

SCOTTISH YOUTH THEATRE

POLICY DOCUMENT

Name of policy	SAFEGUARDING POLICY
Date of Board approval	24 October 2022
Effective from	1 November 2022
Frequency of review	Annually
Date of next review	October 2023

SCOPE

This policy applies to all permanent and temporary staff, the Board, freelance and sessional workers, trainees, work placements, agency staff, anyone working on behalf of Scottish Youth Theatre and participants.

The policy specifically applies to working with any young person under the age of 18. Even though relevant legislation may not cover young people age 18 and over, Scottish Youth Theatre personnel should apply the same principles of care for all participants.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and young people who take part in Scottish Youth Theatre activities
- Provide staff with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

The policy should be included in all inductions for new personnel within the scope. Training, awareness raising and refreshers should be completed at regular intervals and times of policy changes.

Scottish Youth Theatre believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children; namely:

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968
- Equality Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual offences (Scotland) Act 2009
- Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011
- Digital Economy Act 2017
- Children and Families Act 2014
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014)
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| -Safeguarding Code of Good Practice | -Recruitment, induction & training | -Social Media |
| -Health & Safety | -Data Protection | -Code of Conduct |
| -Digital Safeguarding | -Equalities | -Safe space guidelines |
| | | -Complaints |

Policy Review: Scottish Youth Theatre is committed to reviewing this policy and practice annually, at points of changes to legislation and following safeguarding incidents of medium or high severity.

We recognise that:

- The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount, as laid out in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- All children and young people should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, socio-economic background have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children and young people 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
- All children and young people have the right to express their views on matters that affect them

We seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people, a deputy and a lead board member for safeguarding
- Clearly defining the responsibilities of the DSO, Deputy DSO, CEO and lead Board member and lines of reporting according to the nature and subject of any disclosure or complaint
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff
- Developing and implementing an effective Digital Safeguarding Policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- Recruiting staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, young people, their families, staff
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff
- Creating and maintaining safe learning environments and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that may arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensure that we provide a safe physical environment for children, young people, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Providing appropriate sign-posting or support for children and young people in areas of mental health

FILMING, PHOTOGRAPHY AND CONSENT

The documentation of activity is an important aspect of our work to celebrate participants' achievements, to have a record of our work, for reporting purposes and for the marketing and profiling of projects and the organisation.

To ensure the safety of participants and parents/carers, Scottish Youth Theatre will:

- Gain consent from participants for them to be photographed and videoed as part of a project
- Gain parent/carer consent for their child to be photographed and videoed for those under 18 years
- Gain consent for the use of images/film for different uses (reports, printed marketing and digital material)
- Share the final edits of films that include participants in the work with them and their parents/carers where appropriate before sharing publicly
- No use of a child/young person's surname in photography or video content unless requested by them
- Only use images of children/young people in suitable clothing to reduce the risk of inappropriate use
- Only share content through official accounts
- Participants and their parents/carers for those under 18 years, can withhold or withdraw consent at any time

SAFEGUARDING CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Key roles in Scottish Youth Theatre are as follows:

• Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):	Rikki Payne, Creative Director
• Deputy Safeguarding Officer (DepSO):	Annie Lowry Thomas, Artistic Producer
• Lead Board Member for Safeguarding:	Deirdre Heddon
• Chief Executive	Jacky Hardacre

Everyone in the scope of this policy should also adhere to Scottish Youth Theatre's separate Code of Conduct policy.

As an adult working with children and young people on behalf of Scottish Youth Theatre-

You should:

- ✓ Treat all children and young people fairly, with respect, dignity and as an individual
- ✓ Create positive, safe and supportive working environments that enable participants to thrive and where their contributions are valued
- ✓ Be aware of any additional vulnerabilities that some children/young people may face particularly when working with marginalised individuals or groups
- ✓ Be risk aware, not risk averse, maximising the benefits of participation and minimising the risks for participants
- ✓ Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report any concerns or allegations
- ✓ 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 wherever possible
- ✓ Carefully consider the appropriateness of material in relation to the children and young people you are working with; if in doubt, consult with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer
- ✓ Respect everyone's right to personal privacy
- ✓ Be available to listen to the concerns and needs of 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 participants 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
- ✓ Understand when physical contact is appropriate and be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted
- ✓ At the start of a project or activity, politely request that participants do not seek to connect with you on social media

You should not:

- ✗ Ignore, exaggerate or trivialise any issues or concerns raised about the safety and wellbeing of a participant
- ✗ Permit abusive or discriminatory language or behaviour e.g. bullying, taunting, racism
- ✗ Act in a way that could be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- ✗ Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children and young people
- ✗ Share your personal contact details with young people
- ✗ Connect with participants under 18 on social media (for those aged 18 and above you are advised to consider carefully the merits of connecting with participants on social media and the risks you may be placing yourself under)
- ✗ Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- ✗ Promise confidentiality to a child or young person
- ✗ Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour
- ✗ Show favouritism to any individual
- ✗ Make sarcastic, offensive or suggestive remarks or actions (even in jest) directly to, or in front of, children and young people

- ✘ Take unnecessary risks when risk assessments or policy suggests a different approach
- ✘ Deliberately place yourself or others in a potentially compromising situation
- ✘ Develop inappropriate relationships with children, young people or their families, such as contact outside of work
- ✘ Conduct a sexual relationship with a young person
- ✘ Believe "it could never happen to me"

WHAT TO DO

If you have a concern that a child or young person in a Scottish Youth Theatre activity or event is being abused or is in need of mental health support, follow this procedure taking account of these lines of reporting:

Incident or allegation relating to ↓	Incident or allegation relating to ↓	Incident or allegation relating to ↓	Incident or allegation relating to ↓
SYT staff (apart from DSO or CEO), freelance contractor, participant ↓	Designated Safeguarding Officer ↓	Chief Executive or Board Member ↓	Lead Board Member for Safeguarding ↓
Report to ↓	Report to ↓	Report to ↓	Report to ↓
Designated Safeguarding Officer, Rikki Payne rikki@scottishyouththeatre.org (or Deputy Safeguarding Officer if DSO is unavailable, Annie Lowry Thomas annie@scottishyouththeatre.org)	Chief Executive jacky@scottishyouththeatre.org	Lead Board Member for Safeguarding	Chair of the Board or Chief Executive jacky@scottishyouththeatre.org

- Inform the relevant person (as listed above) of your concerns
- For concerns of abuse, using the Scottish Youth Theatre Incident Report Form, make a written record with relevant dates of all details of the facts known to you and give a confidential copy to the relevant person

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

- Stay calm, do not be shocked, try to act normally
- Allow the individual to speak freely, without interruption, but do not question them or attempt to 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 the Designated Safeguarding Officer about it
- Report the matter as detailed above

If you receive an allegation of abuse about any other Scottish Youth Theatre worker (including freelance contractors), a participant or about yourself:

- Immediately inform the relevant person (as listed above) and keep a written record of all the facts as you know them including relevant dates
- Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could lead to further compromise or harm
- In all cases you **MUST** refer the matter to the **relevant person** – do not try to deal with any possible cases of abuse yourself.

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY:

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child or young person, alert the emergency services by calling 999 and provide as much information as possible.

Useful guidance and information:

1. The **NSPCC** have useful resources and online courses on safeguarding issues:
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/>
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/child-protection-scotland-course>
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-performing-arts>
2. **Creating Safety:** Creative Scotland Guidelines for Child Protection, a useful resource for freelance practitioners as well as cultural organisations: [Creating Safety](#)
3. [CPSU Guide 'Physical Contact & Young People in Sport'](#) has useful guidance relevant to drama and dance activities with children and young people
4. Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service [Respectme](#)