



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

**This Policy has been approved by:
KIT Theatre's Advisory Board**

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Contents

Safeguarding Policy:

1) Safeguarding Policy	page: 3-4
1.1: Policy Statement	
1.2: Named persons and contact details	
1.3: Definitions	

Safeguarding Guidelines & Procedures:

2) Promoting good practice	pages: 4-5
2.1: Good practice	
2.2: Use of photographic/filming equipment	
2.3: Data protection and storage of photography	
2.4: Poor/ at risk practice	
3) Recognising Abuse	pages: 5-7
3.1: Types of abuse & indicators	
4) Responding to concerns and allegations	pages: 7-9
4.1: Receiving evidence of possible abuse	
4.2: How to respond when a child discloses abuse	
4.3: Recording information	
4.4: Reporting the concern	
4.5: Allegations against KIT Theatre staff	
5) Safe recruitment	page: 9-10
5.1: Recruitment process	
5.2: DBS Checks	
6) Training	page 10
 Appendix A: Incident Report Form	 page: 11
Appendix B: Safe Touch Guidelines	page: 12
Appendix C: Information & guidance on safeguarding issues	page: 12
Appendix D: Remote Working	

1 Safeguarding Policy

KIT Theatre is committed to promoting equality, diversity and an inclusive and supportive environment for all children with whom it works. The aim of this policy is to promote good practice, so that all KIT Theatre staff can provide children with appropriate safety and protection. In recognising the different needs of vulnerable persons KIT Theatre actively seeks to meet needs identified to us by children and teachers.

Due to all of KIT Theatre's work being delivered at, or in partnership, with schools, it is the responsibility of freelancers and/or Management team to adhere to each individual Schools' Safeguarding Procedures. KIT acknowledges its duty to act equip staff with the relevant information to act appropriately to allegations or suspicions of abuse.

1.1 Policy statement

KIT Theatre is committed to the following:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Children will not receive any less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, disability, race, age, sexual orientation, religious belief, or ethnicity and will not be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All KIT Theatre employees and/or volunteers who work with children will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, vetted in accordance with legal requirements and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures.
- Working in partnership with teachers acting in *loco parentis* is essential for the protection of children
- Implementing and monitoring child protection procedures and reviewing and updating this policy at least once every two years for approval by the Board and always in accordance with new legislation.

Should any member of staff or freelance artist have any questions about this policy, they should be referred to one of KIT Theatre's Safeguarding Officer Tom Bowtell.

1.2 Named persons and contact details

Agency	Named Person(s)	Telephone Number
KIT Child Protection Officer	Tom Bowtell	07932 327 536
Child Line	Advisor	0800 1111
NSPCC	Advisor	0808 800 5000
London Safeguarding Board	Advisor	020 83594049 020 7934 9713
KIT Advisory Board	Callum Lee (Chair)	07970 525 407

1.3 Definitions

A **child** is defined as anyone under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989).

Safeguarding children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment,
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development,
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care,
- taking action to ensure all children have the best chance in life.

Child Protection is defined as measures and structures to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence affecting children.

2 Promoting Good Practice

The good practice highlighted below outlines a code of behaviour for members of staff, freelancers and volunteers when working with children for KIT Theatre. Each child has the right to protection from all forms of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore **NOT** the responsibility of people working at KIT Theatre to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It **IS** however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child, as explained in section 4.

It is also their responsibility under the direction of KIT Theatre management team to implement all applicable controls, procedures and vetting arrangements which are in place to safeguard children and to follow up through the appropriate channels any concerns raised.

2.1 Good practice

All KIT Theatre freelancers, employees and volunteers should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always put the welfare of the child first.
- Treat all children equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always engage with children in an open environment i.e. avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where any form of manual or physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child (please refer to Safe Touch Guidelines, Appendix B).
- Make the experience of KIT Theatre's programme fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying.
- Be an excellent role model, provide an example of good conduct: e.g. being mindful of language used; adhering to a school's system; dressing appropriately for the activity being delivered.
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Keep their personal lives separate and maintain appropriate boundaries (e.g not sharing mobile numbers or personal information).
- Report any issues of concern to a school member of staff, typically the designated safeguarding lead, or KIT's Child Protection Officer.

2.2 Poor/ At risk practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and must be avoided by all KIT Theatre freelancers, employees and volunteers to avoid putting them or the child at risk:

- Spending time alone with children away from others, or being unescorted in a school environment. In situations where this cannot be avoided, make yourself as visible as possible (e.g. do not have your back to others, leave a door open).
- Doing things of a personal nature that the child can do for themselves
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in 'fun'.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon (for more information on responding to allegations, please see Section 4 of this Policy).
- Administering first aid, without prior notice to the representatives at the school. Administering prescription or other medications under any circumstances.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form.
- Allowing a child to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Invite a child to their home unaccompanied.
- Accept social invitations from a child.
- Accept digital social invitations.

2.3 Use of photographic/filming equipment

KIT Theatre requires that Schools' own Photographic Consent Forms have been completed by all parents/carers, before taking photographs or video footage. The consent is for the full use of the material by KIT Theatre in any form and in any medium, which reasonably promotes or

advertises the aims of KIT Theatre. This will include KIT Theatre approved organisations, local press and commercial educational/funding magazines. The photography/video footage will not be used for any other means.

2.4 Storage of photography

Photographs and film footage of children and vulnerable persons will be stored in a password sensitive folder.

3 Recognising Abuse

3.1 Types of abuse & indicators

It must be recognised that the below lists are not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. The types of abuse highlighted below are physical, sexual, emotional and neglect.

Physical abuse:

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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Indicators may include one or more of the following:

- Bruising to the head or face or torso;
- Bruising which indicates fingertip pressure;
- Bruising of different ages;
- Bruising or marks in lines which may result from beating with an implement;
- Cigarette Burns;
- Bruises and fractures for which there is no reasonable consistent explanation;
- The child shows fear of adults;
- Adult bite marks;
- Extensive scratch marks;
- Scalds and blisters;
- The child or young person is under the influence of drink or drugs;
- A history of genital mutilation in the family and a current possibility of circumcision;
- The child or young person shows fear of other young children or young people (this may be indicative of bullying).

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving

children in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and other young people, and by people from all backgrounds.

Indicators may include one or more of the following:

- Child displaying inappropriate sexual knowledge;
- Child displaying inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- Child suffering urinary infections, venereal disease, AIDS or HIV, damaged sexual organs.

Emotional abuse:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

Indicators may include one or more of the following:

- Child exhibits disturbed and irrational behaviour;
- Child shows fear of adults;
- Child is unable to relate to peers and/or siblings and is isolated socially;
- Child shows signs of developmental delay for which there is no medical or physiological explanation;
- Child shows low self esteem;
- Child has aggressive tantrums;
- The child becomes depressed or withdrawn and may be suicidal, self-harming or runs away;
- The child shows fear of other children or young people (this may be indicative of bullying).

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. Where there is domestic abuse and violence towards a carer, the needs of the child may be neglected.

Indicators of neglect can be difficult to identify and use. Indicators of poverty may sometimes be misread as signs of neglect. Poverty affects material standards but it does not of necessity affect the quality of care. There can be neglect in affluent households in which children and young people are surrounded by material comfort, but where they do not receive adequate care and supervision appropriate for their age.

Indicators may include one or more of the following:

- Failure to thrive;
- Developmental delay;
- Prone to illness;
- Sallow or sickly appearance;
- Abnormally high appetite, stealing or hoarding food;
- Smelly or dirty appearance;
- Untreated medical conditions.

4 **Responding to concerns and allegations**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at KIT Theatre in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a legal obligation to report any concerns so that the necessary action may be taken to protect the child. This applies **BOTH** to allegations/concerns of abuse occurring at a school (whether by staff, volunteers or members of the public) and to disclosure/concerns that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspensions. For more detailed information, see the Government's guidance document: [‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused’ \(2015\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

4.1 **Receiving evidence of possible abuse**

KIT Theatre staff or freelancers working with children may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. They may see it happening, may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3 of this document, it may be reported to by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

There are a number of circumstances in which staff might suspect abuse. These include:

- a child ‘disclosing’ abuse – telling someone s/he is being or has been abused;
- a child having an injury for which there is no satisfactory explanation or a number of explanations;
- a child behaving or appearing in such a way as to give rise to concern;
- a member of teaching staff has been seen abusing a child.

4.2 **How to respond when a child discloses abuse**

If a child **discloses** information that indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **Stay calm** and listen carefully to what is said. Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
- **Inform** the child, at an appropriate early opportunity, that it is likely the information will need to be shared – do not promise to keep secrets.
- **Reassure** the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- **Listen** to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously.
- **Ask questions** for clarification only so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Do not ask leading questions.
- **Tell** them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- **Record** in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible after the disclosure – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- **Report** immediately the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the School and notify one of KIT's Safeguarding Officers.

4.3 Recording information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made immediately after the allegation/disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Please use an Incident Report Form (Appendix A). Information should include the following:

- The child/ vulnerable person's name, age and date of birth
- The nature of the allegation/ disclosure/ concern, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- Relevant information about the circumstances of your concerns – what you see, hear or suspect to be happening about an individual child and young person
- Details of witnesses to the incident(s)
- The child/ vulnerable person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail.

4.4 Reporting the concern

If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, you must report these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the School/Venue and notify KIT's Safeguarding Officer. S/he will usually decide whether to refer the child to children's social care, but it is important to note that anyone can refer their concerns to children's social care directly. If you don't feel that your concern has been followed up on, it is your duty to report to another person either in the school or within the KIT management structure.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation the report must be made to KIT's Safeguarding Officer who will refer the matter to children's social care.

Concerns should always lead to help for the child at some point.

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures. You can refer to KIT's Whistleblowing Policy if you feel that KIT staff have not dealt with a concern appropriately.

You can report your concern via the NSPCC 0800 800 5000 (24hrs line). When you call NSPCC:

- A call handler will answer and ask about the nature of your concern.
- If all of the advisers are busy then they will offer you three options: either call back later, request them to call you back, or learn about other ways of getting in touch, such as email.
- Next, you will be put through to an adviser who will explain the NSPCC policy about remaining anonymous and ask you to talk about your concerns.
- The adviser will then assess the information, advise you, and decide upon a course of action with you.
- If they need to refer the case to the police or children's services, they will ask you for some details to identify the child.
- If the adviser decides a referral is not necessary, they will give you some advice about how you can help the child, if you want to.
- You will always be in control of what you want to say.

If there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, call the police on 999.

4.5 Allegations against KIT Theatre staff

Staff or volunteers who have become aware of anything which causes them to feel uncomfortable should talk to KIT's Safeguarding Officer about it immediately. All discussions must be recorded in writing by the Safeguarding Officer and an action plan put in place where necessary.

If any member of staff has concerns about another staff member or about safeguarding practices at KIT Theatre, they must report their concerns to KIT's Safeguarding Officer or Chair of Advisory Board.

KIT Theatre's Safeguarding Officer / Chair of Advisory Board will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the Safeguarding Officer / Chair of Advisory Board will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; especially where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases the Safeguarding Officer / Chair of Advisory Board must reach a decision based upon the available information. Suspensions will be upheld if, on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. Whilst proper procedures must be maintained, the welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

5 Safe Recruitment

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers, both full and part time. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children the following steps should be taken when recruiting.

5.3 Recruitment process

KIT Theatre requires:

- Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or an existing disclosure issued within 3 years.
- At least one confidential reference, including one regarding previous work with children should be obtained.
- All employees and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction during which:
 - The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified in a Letter of Agreement.
 - Safeguarding procedures are explained and training needs identified e.g. basic safeguarding awareness.

5.4 DBS Checks

KIT Theatre requires:

- All freelance workers must have an Enhanced DBS check certified within the 3 years prior to commencing employment and/or be registered on the DBS Update service, which allows employers to check certificates online.
- DBS certificates will be checked by the Producer who will record the name, Disclosure Number and date processed, which will be kept in a password secure document. This information will be shared with school admin teams in advance of freelancers visiting the school.
- Freelancers will be employed subject to what is recorded on their DBS form and their suitability of working with young people.

6 Training

All KIT freelance staff will be sent KIT's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy at appointment and new staff and will require a signature of acknowledgement.

KIT Theatre freelance staff will be encouraged to attend annual Child Protection and Safeguarding training delivered by KIT's Safeguarding Office.

KIT's Safeguarding Officer must attend higher level training in order to offer appropriate advice and assistance within the service.

Appendix A – Incident Report Form

To be completed and sent to KIT's Safeguarding Officer

Completed by:

Contact number:

Date:

Description of incident, please include (as much as you know):

- Child's name, age and date of birth (if known).
- The nature of your concern, including dates, times and any other relevant information.
- Relevant information about the circumstances of your concerns – what you see, hear or suspect to be happening about an individual child and young person; allegations of abuse; injuries or bruising.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened.

I confirm that the above information is correct to my best knowledge. I know not to pass on any information disclosed above but may be requested to recount the events in a court of law.

.....
(Signed on behalf of witness)

.....
(Signed on behalf of KIT Theatre)

Appendix B – Safe Touch Guidelines

KIT Theatre recognises that when used in context and with empathy, touch supports the development of our natural interactions with the children we work with. Staff should ensure that they understand the reasons that they are using touch and how to use it effectively.

Staff members and volunteers should only touch children:

- to encourage or assist;
- to prevent imminent injury to person;
- to prevent serious damage to property.

Staff should not encourage children to hold hands or sit on their laps etc. but can encourage children to sit next to them / give a high five / link arms.

Workers need to be aware that for children who have suffered abuse, physical contact may have upsetting connotations and result in a negative reaction.

Cultural factors are significant with regard to physical contact and a child's/young person's culture needs to be respected.

Children with special educational needs e.g. neurodiverse conditions, may be particularly averse to physical contact and need their own personal space.

Staff should be aware that some children are indiscriminate in their affections and in their approaches to unfamiliar adults and other children. Inappropriate touching by children should be discouraged and where necessary the incident should be discussed with the teacher.

Appendix C – Government information and guidance on safeguarding issues

Key legislation and government guidance, including detail on the procedures for reporting and following up concerns may be found online in the following locations:

Working Together to Safeguard Children (statutory guidance)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

APPENDIX D: REMOTE WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

During periods of social distancing, staff may be working from home and in some cases, with young people digitally. This document provides the guidelines for all workers to keep themselves and the young people they work with safe.

WORKING FROM HOME:

When working from home staff will have their own accounts to access emails and a log-in to access files. All files are saved on Google Drive and folders containing images of children can only be accessed by the Artistic Director, Producer and Administrator.

- No young people's details or images will be downloaded or saved on staff computers.
- Staff will not share their accounts or log-ins with other members of staff and only log into their own accounts.
- If young people's images need to be downloaded for photo or video editing then they will be deleted once the edit has taken place.
- Images or videos will not be saved on email accounts.
- Staff will always lock computer or close documents with sensitive information when they are away from their laptops / computers.

COMMUNICATION VIA TELEPHONE:

A company mobile phone is provided for all staff to make contact with young people (or vice versa). Staff will not use their personal mobile phone for this purpose. All company mobile phones are to be PIN locked so that data is not accessible by others.

For in character phone calls, performers must ensure an adult is present.

COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL:

Staff may be required to email young peoples' personal and/or parents' email addresses. In such cases staff should use clear language to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the recipient. It may be appropriate to copy in another staff member for transparency. Log in details of the email account will be shared between the Artistic Director, Producer and designated Teacher. Staff members who have concerns regarding the content of an email that they send or receive from a young person should consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for guidance.

RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE VIA EMAIL OR PHONE:

We recognise that during these times, there is opportunity for children to disclose information to staff members via texts, calls or digitally.

- If a staff member receives a worrying message that they think may indicate that the young person communicating with them is at immediate risk during or outside of work hours, they should immediately refer it for action to KIT's DSL. This information should be passed on by speaking on the phone as soon as possible and an incident report on the situation should be completed within 24hrs and sent to the DSL. KIT's DSL will in turn report anything immediately to the DSL at the school.
- If there is no response from the school or a disclosure takes place out of school hours the DSL should alert the emergency services (in most cases this will be the police) by calling 999 and giving as much information as possible.