



Stage One Youth Theatre

Safeguarding Policy and Operational Procedures

July 2024

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1. FOREWORD

Stage One Youth Theatre (herein referred to as 'SOYT') has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children and young people with whom it interacts. Children and young people occupy a central place within SOYT and our work. We strongly believe that all children and young people have the right to be treated fairly, justly and have the right to freedom from abuse and harm. SOYT will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

This policy details the legal requirements, organisational procedures and best practice as applicable to all staff. This policy applies to all SOYT staff, including those who work on a volunteer and freelance basis as well as SOYT's Board of Trustees.

Our policy ensures that all our staff and volunteers are carefully selected and vetted, have the relevant qualifications and experience, and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children and young people in their care. We aim to offer comprehensive advice to SOYT staff members and freelance artists with regards to legal requirements and good practice in accordance with [Working Together to Safeguard Children\(2023\)](#).

All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

We have procedures in place to address poor practice, and to help any child/young person who appears to be at risk, or who appears to be a victim of abuse. We will offer help and support when a child/young person tells us that they are affected by these issues. We will work extensively with external agencies such as the NSPCC and the police to ensure as far as possible that children and young people are protected.

The terms "child", "children", are used to refer to anyone under the age of 18¹. The terms "young person" and "young people" mean a person who has attained the age of fourteen and is under the age of eighteen²; however, a young person is legally a child until they attain the age of eighteen. "Young adult" refers to any SOYT participant aged 18 or over.

We will not tolerate bullying. Incidents of bullying will be investigated and treated seriously. Action will be taken to stop the bullying.

The Chairperson of SOYT is: Steve Clark
The Designated Safeguarding Officer is: Helen Wallis
The Lead Trustee for Safeguarding: Justin Butcher
Contact details for the Safeguarding team can be found at Appendix 1.

¹ Children Act 1989 and 2004.

² Child and Young Persons Act 1933.

2. STAFF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Designated Safeguarding Officer** leads upon *policy development, implementation and reporting*, including:

- Reviewing and updating the organisation's safeguarding policy on an annual basis or when necessary.
- Leading upon contact with Local Authority Social Services in the event that a child/young person is at risk of harm.
- Managing complaints about poor practice and allegations against staff/volunteers.
- Referring relevant issues of safeguarding to the Board of Trustees for consideration.
- Collecting monitoring data on all safeguarding activities across the organisation.
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedure and promoting safeguarding across the organisation.
- Acting as a "front-line" point of contact for any persons concerned about the welfare of a child/young person.
- Providing guidance to staff concerned about a child protection issue.
- Keeping accurate records of concerns about children and young people and actions taken.

The **Lead Trustee for Safeguarding** leads upon policy and procedure oversight, including:

- Ensuring that policy and procedures are fully implemented and followed by all staff/volunteers.
- Being kept informed of all serious safeguarding incident forms and feeding in as necessary.
- Reporting to Trustees upon any observations and/or findings concerning safeguarding.

All members of **staff/volunteers** have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people from harm, including:

- Being vigilant of the signs that may indicate a child/young person is experiencing harm or is at risk of harm.
- Report any disclosures or concerns, as soon as possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- When taking a disclosure from a child/young person remembering not to ask any leading questions.

Staff responsibilities will be detailed in all staff terms of reference.

3. RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND TRAINING OF STAFF

3.1 SAFER RECRUITMENT & SELECTION OF STAFF

Safe recruitment and selection practice is vital in safeguarding and protecting children and young people. SOYT recognises and takes seriously its responsibility to adopt practice which minimises risk to the children and young people by ensuring that measures are in place through this practice to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children and young people or who are unsuitable to work with them. The safety and well-being of children and young people is borne in mind at all times throughout the recruitment and selection process. SOYT will ensure that:

- Appropriate checks are carried out on new staff/volunteers.
- The safety of children and young people is explicitly stated in job descriptions.
- Interviewers question and follow up on gaps in employment history through to the interview.
- SOYT carries out enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for relevant roles.
- Staff will be monitored by SOYT's Designated Safeguarding Lead who will offer appropriate advice/guidance.

SOYT will ensure that at least one member of any interview panel has completed at least Basic Safeguarding Training. SOYT will ensure that volunteer and freelance staff are carefully selected and appropriately supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and young people, by observing the following principles:

Regular Freelance staff:

- Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by a panel of at least two staff/Trustees;
- Selected candidates will be required to provide at least two written references;
- Staff will require a probationary period.

Volunteer and Temporary Freelance staff:

- Persons will meet with SOYT's Designated Safeguarding Lead in advance of an employment offer;
- Where relevant, written references will be obtained to confirm their suitability for working with children and young people.

4. IDENTIFYING & RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

At times SOYT staff may have to respond to concerns about the welfare of children and young people. This could relate to the actual or alleged harm of a child/young person. Alternatively, a child/young person we are working with may disclose abuse directly to you. This section provides information and guidelines on our procedures in these situations.

4.1 IDENTIFYING TYPES & INDICATORS OF ABUSE

In order to effectively protect children and young people against harm all staff should be familiar with the various types and key signs of abuse. The Government's *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023) details four key types of abuse:

- Physical;
- Sexual;
- Emotional;
- Neglect.

All staff are required to acquaint themselves with indicators of abuse (please see appendix 3).

4.2 RADICALISATION

a. SOYT recognises the positive contribution it can make towards protecting children and young people from radicalisation to violent extremism. SOYT will continue to empower children and young people to create communities that are resilient to extremism and support the wellbeing of particular children and young people who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremism or crime.

b. Radicalisation is the process by which individuals come to support terrorism or violent extremism. There is no typical profile for a person likely to become involved in extremism, or for a person who moves to adopt violence in support of their particular ideology. Although a number of possible behavioural indicators are listed below, staff should use their professional judgement and discuss with other colleagues if they have any concerns:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Possession of violent extremist literature including electronic material accessed via the internet and communication such as e-mail and text messages
- Behavioural changes
- The expression of extremist views
- Advocating violent actions and means
- Association with known extremists
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology

c. If staff have any significant concerns about a child/young person beginning to support terrorism and/or violent extremism, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately.

4.3 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

- a. It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad or aid or abet someone to take a child out of the country to undergo the procedure – Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Despite the harm it causes, FGM practising communities consider it acceptable to protect their cultural identity. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. The average age is thought to be 6 - 12 years but it is also thought that the age at which girls are mutilated is dropping.
- b. Although the age of the children and young people with whom SOYT engages is such that they are not necessarily in the 'high risk' category for FGM, a child/young person may disclose that she is at risk of FGM, has suffered FGM or that she has a sister or family member who is at risk of mutilation.
- c. Any information or concern about a child/young person or member of their family being at risk of FGM must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer as a matter of urgency.

4.4 HEARING A DISCLOSURE

If a child/young person says or indicates that they are being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a child/young person is being abused, you should follow the below guidance:

RECEIVE:

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said and react calmly so as not to frighten the child/young person.
- Make a note of what has been said as soon as possible.

REASSURE:

- Reassure the child/young person that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell the child/young person they are not to blame and that it was right to tell; I am glad you came to me.
- It is important that you do not promise to keep it a secret as your professional responsibilities may require you to report the matter. If you make this promise to a child/young person and then break it, you confirm to the child/young person yet again that adults are not to be trusted.

REACT:

- Take what the child/young person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child/young person who has a speech disability and/or differences in language;
- Do not ask 'leading' questions, for example 'what did they do next?' (This assumes they did!), or 'did they touch your private parts?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and that of the child/young person) in any later prosecution in court.
- Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.

RECORD:

- Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.
- Record the date, time, place, persons present and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
- Be specific when noting the words used by the child/young person.
- USE SOYT's Incident Report Form (see appendix 5) to ensure all the required information is recorded.

REMEMBER:

- To share your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Ambassador who will take the matter forward.

4.5 REPORTING ALLEGATIONS, SUSPICIONS OR CONCERNS

- a. It is not the responsibility of anyone working at SOYT to decide whether or not a child/young person is being abused or might be abused. However, there is a responsibility to act on concerns to protect children and young people in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child/person.
- b. If you become aware of any issue or complaint relating to the welfare or wellbeing of children and young people then you should raise these with the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will be responsible for documenting your concern on an Incident Report Form. All concerns will be considered and a decision reached as to whether the concern should be referred to Social Services.
- c. All Incident Report Forms are available from the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

4.6 MAKING A REFERRAL TO SOCIAL SERVICES

- a. If a decision is made to raise a concern with Social Services it will be the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to formally report this concern. If, for any reason, the Designated Safeguarding Officer is unable to lead on this process then a Trustee will make the referral.
- b. SOYT will make all referrals within 24 hours of a serious concern or disclosure coming to light. When a referral is made, SOYT will record the name and role of the children and young people's services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call/referral.
- c. If a concern is allayed and a decision is made not to make a referral then SOYT will still be required to record details of the concern and details as to why a referral was not made. This information may become relevant later on if further concerns emerge.

5. ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT OR ABUSE BY STAFF

5.1 In the event of allegations being made against an employee (staff or voluntary), SOYT has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and employee. The same person must not have responsibility for dealing with the welfare issues about children and young people and the staff employment issues. Two separate procedures must be followed:

- 1) In respect of the child/young person the Designated Safeguarding Lead will lead the process related to the child/young person;
- 2) In respect of the staff member against whom the allegation is made the Safeguarding Lead Trustee will lead the process related to the staff member.

5.2 With regards to the child/young person, the aforementioned process will be followed. With regards to the staff member against whom the allegation is made, the below process will be followed:

- a. SOYT will make formal contact with Portsmouth City Council who is responsible for providing instruction in the event of an allegation of abuse or suspicious behaviour made against a staff member.
- b. SOYT is legally required to alert the LADO (local authority designated officer) to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children and young people has:
 - 1) Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child/children and/or a young person/young people;
 - 2) Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child/children and/or a young person/young people;
 - 3) Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they are unsuitable for such work.
- c. The LADO will instruct SOYT on procedure and what information may be shared with the person who is the subject of an allegation. SOYT and LADO will decide, in consultation with the Police and/or any other relevant agencies, what may be shared in situations that may possibly lead to a criminal investigation.
- d. Subject to advice from the LADO, and to any consequent restrictions on the information that can be shared, SOYT will, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome.

5.3 In all instances SOYT will seek to ensure that any staff member is treated fairly and honestly and that they are supported to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved. They will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process.

6. COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

6.1 COMMUNICATION VIA TELEPHONE

Staff and volunteers should make or receive calls or texts with parents and carers, and should where possible not make or receive calls or texts to or from children and young people using their personal mobile phone numbers. This is not always possible but staff and volunteers should choose to text if they need to contact a child personally so there is a paper trail of what has been sent rather than a phone call.

6.2 COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL

Staff will, on occasion, be required to email children and young people using their personal email address. In all cases staff should use formal language to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the recipient and should be carbon copied to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Staff members who have concerns regarding content of an email that they send or receive from a child/young person should consult the Designated Safeguarding Officer for guidance.

6.3 SOCIAL MEDIA

a. SOYT recognises that social media can be a legitimate and effective way to communicate with children and young people. Contact with children and young people through social media forums should only take place through organisational accounts. Current organisational accounts are as follows:

Application	Account Domain
Facebook (closed group page)	https://www.facebook.com/groups/221807061178223/ *Stage One*
Facebook (public page)	https://www.facebook.com/stageoneyouththeatre
Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/stage_one_youth_theatre/
TikTok	https://www.tiktok.com/@stageoneyouththeatre

b. SOYT does not expect its staff to protect their personal social media accounts (thereby making sure their tweets/content is only visible to followers approved by the account holder); however, it does ask all staff to respect their association with the organisation when posting or communicating on social media.

7. PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO & ONLINE SAFETY

7.1. This policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers and other adults associated with SOYT. The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- Protect children and young people who take part in SOYT's services, events and activities, specifically those where photographs and videos may be taken.
- Set out the overarching principles that guide our approach to photographs/videos being taken of children and young people during our events and activities
- To ensure that we operate in line with our values and within the law when creating, using and sharing images of children and young people.

7.2. Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind, and SOYT has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to take, share and use images of children safely. In doing so, it is recognised that:

- Sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation.
- The welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount.
- Children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- Consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images.
- There are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

7.3. We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image.
- Always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children.
- Making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published.
- Changing the names of children (usually their character's name) whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them).
- Never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information.
- Making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information).
- Reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by:

- Only using images of children in appropriate clothing.
- Using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

7.4. **Photography and/or Filming for SOYT's Use**

a. SOYT may use photography and filming as an aid in activities such as rehearsals. Children, young people, parents and carers must also be made aware that photography and filming is part of the programme and give written consent using SOYT's Enrolment Form.

b. If we hire a photographer for one of our events, we will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Providing the photographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and Behaviour.
- Ensuring the photographer wears identification at all times.
- Informing children, their parents and carers that a photographer will be at the event and ensuring they give written consent to images which feature their child being taken and shared.
- Not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access to children.
- Not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event or at a child's home.
- Reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography following our child protection procedures.

7.5. **Photography and/or filming for wider use**

a. If people such as local journalists, professional photographers (not hired by SOYT) or students wish to record one of our events and share the images professionally or in the wider world, SOYT parents should be informed that there may be a photographer present but SOYT will be unable to make the appropriate checks against such photographer's and therefore should decide if they are happy for their child to take part in the activity, knowing there could be photos or videos taken of their child.

b. At the event we will inform children, parents and carers that an external photographer is present and where possible will try to ensure the photographer is easily identifiable.

7.6. **If consent to take photographs is not given**

If children, parents and/or carers do not consent to photographs being taken, we will respect their wishes. We will agree in advance how they would like to be identified so the photographer knows not to take pictures of them, and ensure this is done in a way that does not single out the child or make them feel isolated. We will never exclude a child from an activity because we do not have consent to take their photograph.

7.7. **Storing images**

SOYT will store photographs and videos of children securely, in accordance with our safeguarding policy and data protection law.

8. TRANSPORTING OF CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE

8.1 Parents/carers are responsible for arranging for their children to be transported to and returned home from rehearsals, performances and events. It is reasonable for SOYT to place full responsibility on parents/carers for ensuring appropriate transport arrangements are made. Where parents/carers transport their own children, or make private arrangements with other parents/carers to deliver or collect their children, they are responsible for their children's safety and for the suitability of any travel arrangements.

8.2 Where parents/carers are also SOYT Trustees, volunteers or paid staff, transportation and lift-share arrangements remain a private arrangement with and between respective parents/carers, and any such transportation and lift-share arrangements are not endorsed by or conducted on behalf of SOYT.

9. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKS

9.1 DBS Check Levels

a. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) exists to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children and young people. A DBS check forms one part of the wider safeguarding process. It helps organisations to determine whether a person is a suitable candidate for a particular role by providing information about their criminal history.

b. Before an organisation considers asking a person to apply for a criminal record check through DBS, they are legally responsible for ensuring that they are entitled to submit an application for the job role. There are currently three levels of check:

1. **Standard checks** reveal information relating to spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings from the Police National Computer (PNC). To be eligible for a Standard Check the position must be specified in the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

2. **Enhanced checks** reveal the same information as Standard Checks but also check against information held by local police forces (for instance, relevant on-going investigations). To be eligible for an Enhanced Check the position must be specified in the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 AND regulations made under the Police Act 1997, which includes work with children.

3. **Enhanced checks (with barred list)** are used to check against lists of people prohibited from working with children and vulnerable adults. These are known as 'barred lists' (see below). To be eligible for an Enhanced and Adult/Child Barred list(s) check the position must meet the above criteria and fall within the DBS definition of 'Regulated Activity' (see below).

c. Access to Standard, Enhanced, and Enhanced with Barred List(s) DBS checks is only available to employers who are entitled by law to ask an individual to reveal their full criminal history, including spent convictions (excluding protected cautions and convictions that will be filtered from a criminal record check). This is known as asking 'an exempted question'. An exempted question applies when the individual will be working in specific occupations, for certain licenses or specified positions. These are covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Knowingly requesting a higher-level check than the legislation allows is unlawful and could be a breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation.

d. The minimum age at which someone can apply for a DBS check is 16. Young people and young adults who are members of SOYT do not require a DBS check unless they are employed by SOYT as staff or volunteers.

e. A DBS check has no official expiry date. Any information included will be accurate at the time the check was carried out. It is up to the organisation to decide when a new check is needed. If the applicant has signed up for the DBS update service you can check whether their certificate is up to date online.

f. An organisation can accept a certificate that was requested for a previous role but must:

- Check the applicant's identity matches the details on the certificate.

- Check the certificate is the right level and type for the role applied for.
- Check to see if anything has changed if the applicant is signed up for the update service.

9.2 Regulated Activity Definition and Barred List DBS Checks

Regulated activity is something that must not be done by a person who is barred. If someone is included on the Children's Barred List, they must not apply to work in a role that involves regulated activity with children. The DBS has recently reduced the scope of Regulated Activity, so that some roles that previously needed a barred list check no longer do so. However, those posts taken out of Regulated Activity remain eligible for Enhanced Checks. In reducing the scope there is now a greater role for organisations in deciding whether a person is a suitable candidate for a particular role. To do this effectively they must also use other safeguarding measures rather than rely on legal provisions alone.

9.3 DBS Update Service

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Update Service allows applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date and employers to check a DBS certificate. The Update Service is for standard and enhanced DBS checks only. For unpaid volunteers there is no charge for the service; however, the individual must register for the Update Service within 30 days of their DBS certificate being issued.

The Update Service enables individuals to take their DBS certificate from one job to the next, unless:

- An employer asks you to get a new certificate.
- You need a certificate for a different type of 'workforce' (for example, you have an 'adult workforce' certificate and need a 'child workforce' certificate).
- You need a different level certificate (for example, you have a standard DBS certificate and need an enhanced one).

9.4 SOYT DBS Checks Policy

a. SOYT will only apply for a DBS Check (including an Update Service check) if legally entitled to do so and with the individual's knowledge and permission.

b. Prospective staff and volunteers are within their rights to refuse to apply for a DBS Check; however, SOYT will not be able to employ that individual for any role or in any capacity for which a DBS Check is required.

c. SOYT will accept a DBS certificate from another employer or organisation provided the individual is signed up to the Update Service, the certificate is for "child workforce", and the certificate is an Enhanced Check. If these conditions are not met, then a DBS Check will be applied for by SOYT.

d. If an individual is not signed up to the Update Service, then their DBS Check Certificate must be within 3-years of its issue. Upon expiry of the 3-years a new DBS Check must be applied for.

e. It is SOYT policy that sessions and events, including rehearsals and performances, are supervised by those with an Enhanced DBS; accordingly, neither staff nor volunteers will have regular unsupervised contact with children or young people whilst teaching, training or instructing. On this basis, SOYT is not lawfully entitled to apply for Enhanced DBS checks (with barred list).

f. SOYT Trustees can be asked to apply for an Enhanced DBS check in the child workforce. Where a trustee carries out other roles for SOYT, then both roles should be made clear in the '*Position Applied For*' field on the DBS check application form.

10. CHILD PERFORMANCE LICENSING

Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England – February 2015

The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014

Children and Young Persons Act 1963

Children and Young Persons Act 1933

10.1 Licensing Requirement

a. Under section 37 of the 1963 Act, a licence must be obtained before a child can take part in certain types of performance and activities in Great Britain. This includes:

- Any performance for which a charge is made, whether for admission or otherwise.
- Performances on premises licensed to sell alcohol, for example in a hotel, a pub, a theatre.
- Any live broadcast performance, for example a television or radio broadcast, internet streaming.
- Any performance recorded (by whatever means) with a view to its use in a broadcast or such service or in a film intended for public exhibition. For example, a live stage performance recorded for a cinema screening, a feature film, a video or sound recording of a performance on a website. (Note that this does not extend to user generated content, for e.g. where young people or a family record themselves and share it on a website or social media).

b. It should be noted that:

- A performance licence may be required whether or not the child is paid.
- Amateur groups and musical performances are not exempt from the requirements.
- Licensing requirements apply only to children under the upper limit of compulsory school age (as defined by section 8(3) of the Education Act 1996) (i.e. up to the last Friday in June in the school year in which they have their 16th birthday).

10.2 Exemptions from the licensing requirement for performances

a. Under section 37(3)(a) of the 1963 Act, if a child has not performed on more than 3-days in the last 6-months, they will not need a licence for performance on a fourth day (the “*four-day rule*”). Once a child has performed on 4-days in a 6-month period then a licence is required for any further performances.

b. If a child is to be absent from school this exemption cannot be relied upon: a licence will be required.

10.3 Applying for a Licence

a. An application for a licence must be submitted to the child’s home local authority. Local authorities are responsible for the administration of licences.

b. Where SOYT is responsible for organising, producing and running the activity or for the production of the performance in which the child is to take part, then SOYT’s Child Performance Licensing Lead will apply for licences where they are required. SOYT is the holder of the licence once it is issued, and is accountable for ensuring its conditions are met.

10.4 Chaperones

- a. A child performing, rehearsing for a performance during the performance period, taking part in an activity or performance under a licence, must be supervised at all times by a chaperone, unless they are under the direct supervision of their parent. Chaperones must be approved by the local authority that has granted the relevant licence to the child as part of the application process as being suitable to exercise care and control of the child in question. The maximum number of children a chaperone may take care of at any one time is twelve.
- b. Chaperones must not undertake any activities or other duties which will prevent them from carrying out their duties towards the child or children in their care.
- c. A chaperone will be in charge of children at all times during a performance except when the child is in the charge of their parent or tutor. They should exercise the care that a good parent might reasonably be expected to give that child, and they must recognise that their first duty is to the child.

10.5 Rehearsals

- a. For the purposes of the Children (Performances and Activities) Regulations 2014, “rehearsal” means rehearsal for, or preparation for, a performance, being a rehearsal which takes place on the day of performance or during the period beginning with the first and ending with the last performance.
- b. The licensing requirements of the Act do not apply to rehearsals that take place before the first day of performance. When considering an application for a licence, and in order to satisfy itself that the child’s education and well-being will not suffer, the licensing authority should have regard to the amount of rehearsals before the first day of performance. The regulations require that information as to the dates, places, approximate duration of and proposed arrangements in relation to rehearsals taking place at any time before the first day of performance must be provided as part of the application for a licence.

10.6 Restrictions in relation to all performances

- a. The earliest and latest hours that a child of 5 or over can be present at a place of performance or rehearsal (during the performance period) are from 7am to 11pm.
- b. The maximum number of hours a child may be at a place of performance or rehearsal, may perform or rehearse in one day and may perform or rehearse continuously:

Age of child	Maximum number of hours in one day at place of performance or rehearsal	Maximum total number of hours of performance or rehearsal in one day	Maximum continuous number of hours of performance or rehearsal in one day
5 until child reaches 9	8	3	2.5
9 to school leaving age	9.5	5	2.5

- c. The maximum number of consecutive days upon which a child may perform is 6-days.

Appendix 1 – Contact Details

Role	Postholder	Email Address
Chairperson	Steve Clark	stageonechair@gmail.com
Lead Trustee for Safeguarding	Justin Butcher	Via stageonechair@gmail.com
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Helen Wallis	stageonesafeguarding@hotmail.com
Child Licensing Officer	Karen Tyler	stageonelicensing@gmail.com

If you think a child is being abused or neglected, please contact Portsmouth City Council's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) during office hours:

- phone 0845 671 0271
- email MASH@secure.portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- At all other times, phone the out-of-hours service on 0300 555 1373

The links below will help ensure safeguarding children policies and procedures are robust and cover all relevant areas – for further information about your safeguarding policy and practice, contact your linked Childcare Development Officer.

- [Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board \(PCSB\) professionals and volunteers page](#)
- [Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners](#)
- [Disclosure and Barring Service](#)
- [Working together online](#)

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), also known as the designated officer, is a role set out in the government guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#).

Portsmouth's LADO is Becky Paradise, who can be contacted by:

- phone on 023 9288 2500
- email LADO@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child.
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteers, casual, agency or anyone self-employed and they capture concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside of work. More information is available on the [PCSB website](#).

Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Staff, Volunteers and Trustees

All staff, volunteers and trustees will be expected to be aware of and follow SOYT's Safeguarding Policy and Operational Procedures, and will be expected to adhere to the following Code of Conduct.

Staff, volunteers and trustees will **ALWAYS**:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Set an example you would wish others to follow.
- Treat all children and young people equally.
- Plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or in sight/hearing of others.
- Follow recommended ratios between adults and children/young people for meetings and activities.
- Respect a child/young person's right to personal privacy.
- Avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust.
- Allow children and young people to talk about any concerns they may have.
- Remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned.
- Take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately.

Staff, volunteers and trustees will **NEVER**:

- Form a relationship with a child/young person that is an abuse of trust.
- Engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact - physical, verbal, sexual.
- Make suggestive remarks or threats to a child/young person.
- Use inappropriate language – writing, phoning, email or internet.
- Let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported.

On occasion, one-to-one contact will be unavoidable, in such cases:

- Make sure it is for as short a time as possible.
- Ensure you remain accessible to others.
- Tell someone where you are going, what you are doing and why.
- Try to move with the child/young person to areas where there are more people.
- Try to avoid unnecessary physical contact.

Appendix 3 – Definitions and Signs of Abuse

In order to effectively protect children and young people, staff should be familiar with the key signs and indicators of abuse, which are detailed below:

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child/young person.

An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury. A delay in seeking medical treatment for a child/young person when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern. Bruising may be more or less noticeable on children and young people with different skin tones or from different racial groups and specialist advice may need to be taken. Patterns of bruising that are suggestive of physical child abuse include:

- Bruises that are seen away from bony prominences;
- Bruises to the face, back, stomach, arms, buttocks, ears and hands;
- Multiple bruises in clusters;
- Multiple bruises of uniform shape;
- Bruises that carry the imprint of an implement;
- Cigarette burns;
- Adult bite marks;
- Scalds.

Although bruising is the commonest injury in physical abuse, fatal non-accidental head injury and non-accidental fractures can occur without bruising. Any child/young person who has unexplained signs of pain or illness should be seen promptly by a doctor. Behaviour changes can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation;
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts;
- Flinching when approached or touched;
- Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather;
- Depression; or withdrawn behaviour;
- Running away from home.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse happens where there is a relationship between a carer and a child/young person and can manifest in the child/young person's behaviour or physical functioning.

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children, young people and vulnerable adults who appear well-cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled.

Emotional abuse can also take the form of children and young people not being allowed to mix/play with other children and young people. The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- Failure to thrive or grow;
- Sudden speech disorders;
- Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour, e.g., sulking, hair twisting, rocking;
- Being unable to play; or fear of making mistakes;
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour;
- Self-harm.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves the use of a child/young person for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others.

Adults who use children, young people and/or vulnerable adults to meet their own sexual needs abuse young people of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Usually, in cases of sexual abuse it is the behaviour of children/young people/vulnerable adults which may cause you to become concerned, although physical signs can also be present. In all cases children/young people/vulnerable adults who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously. The physical signs of sexual abuse include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas;
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas;
- Sexually transmitted disease; vaginal discharge or infection;
- Stomach pains;
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.

The following changes in behaviour may also indicate sexual abuse:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn);
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people;
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level;
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts;
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money;
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults;
- Sexual drawings or language.

NEGLECT

Neglect results in a child/young person suffering significant harm or impairment of development as a result of being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.

Neglect can be a very difficult form of abuse to recognise. The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Hunger, sometimes stealing food from others;
- Constantly dirty or smelly;
- Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight;
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child/ young person both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying.

Appendix 4 - Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

The following information is in accordance with the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS) safeguarding children procedures manual (<https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/>), in accordance with [Working Together to Safeguard Children\(2023\)](#)

Introduction

Allegation – this is a technical term based on the definition provided by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. It is different to the dictionary definition of the word and the procedure still needs to be followed even if there is clear evidence that the incident has or has not happened. An allegation does not need to be formally made or explicitly described for this process to be followed.

Person who works with children – this covers paid and unpaid employees, contractors, volunteers and those in positions of leadership and management.

Employer – is used to describe the organisation, company, agency or provider that the adult is working for, in addition to those who manage or oversee the volunteer or member of staff.

This procedure applies when it is alleged that a person who works with children under 18 years of age has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

These behaviours can refer to incidents within and outside of the workplace.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse about someone who works with children. All staff and volunteers should know who the responsible person is and how to contact them. If there is a concern about the nominated person, it should be reported to the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding or another Trustee.

Each local authority has a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who receives reports about allegations. The LADO provides advice and guidance to organisations, liaises with other agencies when there are allegations, and monitors the progress of any allegations.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained while an allegation is being investigated. Information should be restricted to those involved in the investigation or who need to know in order to protect children.

Responding to an allegation

When an allegation is first reported, the person to whom it is reported to should keep a written record of everything related to the allegations, including dates, times and places. They should report the allegations immediately to the designated/nominated person.

The designated/nominated person should then obtain written details about the concern and report the allegation to the LADO.

If the designated senior manager is not available, the report to LADO should not be unnecessarily delayed and should be made by the next most appropriate person.

They should discuss the decision in relation to the agreed threshold criteria as soon as possible and within one working day. Referrals should not be delayed in order to gather information. Failure to report an allegation or concern in accordance with procedures is a potential disciplinary matter.

Parents or carers of the child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager should not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents or carers.

The employer should seek advice from the LADO, the police and children's social care about how much information should be disclosed to the person whom the allegation is about. If information can be shared and won't impact the investigation, the employer should inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation as soon as possible, how the enquiry will take place and what action may be taken.

If the allegation occurs outside of office hours and needs immediate action, the children's social care emergency out of hours team should be contacted, or the police.

The LADO and the designated senior manager should assess whether there is evidence that the allegation may be false.

If the allegation is not demonstrably false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the LADO should consider referring to children's social care and ask them to convene an immediate strategy meeting/discussion.

Allegation meeting/discussion

Where an allegation meeting is considered appropriate, it will be called and chaired by the LADO. The meeting should ensure arrangements are made to protect the child involved, and any other children who may be affected, and appropriate support given to all children who are impacted.

Other considerations for the meeting include:

- Recommendations for suspension or equivalent
- Potential media interest
- Risk assessment of employer's safeguarding arrangements
- Timescales for future review meetings

A final review meeting may be held at the end of the investigation process. This meeting will consider if the threshold for a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has been met, will consider if there are lessons to be learnt from the process, and will record the outcome determined by the employer or the criminal and/or social work process.

Referral to the DBS

If an allegation is substantiated and the person is no longer working in their position (either through dismissal or resignation or some other means), the LADO should discuss with the employer whether a referral should be made to the DBS.

The duty to make a referral to the DBS may not be triggered by temporary suspension, it depends if there is sufficient information to meet the referral duty criteria. Following investigation, if the person is returned to a position working in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults then there may not be a legal duty to make a referral. But, if a decision is made to dismiss the person or remove them from working in regulated activity, a referral needs to be made.

Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers should be aware of SOYT's whistleblowing policy and feel confident to voice concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If a member of staff believes that a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately, they should report the matter to the LADO.

Outcomes of allegation investigations

The outcome of allegation investigations will fall under one of the following five definitions:

1. **Substantiated:** there is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation.
2. **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
3. **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.
4. **Unsubstantiated:** this is not the same as a false allegation. It means that there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation; the term therefore does not imply guilt or innocence.
5. **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made or there is an alternative explanation being offered.

Disciplinary action

Where a strategy meeting decides that police investigation or a referral to children's social care is not necessary (or an investigation is complete, or there is no charge or prosecution), the LADO and the designated senior manager should discuss whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Record keeping

Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. Records should be retained at least until the accused has left SOYT or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Unsubstantiated, false and malicious allegations

False and malicious allegations are rare and may be a strong indicator of abuse elsewhere which requires further exploration. If an allegation is demonstrably false, or considered to be malicious, the employer, in consultation with the LADO, should refer the matter to children's social care.

If it is established that an allegation is malicious, that is has been deliberately invented, the LADO and employer will consider if the police should be asked to consider review the case and consider what action may be appropriate.

Appendix 5 - Stage One Youth Theatre – Safeguarding Concern / Incident Report Form

This form is designed to report any safeguarding incidents or concerns. It should be completed by the member of staff or volunteer who has been disclosed to, who witnessed the incident, was most directly involved or who provided first aid if relevant. Once completed it must be submitted as per SOYT's reporting protocols.	REFERENCE NUMBER
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Name & role of person completing this form:	
Contact details:	Date/time report completed:

Details of child or young person at risk or making disclosure:

Name:	
Address & Contact number:	
Date of birth:	
Have parents/carers been notified of the incident?	Yes / No

Incident Details:

Date/ Time:	Location of incident:
Description of the incident or concern: (continue on separate sheet if necessary & include reference number): <i>(Include relevant information such as what happened and how it happened, description of any injuries sustained, behaviour witnessed and whether the information provided is being recorded as fact, opinion or hearsay)</i>	
Child or young person at risk account of the incident or concern: <i>(use their own words)</i>	

Witness account of incident or concern: *(include further accounts on separate sheets as necessary. Include reference number on each accompanying account)*

Details of any witnesses:

Name(s): <i>(Consider anonymising where this will not negatively impact the ability to take immediate response actions)</i>	Relationship to child or young person at risk:	Contact details:
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Details of any persons involved in the incident or alleged to have caused the incident, injury or presenting risk:

Name(s): <i>(Consider anonymising where this will not negatively impact the ability to take immediate response actions)</i>	Relationship to child, young person or adult at risk:	Contact details:
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Outcome of incident & immediate actions taken: (tick box and details where relevant)

First aid provided	
Ambulance/medical attention required	
Police attended	
Any disciplinary actions	

Signed By Author:	Name:	Date:
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Reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) section: (to be completed by DSL)

Date & time DSL notified of incident/concern:
Date & time this form passed on to DSL (if different from above):
DSL comments: <i>(actions taken / impact on rest of programme / external agency involvement / initial lessons learned / follow-up actions required):</i>

External agency referral: (tick box where relevant)		
Social services notified – Y/N	LADO notified – Y/N	Other referral made – Y/N
Date & time of referral:	Date & time of referral:	Agency:
Name of contact person:	Name of contact person:	Date & time of referral:
Contact number / email:	Contact number / email:	Name of contact person:
Agreed action or advice given:	Agreed action or advice given:	Contact number / email:
		Agreed action or advice given:

Signed By DSL:	Name:	Date:
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For SOYT Office Use Only:

Follow-up action required:		
Action:	Due date:	Whom responsible:

Appendix 6 – Maintaining Professional Boundaries

Appropriate language

You can and should develop good, strong, trusting and friendly relationships with the members that you engage with, but you are not forming “friendships” with them. On this basis always be thoughtful about the language that you might be using. Sensitive thought and challenge should be explored in relation to inappropriate language or terms. Examples to avoid include:

- Use of inappropriate names or terms of endearment.
- Inappropriate conversation or enquiries of a sexual nature.
- Inappropriate comments about either party’s appearance, including excessive flattering or personal criticism.
- Disrespectful or discriminatory treatment of, or manner towards, young people based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation.
- Humiliation, profanity or vilification.
- Suggestive humour, “banter”, jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature.
- Obscene or inappropriate gestures and language.

Personal space

Respect the personal space and privacy of all members. Remember that young people can read different interpretations into our actions. It is also very easy for these situations to escalate if we are not sensitively, proactively and dynamically challenging and managing boundaries. The exception to this will always be related to safeguarding and the safe management of risk. Examples to avoid:

- Unwarranted or unwanted touching of a member personally or with objects (e.g. pencil, book, ruler etc).
- Corporal punishment (physical discipline, pushing, shoving, smacking).
- Initiating, permitting or requesting inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a member (hugs, kisses, tickling, play fighting) or facilitating situations which unnecessarily result in close physical contact.

SOYT and home

SOYT and home or the personal and the professional should be held separately. Remaining “in role” at all times minimises the likelihood of false, or unfounded allegation and ensures that professional codes of conduct are adhered to. Examples to avoid:

- Inviting, allowing or encouraging members to meet you outside of SOYT.
- Allowing members to access to a staff member’s personal internet locations and personal devices (e.g. social networking sites).
- Attending member’s social gatherings.
- Being alone with a member outside of a staff member’s responsibilities unless agreed by a senior member of staff.

- Entering changing rooms or toilets occupied by members when supervision is not required or appropriate or using toilet facilities allocated to members. Undressing using facilities set aside for members, or in their presence.
- Transporting a member unaccompanied without prior permission.
- One-to-one tutoring, mentoring or coaching of members without the prior agreement.
- Giving personal gifts or special favours. Singling the same members out for special duties or responsibilities.

Collusion

Be careful not to collude with members. Be aware that children and young people can draw adults into conversations and situations. We should always remain within the boundaries of our professional role.

Modelling behaviour

Challenge discriminatory and/or non-inclusive language/jokes. We are role models to the members that we work with, and it is important that we promote and respect difference. We also have a responsibility to challenge negative ideas, assumptions, behaviour and language whenever it occurs. This is how young people will learn new ways of thinking about themselves and others.

Confidentiality

Avoid discussing information regarding other SOYT members or members of staff or volunteers. Be aware of being overheard while on your mobile phone or talking to other staff.

Gifts, loaning and borrowing

Avoid giving members gifts and lending or borrowing items. There are issues of power, control and equality involved in these areas. Members are not encouraged to offer gifts to staff or volunteers.