



# Big Stars Theatre School: **Children's Safeguarding Policy**

**Children's Safeguarding Policy for Big Stars  
Theatre School, Big Stars Birthday Parties &  
Big Stars Sport and Fitness.**

<p>1st September 2022 Jessica Bouch</p>
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## **Introduction**

Big Stars Theatre School understands that it has a duty of care as well as a legal and moral responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every person we come into contact with through our classes and course regardless of age, gender, identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin. We recognise the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take and understand Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Big Stars Theatre School is committed to working to provide a safe environment and an enjoyable experience for all. And will not tolerate bullying, abuse, exploitation or any targeted behaviour.

We acknowledge that all members have a right to protection, and we must take into account the needs of those who may be particularly vulnerable such as children, young people and adults at risk.

We are committed to addressing safeguarding throughout our organisation through prevention, reporting and response.

Big Stars Theatre School will:

- Protect children, young people and adults at risk, who receive Big Stars Theatre School's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- Provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Big Stars Theatre School including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers and students. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

## **Definitions:**

The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is: anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or are in hospital.

Adult at Risk:

- An adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and

- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Child and Adult Abuse: Children and adults may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their daily lives. There are 4 main categories of abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional abuse, and neglect. It is important to be aware of more specific types of abuse that fall within these categories, they are:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child Criminal exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Historical abuse
- Online abuse

### **What do we mean by Safeguarding?**

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding children: Safeguarding children is defined in [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) 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 enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **What is abuse?**

Abuse is when someone causes us harm or distress.

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse.

Harm is defined as all harmful conduct and/or: behaviour that causes physical or psychological harm for example harassment and intimidation, causing fear, alarm or distress.

Types of abuse:

- physical abuse
- psychological abuse
- rape
- sexual assault
- verbal abuse
- elder abuse
- financial abuse
- emotional abuse
- domestic violence
- bullying/cyberbullying
- child sexual exploitation
- child trafficking
- human trafficking
- criminal exploitation/gangs
- female genital mutilation
- grooming
- neglect

There are four main categories of child abuse: **physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.**

### **Identifying abuse**

There are different types of child abuse and the signs that a child is being abused may depend on the type of abuse they are facing.

#### **Physical abuse**

If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, this should be reported.

Physical abuse signs include:

- bruises
- broken or fractured bones
- burns or scalds
- bite marks.

It can also include other injuries and health problems, such as:

- scarring
- the effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures
- breathing problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning.

Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse. Visible signs include:

- swelling

- bruising
- fractures
- being extremely sleepy or unconscious
- breathing problems
- seizures
- vomiting
- unusual behaviour, such as being irritable or not feeding properly.

### **Emotional abuse**

Children who are being emotionally abused may:

- seem unconfident or lack self-assurance
- struggle to control their emotions
- have difficulty making or maintaining relationships
- act in a way that's inappropriate for their age.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused or neglected might:

- be overly-affectionate to strangers or people they don't know well
- seem unconfident, wary or anxious
- not have a close relationship or bond with their parent
- be aggressive or cruel towards other children or animals.

Signs in older children:

- use language you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- act in a way or know about things you wouldn't expect them to know for their age
- struggle to control their emotions
- have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills
- have few or no friends.

### **Sexual abuse**

Signs of sexual abuse in children include:

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.
- Bruises.
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area.
- Sexually transmitted infections.
- Pregnancy.

If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might:

- spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Children and young people might also drop hints and clues about the abuse.

## **Neglect**

Signs a child is being neglected include:

- being smelly or dirty
- being hungry or not given money for food
- having unwashed clothes
- having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter
- having frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants.
- anaemia
- body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- medical or dental issues

- missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- not given the correct medicines
- poor language or social skills
- regular illness or infections
- repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
- skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- thin or swollen tummy
- tiredness
- untreated injuries
- weight or growth issues.
- living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- being left alone for a long time
- taking on the role of carer for other family members.
- becoming clingy
- becoming aggressive
- being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- changes in eating habits
- displaying obsessive behaviour
- finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
- missing school
- showing signs of self-harm
- using drugs or alcohol.

**Legal Framework:** This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England and Wales.

### **The Prevent duty**

Some organisations in England, Scotland and Wales have a duty, as a specified authority under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. These organisations include:

- Schools
- Registered childcare providers
- Local authorities

- Police
- Prisons and probation services
- NHS trusts and foundations.
- Other organisations may also have Prevent duties if they perform delegated local authority functions.

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme.

**Radicalisation** is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.

**Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

### **Training and Awareness**

Big Stars Theatre School will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its Employees, Volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (e.g. contractors).

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children.
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and take action.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding Alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children.
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

Similarly, employees and volunteers may encounter concerns about the safety and wellbeing of an adult at risk of abuse.

### **Reporting Safeguarding concerns**

All members and volunteers are obliged to report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Jessica Bouch.

Big Stars Theatre School will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to all staff members and volunteers.

Reports should be made immediately in writing. Any person making a safeguarding report should locate the reporting form.

Big Stars Theatre School will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.



Under no circumstances should any member of staff or the safeguarding team investigate the safeguarding issue themselves. This is to follow the reporting procedure and given to the correct authorities immediately

Under no circumstances should any safeguarding issue be posted on to any form of social media or discussed with parties outside the safeguarding protocol.

**Confidentiality and Information Sharing:** Big Stars Theatre School expects all employees, volunteers and anyone else linked to the organisation to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

*However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.*

**Recording and Record Keeping:** A written record must be kept about any concern regarding an adult with safeguarding needs. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decisions made and why they were made. All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

## **Safe Recruitment & Selection**

Big Stars Theatre School is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

Big Stars Theatre School will:

- Hold interviews with consistent questions
- Ask about values as well as skills
- Request a DBS
- Share information about child protection and good practice
- Zero tolerance of unacceptable behaviour or language

## **Social Media**

Big Stars Theatre School asks that the parent/guardian of every new student fills in an enrolment form. This form lists our terms and conditions and asks for consent to use a child's image on the organisation's social media pages.

It's important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have photographs and films of their special moments. Family and friends also want to be able to share the successes of their children when they have been part of a special event or activity. However, some children, parents or carers may not be comfortable with images of themselves or their children being shared. Examples of this may include:

- if a child and/or their family have experienced abuse they may worry about the perpetrator tracing them online

- children who choose not to have contact with some members of their family may decide to minimise their online presence
- families may have religious or cultural reasons for choosing not to be photographed.

### **Staff's use of social media**

Any misuse of social networking sites that has a negative impact on the setting may be regarded as a disciplinary offence. Instances where the setting is brought into disrepute may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct and disciplinary action will be taken.

Staff must not post comments that can be interpreted as: Personal attack, Defamation, Bullying and harassment, Spam, Offensive comment or Illegal activities.

Members of staff may from time to time be engaged in work related social media in which they post to company social media profiles.

### **Use of Mobile Phones and other Digital Technology**

Teachers and staff members may be required to use their mobile phone as part of their class delivery for Big Stars Theatre School. This may be for:

- Music
- Photographs
- Videos
- Electronic scripts
- Contacting the parent/guardian of a student

All employees and volunteers should be aware that it is unlawful to photograph children and young people without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities and should refer to Big Stars Theatre School's Student Database to ensure written permission has been obtained.

### **Whistleblowing**

It is important that people within Big Stars Theatre School have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong- doing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by Big Stars Theatre School to protect whistleblowers.

### **Important Contacts**

Designated Safeguarding Lead  
(Level 3 Safeguarding Training)

Name: Jessica Bouch

Email address: [jessiebouch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jessiebouch@hotmail.co.uk) or [bigstarstheatreschool@outlook.co.uk](mailto:bigstarstheatreschool@outlook.co.uk)

Telephone number: 07527712354

**Police**

Emergency – 999

Non-emergency – 101

**NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000

**Flintshire Adult Social Services - Single Point of Access**

Preswylfa, Hendy Road, Mold, CH7 1PZ.

Telephone: 03000 858858

E-mail: [spoa@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:spoa@flintshire.gov.uk)

**Flintshire Children's Social Services**

County Offices, Chapel Street, Flint, CH6 5BD.

Telephone: 01352 701000

**Chester Adult Social Care**

0300 123 7034

Emergency OOH - Telephone: 01244 977277

Email: [emergencydutyteam@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:emergencydutyteam@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**Chester Children's Social Care**

0300 123 7047

[i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:i-ART@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Emergency OOH - 01244 977277

[edt2@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:edt2@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

01244 977277