

StageArts Theatre School

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN SEPTEMBER 2020

Our Policy Statement:

“We at StageArts are committed to practices that protect children from harm. All our staff and volunteers at StageArts recognise and accept our responsibilities to develop the awareness of the issues that may cause children harm.”

Definition:

For the purposes of these policies and procedure children are any person under the age of 18 years of age, or those whom are considered vulnerable.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by: -

- Adopting child protection policies and guidelines through a code of behaviour for all our staff.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies only when needed and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers have the necessary DBS certificate in place.
- Making all new staff and volunteers aware of our child protection procedures and policies.
- Appointing two designated people to enable any concerns to be reported in accordance with our procedures.
- We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at regular intervals.

Code of Behaviour - for All Staff and Volunteers

1. Staff and volunteers **should not** spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others. Meetings with individual children should be avoided or take place within sight of others. If privacy is needed, the door should remain open and other staff or volunteers should be aware of the meeting.
2. Staff and volunteers are **advised not to** make unnecessary physical contact with children. However, there may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable, such as providing comfort at times of distress, or physical support. In all cases contact should only take place with the consent of the child.
3. It is **not good practice** to take children alone in a car, however short the journey. Where this is necessary it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents (or guardians) and the person in charge of StageArts.
4. Staff and volunteers **should not** meet children outside of organised activities unless it is with the knowledge and consent of the parents and the person in charge of StageArts.

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5. Staff and volunteers **should not** start an investigation or question anyone after an allegation or concern has been raised. This is the job of the authorities. You should just record the facts and report these to a designated person.

6. Staff and volunteers should **never** (even in fun) –

a. Initiate or engage in provocative conversations or activity.

b. Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged.

c. Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.

d. Allow any allegations made by a child go without being reported and addressed, trivialise or exaggerate issues.

e. Make promises to keep any disclosure confidential from relevant authorities.

7. Staff or volunteers **should not** show favouritism to any one child, nor should they issue or threaten any form of physical punishment.

All StageArts Staff must: -

1. Staff and volunteers **must respect** children's rights to privacy and encourage children and adults to feel comfortable enough to report attitudes or behaviour they feel is inappropriate.

2. Staff and volunteers at StageArts will **be expected** to act with discretion with regards to their personal relationships. They should ensure their personal relationships do not affect their leadership role within the organisation.

3. All staff and volunteers **should be aware** of the procedures for reporting concerns or incidents, and should familiarise themselves with the contact details of the designated persons.

4. If a member of staff or volunteer finds himself or herself the subject of inappropriate affection or attention from a child, **they should** make StageArts aware of this.

5. If a member of staff or volunteer has any concerns relating to the welfare of a child in their care, be it concerns about actions/behaviours of another staff member or volunteer or concerns based on any conversation with the child; particularly where the child makes an allegation, they should report this to a designated person.

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CHILD PROTECTION QUICK REFERENCE FOR STAGEARTS STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

As an adult working with children and young people YOU have a duty to act when you have a concern about a child's welfare.

WHEN TO BE CONCERNED?

If you become aware of information that leads you to be concerned about the physical, emotional or sexual wellbeing of a child.

The information you have may not be enough on its own for a child protection referral. However, it will help your DSP (designated Senior Person) to build a picture of a child at risk.

ALERTS -

- You may see physical signs
- You may hear worrying accounts
- You may pick up emotional distress
- You may notice changes in a child's behavior or presentation
- Someone may disclose information to you.

HARM TO A CHILD CAN BE CAUSED BY

- A parent or carer
- Family member / friend
- Another child
- Stranger
- Member of staff / volunteer

Regardless of the source of harm you MUST report your concern to your DSP CATHERINE GEOGHEGAN. If your concern is about your DSP, you must report it to DIONNE TYSON 07507 566748

WHAT YOU MUST DO!

Know your role

RECOGNISE and RESPOND, do not investigate or attempt to resolve

Don't ignore

Make a written record sign it and date it

DEALING WITH A CHILD'S DISCLOSURE. LISTEN!

Listen carefully to what is said to you. Don't interrupt.

Ask open questions-; How, what, who, when, where.

Be calm, attentive and non - judgemental. Don't promise to keep what is said secret.

Write it down.

Use the child's own words

Note anything else that made you concerned.

Give it to your DSP.

REMEMBER Protection of a child must be your priority.

Delay in reporting your concerns could cause the child greater harm.

Not all abuse has physical signs. If in doubt talk to you DSP