

Chelmsford Theatre Workshop – SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduction:

This policy covers all children and young people up to and including the age of 18, and vulnerable adults.

"Safeguarding is to prevent harm; child protection is how we respond to harm." (NSPCC)

Chelmsford Theatre Workshop (CTW) regularly produces plays for theatrical performances which can involve many actors of varying ages and personalities. It has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that when children and young people are involved in a production; everyone involved accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means that everyone follows the procedures below to protect children and reports any concerns about their welfare to the designated person. It applies to everyone connected with the theatre at the time of the production.

This policy should be read in conjunction with all policies available on the CTW document library online, (specifically the chaperone policy and guidelines, role of the Safeguarding Officer, code of conduct and health and safety).

There are four elements to our policy:

- Legislation, policy and guidance
- Prevention: including during rehearsals and performances
- Safeguarding concerns: including disclosures, handling allegations and recording
- Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

Aims of the policy:

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children and young people who take part in any CTW production, in any capacity, from harm.
- To provide directors, cast and crew, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of CTW and to allow cast, crew and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding and child protection issues.

Legislation, Policy and Guidance:

CTW will adhere to the relevant legislation when working with children and young people under the age of 18 years as outlined in the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

Prevention:

We recognise that the "entertainment industry" can be a very "adult" environment and we expect that all staff, chaperones, parents/legal guardians, volunteers and anyone else who comes into contact with children and young people behave in an appropriate manner at all times and remember that "The Welfare of the Child is Paramount".

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

- Acting within the Children's Act 1989 & 2004
- Acting within The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Valuing, listening and respecting their comments and opinions.

- Maintaining a Safeguarding lead person, responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to and all involved are informed and happy.
- Ensuring that any volunteers working directly with the child/young person are suitably trained, supervised and supported.
- Establishing and maintaining an ethos where children feel welcome and familiar with their environment and are informed of personal arrangements: (toilets, dressing rooms etc); emergency arrangements: (fire exits, meeting points etc); and any Health and Safety Procedures (Dangerous equipment, First aid etc.)
- Informing each child who the appropriate person or people are to speak to if they have any questions, problems or concerns.
- Ensuring that all children are treated with respect and dignity and are treated as individuals and offered equality of opportunities.
- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- Gaining parental permission for the use of photos and social media posts where appropriate.
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- using the procedures below to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Rehearsals and Performances:

- Always have a registered chaperone and approved team with the children during performances, and at least one DBS checked adult, or parent, at all rehearsals with sole responsibility for the children and young people.
- All cast and crew should always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and unnecessary physical contact with children); and involve parents/chaperones wherever possible, to take responsibility for the child/children they are responsible for. (Parents must only have responsibility for their own child)
- Recognise the individual needs of the child. e.g. recognising when a child may be tired and may need a break.
- Ensure that children are supervised appropriately.
- Ensure that all Chaperones are registered with the local authority in which they reside and have an enhanced DBS check.
- Ensure that all staff and crew who don't necessarily have close contact with children but who are assisting in the production are aware of their conduct around children.

Safeguarding concerns:

If someone is concerned about a child or young person's welfare, they should tell the nominated Safeguarding Lead (or the chairperson if unavailable) immediately. The Safeguarding Lead will then determine the next course of action and inform children's services if necessary.

Any concerns must be kept confidential and should not be discussed with anyone other than those directly involved.

Concerns can be abuse as detailed below, or any other issues including self-harm, eating disorders, poor mental or physical health; anything that may affect the child or young person's welfare while at the theatre.

Disclosure of Abuse

If a child tells you that they or another child or young person is being abused:

- Always stop and listen straight away, show that you take their allegations seriously.
- Encourage the child to talk, but do not ask leading questions, interrupt or ask the child to repeat

itself.

- Never promise that you will keep what is said confidential or secret – explain that if you are told something of concern that you will need to let someone know but that you will only tell the people who need to know and can help.
- Record what you have been told accurately and as soon as possible. Use the child's own words. Make a note of the time, location, whether anyone else present and of the Child's demeanour.
- Ensure that your concerns are reported immediately to the designated individual.
- Do not confront the alleged abuser.

Handling Allegations

- If a child makes an allegation against a member of CTW (or an adult associated with CTW), it must be reported as a matter of urgency to the designated individual for child protection who will refer to Social Services department for Children's Services. If the allegation is against the designated person then the information should be reported to the Chairman or directly to Social Services department for Children's Services. (This would generally be referred to the authority in which the alleged incident took place).
- The alleged perpetrator should not be made aware of the allegation at this point.

Recording

- All safeguarding concerns should be recorded verbatim, and all emails or messages relating to the concern saved until the issue is resolved
- In all situations the details of the allegation or reported incident must be recorded. Make accurate notes of time, dates, incident or disclosure, people involved, what was said and done and by whom, action taken to investigate, further action taken e.g. suspension of individual and if relevant: reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, name of person reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record must be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know.

Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect:

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm or fails to act to prevent harm. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection.

- Physical Abuse - May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.
- Sexual Abuse - Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, may involve: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in 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 basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- Emotional Abuse - The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, 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.

Conclusion:

CTW are committed to reviewing this policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on:

.....(date)

Signed:

The **Designated Individual** for child protection and safeguarding:

Name: Andrea Dalton

Position in group: Safeguarding lead

Contact details: 07801 628017

safeguarding@ctw.org.uk

Other members of the management committee who may be contacted if chairman is unavailable:

Chairperson:	Mark Sutton	chairman@ctw.org.uk
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Secretary:	Mark Preston	secretary@ctw.org.uk
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Treasurer:	Vic Bence	treasurer@ctw.org.uk
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NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000