



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Zenith Youth Theatre Company takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people involved with the company. We have a legal responsibility to all children up to the age of 18, but this policy is for all young or vulnerable people within our group.

In promoting this policy Zenith Youth Theatre company is keen to take reasonable steps to:

- Provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit and of young people, volunteers and staff;
- Keep young people safe from harm while in the care of its staff or volunteers;
- Comply with relevant statutory requirements;
- Support and protect the interests of all committee members, trustees, production staff, volunteers, sessional workers, students or anyone working on our behalf who have contact with, or access to young people.

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

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2016

We recognise that our volunteers, because of their contact with and knowledge of the children and young people in their care, are well placed to identify abuse and offer support to children in need.

As part of the ethos of the company, the volunteers, committee members and trustees are committed to:

- ensuring the company practises Safer Recruitment in checking the suitability of any volunteers or adults working with children and young adults;

- ensuring we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (Chris Jones) and a deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Scott Rogers) for safeguarding/child protection who have received appropriate training and support for this role.
- ensuring that all volunteers and adults understand, and adhere to, the company's code of conduct;
- Ensuring all volunteers are aware of the needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication and physical activities.
- establishing and maintaining a safe environment, where all children feel secure, can learn and develop, are encouraged to talk and are listened to, where their views are valued and respected;
- making sure that the young people in our care are aware of our procedures and policies to keep them safe.
- ensuring all volunteers and adults are aware of signs and symptoms of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect and know the correct procedure for referring concerns.
- ensuring all volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and their responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection;
- supporting children who have been abused, and carrying out specific actions in accordance with the agreed child protection plan. The volunteers will be trained to listen and take notes; when necessary, and will be asked to provide a witness report of the event. The company recognises that it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

This Safeguarding policy should be read in conjunction with other policies e.g.

- Anti-bullying
- Health and Safety
- Equal Opportunities
- Whistleblowing
- Volunteers Code of Conduct
- Members Code of Conduct
- Data Protection
- Lone working
- Safer recruitment
- Safer working Practice
- Social Media

Types of Abuse

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 also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. 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 in the production of sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional abuse: is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions beyond the child's developmental capability as well as the overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve serious bullying, 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 maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Procedures for Referral

Any volunteer or adult who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, if unavailable, to the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior volunteer in attendance.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will immediately inform Children's services, the police and/or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 as appropriate.

The referral will be shared with the parent/carer, and where appropriate with the child/young person, unless to do so may place the young person at increased risk of significant harm, in which case advice should be sought from the Children's services, the police and/or the NSPCC as appropriate.

Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual members/families shared with volunteers on a strictly need to know basis.

Alleged Abuse by Volunteers

Volunteers/adults must report an allegation about a fellow volunteer/adult immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the company. Where the allegation is against the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the volunteer/adult must contact the deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for safeguarding/child protection. If contacted with regard to an allegation the designated safeguarding lead or deputy will follow the above procedures for referral. An allegation must not be discussed with the alleged perpetrator or other members of group, unless advised to do so.

The company is legally obliged to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if at the end of the allegation process a volunteer/adult is removed from their position,

or if they leave while under investigation for allegedly causing harm or posing a risk of harm to children

If a volunteer/adult has a concern about another volunteer/adult then this should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where there are concerns about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they should be referred to the deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The company has a code for adults working with children and young people in place, which clearly states what behaviours are acceptable and what behaviours are not.

Record Keeping

Any volunteer/adult receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. All records must be dated and signed and discussed with the designated Safeguarding Lead. Where volunteers have observed injuries to a child, these should be recorded on a body map outline, with some indication given about the size of the injury. Volunteers/adults should not take photographs of injuries.

All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.

Written records of concerns about children must be kept, even where there is no need to make a referral immediately.

All records relating to child protection concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential.

The quality of child protection records will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The company will refer to the NSPCC document entitled Records Retention and Storage.

Parental Involvement

This company is committed to helping parents/carers understand its responsibility for the welfare of all members.

Parents/carers will be made aware of the company's Safeguarding policy via the company's website.

Concerns will be discussed with parents/carers. Where a referral is needed, the designated person should seek the agreement of parents/carers before making the referral, unless to do so may place the child at increased risk of significant harm. However a lack of agreement should not stop a referral going ahead.

Training

Trustees must ensure that all volunteers read and are familiar with this Guidance and that all volunteers understand and discharge their responsibilities as set out in this Guidance.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and their Deputy must receive child protection training and undertake refresher training on specific issues as required.

All volunteers must be provided with child protection training on a regular basis, at least every 3 years (minimum). However, it is the intention of this company to provide training annually.

In addition all volunteers should receive safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email and meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Other adults working with the company on an adhoc basis must be made aware of basic information in respect of the company's child protection procedures, including the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Training records must be kept up to date by company, recording the date, focus and level of training received by individuals.

The Role of the Trustees

The Trustees will ensure that all statutory duties with regard to child protection are fulfilled.

The Trustees will ensure that weaknesses identified; within the annual company safeguarding audit; through on-going monitoring of child protection procedures; other sources, are addressed. The Trustees will regularly monitor the implementation and impact of the identified actions.

The Trustees, in liaison with the designated person, will ensure that the company has a Safeguarding policy and child protection procedures in place, which are known to all volunteers and up-dated annually.

The Trustees controls the use of rehearsal and theatre premises inside rehearsal/performance hours and has a duty to safeguard children and young people using these premises. Where services or activities are provided separately by another body, the Trustees, through the designated lead, will seek assurance that the body concerned has appropriate policies and procedures in place in regard to safeguarding children and child protection.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and up-dated where appropriate, however if a weakness is identified in companies procedures, the policy will be reviewed and revised immediately.

Date when policy was last reviewed: August 2022

Date when next review is due: August 2023

..Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Name: Mr Chris Jones

Email: dsl@zenithyc.co.uk

Deputy DSL:

Name: Mr Scott Rogers

Email: dsl@zenithyc.co.uk

Bath Children and Families Duty and Assessment Team:

Office hours: 01225 396111 or 01225 477929

Outside of office hours: 01454 615165

Bath Police Station: 101 or 999 in an emergency

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000