature of creative writing and make children and young people aware of this possibility. If this does occur then following the Policy and Procedure recording procedure is advised.
- It is also recognized that many young people will use creative writing to highlight how they are feeling, and may write down their abuse experiences. Trainer / creative specialists must be aware of this and respond appropriately.

Dance

Dance is a physical activity and this is what makes it a creative and joyful art form. In recognising that it is a physical activity it is therefore inevitable that physical touch will be an integral part of that experience. This physical touch can include the teacher / choreographer / dancer having to touch a child, young person or vulnerable adult in order to demonstrate a particular movement or to improve posture. Touch can also be to encourage a child or young person to work in pairs / trios with their peers.

Therefore the touch of children and young people must be recognised as important to the task of the teacher/ choreographer / dancer in order to teach the young people / children.

In relation to safeguarding good practice issues the following are specific areas to be aware of:

- Touch is given and directed in a respectful and non-threatening manner.
- Permission is sought from the child for touch to take place.

- It is important to highlight to children, young people and vulnerable adults that it is OK to say no and they do not have to partake in any activity which they do not want to.
- Awareness of the issues of power, physical size and bullying within a group of young people in encouraging the working of pairs / trios. It is important that young people are made aware if their behaviour is uncomfortable / frightening for their peers
- That a teacher / choreographer / dancer is not involved in the changing of children or young people. Privacy for individuals (girls and boys) when changing and separate facilities should be available where possible.
- Separate changing facilities should also be available for teacher / choreographer / dancer.
- Where possible provision of tutors / supervisors of both sexes should be made available.

Visual / Film

It is important to realise that the increase in visual forms of communication has greatly enhanced our world today which for the most part is extremely positive. However, the internet has also provided an avenue for the exploitation of children and young people through images.

In relation to Safeguarding good practice issues the following are specific areas to be aware of:

- That clear information is given to those persons whether children, young people or vulnerable adults and their parents / guardians / carers as to the exact detail of the visual art being used. Consent for children / vulnerable adults to attend the workshop is received in the first stage of the consent process.
- Good practice would recommend that a Release Form for use of visual work / images is forwarded prior to the visual facilitator attending the school / youth club / day centre to be completed by the parents / carers / guardians of the children and or young people who will be attending the workshop.
- It is important to understand the motivation of a person who is involved in the sexual exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults and that for them even the most innocent of photographs, images or film can provide them with sexual stimulation.
- The inclusion of a child, young person or vulnerable adult's image on a website has been another positive communication medium for visual facilitators to highlight their work and showcase the work of groups. However, the internet is a medium with no boundaries and therefore an image can be forwarded to any number of other websites / emails / individuals. The security of these images to your particular website cannot be guaranteed.

- In recognising these issues it is therefore good practice to ensure that those adults signing a consent form are aware of all the visual mediums that their child or young person's image may be displayed on and permission sought for their consent in this way.
- As a visual arts facilitator you must abide by safeguarding guidelines which would request that you do not place a child in an at risk situation. Therefore it is good practice to question your motivation when considering displaying an image or film of a child or young person and if it is absolutely necessary.
- The showcasing of visual facilitators' work is very important for the display of work and in encouraging children / young people and vulnerable adults to continue to explore the visual arts. However, if showcasing a piece of work for which you have received consent in the Release Form also includes the image of another child / young person / vulnerable adult then it is good practice that consent for that image is received from the responsible parent / carer /guardian for that child / adult in that image.
- Good practice would highlight that all the material generated in the visual arts workshops remains the property of the individual participants / receiving organisation. Further consent for the showcasing of work needs to be given by the consenting parent / carer / guardian. For further information in relation to issues of copyright / ownership of intellectual property please go to Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) at www.culture.gov.uk.
- Visual arts facilitators should never be alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a 'dark' room/ editing studio situation.
- Accessing the internet can provide a breadth and depth of creative opportunities for children and young people and vulnerable adults as indicated earlier, however this needs to be monitored to ensure its safe use. It is therefore important that at the planning stage protocols are agreed that address:
 - Confirmation that a child protection block is in place on the computers e.g. 'Childnet'.
 - Levels and quality of supervision are agreed.
 - Levels of taste and decency and appropriateness of material for the children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is better to err on the side of caution unsure.

Drama

In recognising that physical contact is an integral part of the teaching of Drama, it is important to highlight safeguarding good practice issues. The following are specific areas to be aware of:

- In relation to physical touch it is important that all children and young people are fully aware of the fact that touch is integral to doing drama.
- Parents need to be informed by the receiving organisation of the nature of a drama workshop and the role touch plays.
- It is also vital to recognise that any type of drama or creative expression of feelings can trigger for any child or young person who has suffered or is suffering any type of abuse feelings that may be expressed in the drama. It is therefore important to recognise this and have the necessary experience to deal with this.
- If, given the nature of the activity a disclosure occurs or is experienced then the trainer/creative specialist should follow the Policy and Procedure.

Useful Contacts – Children and Young People

ACE (Advisory Centre for Education)	www.ace-ed.org.uk
Anti-bullying Alliance	www.antibullyingalliance.org
Bullying Good advice for children on bullying is outlined here - how to recognise it, and what to do if you are the victim or know of someone who is. For those unwilling to tell anybody, help is available on the site via email.	www.bullying.co.uk www.familylives.org.uk Tel: 0808 800 2222
Child Exploitation Online Protection	www.ceop.gov.uk
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk www.thecpsu.org.uk 028 90351135
Childline Northern Ireland Got a problem? Childline has helped hundreds of thousands of children in trouble or danger. If you feel you can't face ringing them, check out their website. There are fact sheets on many subjects including bullying.	www.childline.org.uk Helpline 0800 11 11 2nd Floor, Lanyon Bldg. , 14 Queen Street, Belfast BT1 6ED. Tel: 0870 336 2945
Children's Law Centre	www.childrenslawcentre.org 3 rd Floor, Philip House, York St, Belfast, BT15 1AB CHALKY Helpline 0808 808 5678
Counselling for young people	www.contactyouth.org
Department Of Culture Arts and Leisure	www.dcalni.gov.uk
Domestic Violence	www.womensaid.org.uk
Drugs and alcohol	www.contactyouth.org
Health	www.kidsallergies.co.uk
Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Teams	

Belfast HSC Trust Gateway Team Northern HSC Trust Gateway Team South-Eastern HSC Trust Gateway Team Southern HSC Trust Gateway Team Western HSC Trust Gateway Team Out of Hours Contact There will be a recorded message at each of the above numbers which will provide Emergency Out of Hours numbers.	028 90507000 0300 1234333 0300 1000300 08007837745 028 71314090
Internet Safety	www.iwf.org.uk
Kidscape Open Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm. Nearly everyone is bullied at some time in their lives according to this charity. It offers information and support to young people and their parents.	www.kidscape.org.uk 020 7730 3300
National Children's Bureau	www.ncb.org.uk
NI Anti-Bullying Forum	www.niabf.org.uk
NI Commissioner for Children & Young People	www.niccy.org
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	www.nspcc.org.uk Helpline 0808 800 5000
Parentline Plus Advice for parents on supporting a child who is being bullied.	www.parentlineplus.org.uk E-mail: contact@parentlineplus.org.uk Freephone 0808 800 2222
Parents Advice Centre (Belfast & Derry) Parenting Education Project, Parenting Forum NI and The Men's Project -	www.parentsadvicecentre.org Belfast Tel: 028 9031 0891 Derry Tel: 028 7137 2006 Freephone 0808 8010 722
Special Education Needs	www.throughtheroof.org
Sport Northern Ireland	www.sportni.net

	Tel: 028 90381222
Suicide and self-harm	www.pips-project.com www.samaritansbelfast.org
There4Me NSPCC On line advice service for 11- 16 year olds	www.there4me.org.uk
Volunteer Development Agency 028 90236100	For further information on developing Safeguarding policy and procedures are provided in the documents Our Duty to Care and Getting it Right available at www.volunteering-ni.org

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Date of last review: August 2017

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Next Review:
- Changes in NICS guidance; or
- complaint or issue which requires review of policy; or
- August 2019

1. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

In the course of our work staff may become aware of situations where a vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse or is being abused. It is important that staff are alert to signs of abuse and take appropriate action to safeguard vulnerable adults.

Who is a vulnerable adult?

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old and frail, or has some form of illness.

Because of his or her vulnerability the individual may be in receipt of a care service in his or her own home, in the community or be resident in a residential care home, nursing home or other institutional setting.

Why do we need to protect vulnerable adults?

Vulnerable adults are entitled to have their civil and human rights upheld and to live a life free from abuse. They need to be treated with respect and dignity and be able to choose how to live their lives independently. They should be afforded the opportunity to participate in their local community as active citizens, fulfil personal aspirations and realise their potential in all aspects of their daily lives.

If abuse does occur, vulnerable adults need to be assured that they will be protected by the law and have their civil and human rights upheld in the course of any investigation that takes place.

What makes an adult vulnerable?

The definition of vulnerable adult is linked to the range of services targeted at people who by virtue of the need to access those services is more likely to render them vulnerable. This includes the services of a residential care home, nursing home, domiciliary and health care services, prison and probation services, welfare services and services offered to adults who have particular needs generated by age, a disability or health impairment.

What is meant by work with a vulnerable adult?

Since September 2012, the new definition of regulated activity relating to adults no longer labels adults as 'vulnerable'. Instead, the definition identifies the activities which, if any adult requires them, lead to that adult being considered vulnerable at that particular time. This means that the focus is on the activities required by the adult and not on the setting in

which the activity is received, nor on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult receiving the activities.

Who might the abuser be?

It can be anyone:

- A partner, child, relative or friend.
- A paid or volunteer carer.
- A health, social care or other worker.
- A person claiming to be an employer of one of the above
- A stranger.

Where might the abuse occur?

Abuse can happen anywhere:

- In someone's own home.
- At a carer's home.
- Within nursing care, residential care or day care.
- At work or in educational settings.
- In rented accommodation or commercial settings.
- In public places.

How can you be alert to signs of abuse?

- You may see or hear something happen.
- A vulnerable adult may disclose an allegation to you.
- A colleague, family member or somebody else may tell you something that causes you concern.
- You may notice injuries or physical signs that cause you concern.
- You may notice either the victim or perpetrator behaving in a certain way that alerts you something may be wrong.

What should you do if you suspect abuse?

Remember your role is primarily supportive rather than investigative.

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be open and honest about your concerns• Stay calm.• Listen very carefully.• Ensure that no one is in immediate danger.• Call for emergency services if urgent medical / police help required.• Be aware that medical and forensic evidence might be needed.• Encourage the person not to wash or bathe as this could disturb medical/forensic evidence.• Tell the person that they did the right thing in telling you.• Express concern and sympathy about what has happened.• Reassure that the information will be taken seriously and give information about what will happen next.• Let the person know that they will be kept involved at every stage; that they will be told the outcome and who will do this.• Give the person contact details so that they can report any further issues or ask any questions that may arise.• Explain that you must tell your	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop someone disclosing to you.• Be afraid to act on your concerns.• Press the person for more details.• Promise to keep secrets or make promises you cannot keep.• Gossip about the disclosure or pass on the information to anyone who does not have a legitimate need to know.• Contact the alleged abuser.• Attempt to investigate yourself.• Tidy up, as this may disturb forensic evidence.• Be judgmental.• Leave details of your concerns on a voicemail or by e-mail.

<p>line manager or designated officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your line manger or designated officer immediately. • Explain what you have heard or seen that has given rise to your concerns. • Give as much information as possible. 	
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Who do I contact if I suspect abuse?

It is important to remember that if a vulnerable adult is in **immediate danger** you should contact the emergency services immediately by dialling **999**.

If you have any concerns discuss them with your line manager whose responsibility it will be to refer these concerns to the appropriate Health and Social Care Trust Adult Protection Co-ordinator. All the telephone numbers you will need can be found at the end of this policy.

If you have raised your concerns in the above way but either the vulnerable person or your line manager is reluctant to proceed with the referral, you should make a record and contact your HSC Trust’s Adult Protection Co-ordinator or a Designated Officer with responsibility for Adult Protection.

If all mechanisms for reporting allegations of abuse have been exhausted without your concern being taken seriously, it should be noted that the Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 provides for the active safeguarding and protection of what are commonly known as ‘whistle-blowers’.

We are all responsible for the protection of vulnerable adults.

Useful Contacts

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

9am to 5pm – 028 2563 5558

Out of hours – 028 9446 8833

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

9am to 5pm – 028 9266 5181 extension 4544

Out of hours – 028 9056 5444

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

9am to 5pm – 028 3083 2650

Out of hours – 028 3083 5000

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

9am to 5pm – 028 9056 5707

Out of hours – 028 9056 5444

Western Health and Social Care Trust

9am to 5pm – 028 7131 4090

Out of hours – 028 7134 5171

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Emergency 999

Non-emergency and general enquiries

0845 0600 8000

Helpline numbers

24-hour Domestic Violence helpline – 0800 917 1414

Action on Elder Abuse helpline – 0808 808 8141

Other sources of advice

The Older People's Advocate – 028 9031 6383

CAUSE FOR CONCERN FORM
(Please complete in block capitals)

Date: _____

Name and age of child / young person / vulnerable adult:

Nature of incident, complaint or allegation:

(continue on separate page if necessary)

Child / young person / vulnerable adult's statement/comment:

Name/s _____ of _____ Supervising _____ Adult: _____

Action taken: _____
(continue on separate page if necessary)

Date & Time: _____

If Police or Children's Social Care Services contacted:

Name: _____

Position:

Tel No of person handling case: _____

Details of person completing the form

Name: _____

Position:

Organisation: _____

Tel

No:

Signature of person completing form:

If form has not been completed by Northern Ireland Screen's Designated Officer or deputy Designated Officer, please ensure a copy is forwarded to them.

Copy sent to:

Northern Ireland Screen Designated Office or Deputy Designated Officer.

Name: _____

Date:

Follow up Action (To be completed by Designated Officer or deputy Designated Officer)

Understanding Child Abuse

Definitions

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institution or community setting, by those known to them or more rarely by a stranger. Definitions of abuse are defined in the Children (NI) Order 1995 Guidance “Co-operating to Safeguard Children” published by Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

Further guidance can also be found in “Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection” published by Department of Education on www.deni.gov.uk.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful or negligent failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing.

Signs and Symptoms

Determining whether abuse has occurred or not is a difficult task even for experts in Child Protection. Whilst it is not the role of the trainer/creative specialist to determine whether abuse has happened you are in a position to notice injuries or hear what young people are telling you.

Abuse can often result in observable changes or signs of abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. This is more likely to be identified by those who have day-to-day contact with the child i.e. teachers, ancillary staff, playgroup leaders, youth workers. However, as a trainer/creative specialist you may also become aware of signs and symptoms that give you cause for concern. For example, the following may be noticeable:

- Bruises, particularly bruises of a regular shape which may indicate the use of an implement such as a strap, or the mark of a hand, lacerations, bite marks or burns, particularly when children change their clothes for physical activity or other activities, or when very young children or children with special educational needs are helped with activities;
- Possible indicators of physical neglect, such as inadequate clothing, poor growth, hunger or apparently deficient nutrition, poor personal hygiene, untreated medical problems, lack of concentration;
- Possible indicators of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence, or attention-seeking, self mutilation, over-reaction to mistakes;
- Young People who have been sexually abused may exhibit physical signs, or lead to a substantial behavioural change including precocity, withdrawal or inappropriate sexual behaviour, soreness in genital areas, bruising on inner thighs or buttocks.
- Any, or any combination, of the above may be accompanied by or solely manifested in marked deterioration in performance or behaviour which gives rise to concern.

There may be an acceptable explanation and the above are not intended as a checklist of symptoms.

Who abuses?

Perpetrators of abuse come from all sections of society. Children and young people can be abused by family members, friends, peers and/or strangers. However, it is well recognised and documented that children and young people are more frequently abused by someone they hold in a position of trust. Perpetrators of abuse will use a variety of methods to gain access to children.

Good Practice

There are four categories of abuse as defined in the Children (NI) Order 1995 and it is important you are aware of what these are.

Individuals need to be aware of indicators of abuse.

- Perpetrators can potentially be anyone and as an educator / organisation you should have in place the policies / procedure and/or awareness to respond to concerns in relation to this.
- Some children, young people and young adults can be particularly vulnerable i.e. children with a disability, children from ethnic minorities, children living away from home and consideration needs to be given to this.
- Individuals need to be aware of both general and specific considerations in relation to their creative specialism which will promote the well-being of the children in their workshops.
- It is important that participating organisations consider carefully how trainer/creative specialists are used and perceived. It is essential that they are seen as providing additional creative opportunities and that they are supported by a supervising adult who remains with them and knows the children /vulnerable adults well. They must also be aware of their own organisation's policies and procedures and how to implement these.

What is adult abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons and can take many forms:

What are the forms of abuse?

Physical abuse

Including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint or disciplining a person in an inappropriate way.

Psychological abuse

Including emotional abuse, verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying, or the use of threats.

Financial or material abuse

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Sexual abuse

Direct or indirect sexual activity where the vulnerable adult cannot or does not give his or her consent.

Neglect or acts of omission

Withdrawing or not giving the help that a vulnerable adult needs, so causing them to suffer.

Discriminatory abuse

Abusing a person because of their ethnic origin, religion, language, age, sexuality, gender or disability.

Institutional abuse

Abuse or mistreatment by a regime or by any individual within any building where care is provided.

What are the signs?

Physical – fractures, bruising, burns, pain, marks, not wanting to be touched.

Psychological – withdrawn, too eager to do every thing they are asked, compulsive behaviour, not being able to do things they used, not being able to concentrate or focus.

Financial – having unusual difficulty with finances, over protection of money and things they own, not paying bills, and lack of normal home comforts.

Sexual – genital irritation, sexually transmitted diseases, offensive language, recoiling contact, persistent sexually inappropriate behaviour.

Neglect – having pain or discomfort, overly hungry, thirsty or untidy, deterioration in health, changes in behaviour.

Discriminatory – the person is not receiving the care services they require, carer overly critical or makes insulting remarks about the person, person made to dress differently from how they wish.

Institutional – lack of personal clothing / possessions, no care plan, frequent hospital admissions, instances of unsatisfactory professional practice, ill treatment or gross misconduct.

The above list is meant as a guide and is not intended to be exhaustive.

GUIDANCE ON VETTING SYSTEMS

AccessNI

Background

The Pre-Employment Consultancy Service (PECS) had been operated by the DHSSPS since 1982 to assist agencies in screening out unsuitable people when recruiting to positions with substantial access to children and to adults with learning disabilities. The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 (POCVA) enhanced these arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable members of society. From April 2005 the system for vetting those who work with children was known as the Protection of Children (NI) Service (POC (NI)). From 1st April 2008 the system for providing organisations with criminal history information about anyone seeking paid or unpaid work in certain defined areas has been administered by AccessNI.

AccessNI was established by a joint programme between the Northern Ireland Office, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Education and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. It provides a disclosure service and an individual checking a number of sources of information and lists. These include UK criminal record information and current disqualifications lists in NI and GB.

AccessNI should be used to complement each agency's own safeguarding measures and all agencies entrusted with the care or training of children need to have robust recruitment and staff/volunteer selection procedures, which are enhanced after appointment by appropriate training, supervision and appraisal processes.

AccessNI should only be used as part of an overall recruitment policy. It provides organisations registered with them with a central means of checking the suitability of an individual seeking work with children. The use of AccessNI by organisations has a deterrent effect but should **never** be relied upon to screen out all abusers. It is not a foolproof guarantee of suitability. AccessNI provides a means for accessing any information which might have a bearing on an individual's suitability.

Levels of Disclosure from AccessNI

There will be **3** different levels of disclosure. Individuals will be able to access a Basic Disclosure. Standard and enhanced disclosures can only be accessed by registered employers.

1. **BASIC DISCLOSURE**

The Basic Disclosure Certificate will show details of all convictions considered to be unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978, or state that no such convictions were found.

2. **STANDARD DISCLOSURES**

The Standard Disclosure Certificate shows details of spent and unspent convictions only.

3. **ENHANCED DISCLOSURE**

An Enhanced Disclosure contains all of the information in the Standard Disclosure plus other relevant information held in police records. It also clearly indicates whether the Applicant is on the ISA's Children's list or Vulnerable Adults list and therefore is barred from working with those groups.

What Is Actually Checked

AccessNI searches the following databases for every application.

- The Criminal Record Viewer – which contains the NI criminal record, and
- The Police National Computer – which contains the GB criminal record. In respect of a basic check the “spent” element of the criminal record is removed. For Standard and Enhanced checks, the full record is disclosed

For Standard and Enhanced Disclosures, the following sources will also be searched if E4 and E5 on the Disclosure Certificate Application Form are ticked, meaning the position applied for involves working with children or vulnerable adults:

- Disqualification from Working with Children (DWC (NI) List)
- Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults (DWVA (NI))
- List 99 held by DCSF
- DoH PoCA and PoVA lists
- Unsuitable Persons List held by DE
- Relevant Scottish Lists

For Enhanced Disclosures only, AccessNI will ask relevant Police Forces throughout the UK for any additional non-conviction material, including cases pending, which the Police consider relevant for Disclosure.

Cost

There is a charge for every Disclosure Application except those Applications falling within the definition of a volunteer. In addition, organisations must pay a one-off Registration Fee to enable them to use AccessNI's services.

Definition of Volunteer

Anyone who gives their time in a position in a non-profit organisation, free of charge, doing something for the good of the community or a voluntary group (for which they may get travelling and other out-of-pocket expenses) and which is not for their own benefit or for the benefit of a close relative.

This policy has been developed to make good on a longstanding commitment made by the government to make special provision for volunteers under the new service.

It is important however that the provision of free disclosures operates fairly and efficiently. This means that we wish to avoid situations where customers are meeting costs which should rightly be carried by government; or where the government is effectively double-funding some organisations by giving direct financial support as well as free disclosures. This would place an undue burden on paying customers - which will include a number of organisations in the not-for-profit sector.

It is therefore our intention to exclude from eligibility for free disclosures volunteers within the two specific and narrowly defined categories outlined below. The exclusions attach to the delivery of statutory services or funding supplied for defined projects. In each case, the exclusion proposed is not intended to remove support from volunteers but rather to recognise the provision of government funding from another source.

AccessNI charges for the following services:

1. Basic Disclosures (£26).
2. Standard Disclosures (£26).
3. Enhanced Disclosures (£30).
4. Registration of an organisation which includes the equivalent of managing Registered Body details and an Enhanced Check on the Lead Signatory (£150).
5. Registration of each Counter-signatory (£10).

AccessNI does not charge for:

- Disclosure Checks for volunteers who meet the criteria.
- Advice and assistance to Applicants and Registered Bodies.

- Removal of Counter-signatories.

For further clarification or assistance please contact AccessNI on 028 90259100, or visit their web site at www.accessni.gov.uk

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007

Background to Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups

Following the murders of Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells by Ian Huntley (a school caretaker) in 2002, the Bichard Inquiry was commissioned to examine the reasons why this happened and the lessons to be learned. One of the key issues this Inquiry looked at was the way in which organisations recruit and select people to work with children and vulnerable adults. The inquiry asked whether the way organisations check the background of applicants is reliable enough and also whether organisations should be responsible for deciding whether a job applicant can be safely employed.

One of the Inquiry's recommendations was the need for a single agency to determine if individuals who want to work or volunteer with children, young people and vulnerable adults are suitable to do so.

As a result, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 was introduced to establish an Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), now replaced with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as of 1 December 2012.

Every person who wants to work or volunteer with children, young people or vulnerable adults must be registered with the DBS. In Northern Ireland, applications for DBS registration will be processed by AccessNI.

An individual, who is registered with the DBS may be placed on a barred list by the DBS if he/she engages in relevant conduct subsequent to registration. Individuals convicted of specified offences can also be automatically barred from work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

The DBS will hold a list of all those who are barred from working with children and young people and a separate list of those barred from working with vulnerable adults. These are called the Barred Lists and will replace the existing Disqualification from Working with Children (DWC) List, the Unsuitable Persons List (UP List) and the Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults (DWVA) List, as well as the current system of Disqualification Orders established under POCVA.

Individuals on existing barred lists [as described above] will be considered for transfer to the new barred lists through a process of migration undertaken by the DBS. If DBS registration is withdrawn as a result of barring, any employer/organisation that has registered an interest in the individual will be informed immediately. Organisations will also be able to carry out free on-line checks of DBS registration on those they are intending to employ/involve in volunteering.

Implications for organisations funded by Northern Ireland Screen

From 26 July 2010, when someone new is recruited to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, the individual must be registered with the DBS. The organisation must check that the person is registered with the DBS before allowing them to commence employment. This will determine whether or not the organisation can allow them to take up a regulated activity, and may affect what activities they can undertake.

Following a review of the Vetting and Barring Scheme in 2011, changes were made to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

New Disclosure and Barring Service Goes Live

The new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), a merger of the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Criminal Records Bureau, has become operational. The DBS will have responsibility for maintaining the list of individuals barred from engaging in regulated activity with children and the list of individuals barred from engaging in regulated activity with adults, making decisions as to whether a person should be included in one or both barred lists, and reaching decisions as to whether to remove an individual from a barred list. AccessNI will continue to provide disclosure services in Northern Ireland.

For more information visit: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/svg.htm/

'Regulated' activity

Regulated activity still excludes family arrangements and personal, non-commercial arrangements.

Regulated activity relating to children:

- (i) Unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or providing advice/guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children;

- (ii) Work for a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: e.g. schools, children's homes, childcare premises, a children's hospital **but** not work by supervised volunteers in those places;

Work under (i) or (ii) is regulated activity only if done frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30-day period; by the same person, engaged in work for or in connection with the purposes of the establishment; and it gives the person the opportunity, in their work, to have contact with children.

Regulated activity relating to adults:

The new definition of regulated activity relating to adults no longer labels adults as 'vulnerable'. Instead, the definition identifies the activities which, if any adult requires them, lead to that adult being considered vulnerable at that particular time. This means that the focus is on the activities required by the adult and not on the setting in which the activity is received, nor on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult receiving the activities.

This means, for example, anyone providing personal care to an adult is in regulated activity irrespective of whether that occurs in, say, a hospital, a care home, a day care centre, a prison or in sheltered housing. There is no longer a requirement for a person to carry out the activities a certain number of times before they are engaging in regulated activity.

An adult is a person aged 18 years or over.

'Controlled' Activity

Following a review of the Vetting and Barring Scheme in 2011, changes were made to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

With effect from 10 September 2012 'controlled' activity has been repealed meaning that the controlled activity category will no longer exist. This category covered people who might have less contact with vulnerable groups – for example, some people who deal with records. It will no longer be possible to check whether such people are barred, although some may remain eligible for enhanced disclosure checks, depending on their role.