



‘inspiring youth, nurturing talent, professional collaboration’

Safeguarding Policy

For the purpose of clarity within this policy, Founders, Company Director, Officers, Production, Creative and Technical teams, Chaperones, volunteers and members, shall hereafter be referred to collectively as BOOM Theatre.

BOOM Theatre is a not for profit community interest company. Boom Theatre encourages education in performance of musical theatre in the community, through acting, directing, general production and theatrical skills to promote positive mental health and raise life aspirations. To help fund its community objectives BOOM Theatre aims to present a youth production once a year and hosts several community workshops with industry professionals to provide the young people within the community with opportunities locally that they would normally have to travel to London to experience.

The main laws and sources of guidance supporting this policy are:

- Children Act 2004
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Government guidance on safeguarding children
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- NSPCC (www.nspcc.org.uk)
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 (2023 update)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The policy applies to BOOM Theatre Founders, Officers, Production, creative and technical teams, Chaperones, members, and all other volunteers invited to perform or work with BOOM Theatre.

Policy Statement

BOOM Theatre acknowledges it has a responsibility under Section 157 of the Education Act 2002 for the safety of all children and young people involved in all of its activity and wants to provide a safe and secure environment for children and young people to flourish and feel comfortable. It also recognises that good safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with its work.

BOOM Theatre believes that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind and accepts its duty of care to safeguard the welfare of all children, by committing to practices that protect them.

The following principles underpin BOOM Theatre's approach to safeguarding and child protection.

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, disability, sex, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children and young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

A child is defined in law as a person up to the age of eighteen years. Therefore the term `child` is used throughout this policy and procedure and this includes young people.

Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the BOOM Theatre:

- Are clear about how to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns about children
- Have a clear understanding of the principles and practice involved in the safeguarding and protection of children
- Understand the importance of prevention in responding proactively and efficiently to all concerns.

The policy aims to ensure that:

- All attending children are safe and protected from harm;
- Other elements are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices
- BOOM Theatre, visitors, and parents are made aware of the expected behaviours and BOOM Theatre's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

Ethos

Safeguarding is considered everyone's responsibility and as such BOOM Theatre aims to create the safest environment within which every Child has the opportunity to participate. We will do this by working in partnership with other agencies and seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities. BOOM Theatre will ensure that all involved with BOOM Theatre are aware of this policy as part of their initial induction process and there will be regular briefings and updates for everyone who has an active role within BOOM Theatre.

Founders and Officers Responsibilities

Their responsibility is to make sure that the BOOM Theatre has an effective safeguarding policy and procedures in place and monitors that BOOM Theatre complies with them. The core group has appointed a Safeguarding Officer who has lead responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues in BOOM Theatre. In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer, there is a deputy safeguarding Officer.

For this policy to be effective, it is essential that BOOM Theatre have an understanding of what safeguarding is, know that 'safeguarding is everybody's responsibility', know how to access safeguarding information, know of any possible contribution that they may be required to make to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults and how to access further advice, support or services.

All Chaperones are licenced and know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse, and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.

All parents/carers are made aware of BOOM Theatre's responsibilities in regard to child protection procedures through publication of the BOOM Theatre's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to BOOM Theatre. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children, the following steps should be taken:

- Safer recruitment procedures are followed
- All Production, Creative and technical team members working with young adults and children should provide relevant details on a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate.
- Our children and young people will be accompanied by a licenced chaperone who will have undergone all relevant safeguarding training and DBS checks.
- Should there be a need to dismiss or remove a member or a volunteer because they have harmed a child, or would have done so if they had not left, we will report this to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) 01872 326536 lado@cornwall.gov.uk.
- Our safeguarding policies and procedures will be annually reviewed and updated.

Company Director and Safeguarding Officer Responsibilities

Recruitment of creative and technical teams could include scrutinising applications, verifying identity and qualifications, obtaining character and professional references, checking previous employment history and that they have the health and physical capacity for the job, and a face to face interview as well as a mandatory enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check.

Where production team and chaperones begin work prior to a satisfactory DBS check being received, they must not work alone or unsupervised with children until the check has been received. If restricted duties are not possible then the individual will not be allowed to start. If they are unable to provide supporting documentation they should not be included in any events involving contact with children as this would place them and the children in an unnecessarily vulnerable position.

Our Safeguarding Officer and the deputy in their absence is responsible for:

- Ensuring all licenced chaperones are up to date with their training and DBS and arranging renewal sessions and new licencing with the local authority
- contacting by telephone the Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU) 0300 123 1116 as a matter of urgency, (for urgent referrals after 17:15 or at the weekend call the

Out of Hours Service on 01208 251 300) in order to discuss the child protection concerns of possible abuse or neglect that the designated person has in connection with the child, being prepared to provide the child's details and follow advice and guidance provided by the person handling the call and as in the guidance referred to above;

- providing a written record of any formal referral by post/e-mail to the Referral and Assessment Service using the multi-agency referral form within 48 hours;
- ensuring that written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral;
- ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from Child records, with a front sheet listing dates and brief entries to provide a chronology;
- ensuring that an indication of further 'child protection related' record keeping is marked on the Child's records;
- acting as a focal point to discuss concerns and liaising with other agencies and professionals;
- ensuring that BOOM Theatre are aware of this policy and know how to recognise and refer any concerns;
- Keeping themselves up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant level 3 training
- Implementing all recommendations applicable to BOOM Theatre arising from serious case reviews.

DISCLOSURE

If a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person:

- stay calm and listen carefully;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you;
- do not investigate or ask leading questions;
- let the child know that you will need to tell the safeguarding officer or deputy;
- not promise to keep what they have told you a secret;
- inform the safeguarding officer/deputy as soon as possible; and

- make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which will be signed, and dated using BOOM Theatre safeguarding record procedure

CONFIDENTIALITY

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential;
- the founder or safeguarding officer/deputy will only disclose personal information about a Child to other members/volunteers/ Officers and chaperones on a need to know basis;
- BOOM Theatre must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children;
- BOOM Theatre must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being, or that of another; and
- BOOM Theatre will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to MARU with their parents/carers, unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the Multi-Agency Referral Unit on this point.

Managing Allegations against BOOM Theatre.

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members, volunteers, and BOOM Theatre that are working with or may come into contact with children and young people whilst involved with. Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. They can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults. If an allegation is made, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Safeguarding Officer and in their absence the deputy or the Company Director

- The Safeguarding Officer on all such occasions will follow the procedures in the Our Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (<https://ciossafeguarding.org.uk/scp/p/professionals/what-you-need-to-know-if-you-have-a-concern-about-a-person-who-works-with-child>) and will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)- 01872 326536
- The safeguarding officer may need to discuss with the LADO the nature of the allegations in order for appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegation being made.

Officers will also need to:

- Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child or young person to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser;
- contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO;
- consider the rights of BOOM Theatre for a fair and equal process of investigation;
- ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed, including whether suspending the member from attending until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary;
- act on any decision made in any strategy meeting; and
- advise the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations founded, or would have been had they not resigned.
- If the allegation made to the BOOM Theatre concerns the Safeguarding Officer, the deputy and Company Director the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the LADO on 01872 326536 without notifying the Company director/Safeguarding Officer/deputy first.

BOOM Theatre Conduct

Stated below are the standards of behaviour required of BOOM Theatre in order to fulfil their roles and to ensure that they conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of BOOM Theatre.

Attitudes

- Treat all children equally and with respect and dignity.
- Value each child and recognise the unique contribution of each individual.
- Encourage each child and always listen to what he or she is saying.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism. By Example
- Be an excellent role model – (do not smoke, drink or use inappropriate language in the company of children and challenge any inappropriate behaviour by a child or an adult working with children).

- Respect children's right to privacy.
- Never allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking situations.
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures.
- Never reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Never allow or encourage abusive peer activities.
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to or within the hearing of a child even in fun.

One to One Contact

- Always work in an open environment - avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment (no secrets).
- Involve parents/carers and other key influencers wherever possible.
- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others. If privacy is needed ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts.
- Never allow a child to travel on his or her own with you in a vehicle.
- Never share a room with a child.
- Never take children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Never enter a toilet with children unless another adult is present or gives permission.

Physical contact

- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Never allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching or contact of any kind.
- Never engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Never physically restrain a child unless the restraint is to prevent physical injury, damage to property or the commission of a criminal offence.

General

- Be aware that someone might misinterpret your actions no matter how well intentioned.
- Secure parental consent for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment wherever such prior permission seems appropriate
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Obtain written consent prior to any photographs, videoing or audio recording. · Never allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Never do things of a personal nature for a child or a young person that they can do for themselves. If such an incident arises BOOM Theatre should seek out a chaperone to deal with such an incident.

We understand that Chaperones, production, creative, and technical team members and volunteers work directly with children and young people and should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. The document: 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Working with Children and Young People' provides advice on these and the circumstances which should be avoided in order to limit complaints against staff of abuse of trust, and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse.

We recognise that Officers, Chaperones, production, creative and technical teams, volunteers and members within BOOM Theatre who may have become involved in the case of a child who has suffered harm, or appears likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support by providing an opportunity to discuss their anxieties with the Safeguarding Officer or in their absence their Deputy.

Physical Restraint

We have a procedure in place for recording each significant incident in which BOOM Theatre uses force on a child, and for the reporting of these incidents to the Child's parents as soon as practicable after the incident.

BOOM Theatre will ensure that whoever has used appropriate physical restraint will have a reasonable defence to any legal action against them, if:

- The purpose of the physical intervention was to avert an immediate danger of injury to any person; or an immediate danger to the property of any person ("person" includes the Child); or to prevent the committing of a criminal offence; or where a young person's conduct leads to behaviour that prejudices good order and discipline; and
 - no more force was used than was reasonably necessary in the circumstances
- Wherever possible such events are recorded and signed by a witness. We understand that physical intervention of a nature that causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedure

Prevention

We recognise that BOOM Theatre plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to children by providing them with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

BOOM Theatre will support all Children by:

- Establishing and maintaining an ethos, understood by BOOM Theatre, which enables children to feel secure and encourages them to talk, knowing that they will be listened to.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within BOOM theatre and ensuring that all children know that there is an adult at BOOM Theatre whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Providing opportunities which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.
- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of life
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Recognising that children come from a variety of different cultural backgrounds, BOOM Theatre has developed policies to ensure that we embrace diversity in religion and faith, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

Health and Safety

Assessments:

Risk assessments must be undertaken prior to any activity involving children. These will assess what might occur during the activity, the likelihood of their occurrence and the steps that can be taken to manage the risk. BOOM Theatre's participants in the event should be made aware of the risks. The risk assessment should outline the arrangements for care and supervision and how these will be communicated to appropriate parties. Each risk assessment should be signed off by two members of BOOM Theatre.

Employers and Public Liability:

The Society has cover in accordance with the relevant legal liability statutes for injury to Officer, Members, Production, creative and technical teams, Chaperones and volunteers, visitors and injury to third parties.

Other areas that need careful consideration when planning events include fire procedures, first aid, and access.

Internet

If children are to undertake any activities involving the internet, it is essential that the guidelines be followed:

- Children should be informed that they should never give out their email address or information that could identify them on the internet.
- Children should be closely supervised at all times and not allowed to access any unauthorised sites, chat rooms, discussion forums, instant messaging services and bulletin boards.

Communications

BOOM Theatre should not give out their own personal mobile phone numbers or personal emails to children involved in an activity, or accept friend requests on social media if they are personal accounts.

BOOM Theatre should not send messages to children from their personal telephones.

BOOM Theatre recognises that where there are existing relationships through parental friendships and family connections this information may already have been exchanged. It is requested that for the purpose of BOOM Theatre activities

that only agreed communication through BOOM Theatre social media accounts is used.

Training

All Chaperones will have access to safeguarding training at least every three years, as part of their licence renewals with the local authority. We will also, as part of our safer recruitment, issue information in relation to our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Our Safeguarding Officer and Deputy will also undertake additional level 3 training at least every two years to support the Founders in managing allegations against BOOM Theatre who work with children and young people and to support the annual review of this policy, in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation.

Policy Review

The Officers are responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy and for additional policies that are relevant to safeguarding and child protection.