



# On The Mark Youth Theatre

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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<b>Organisation</b>	On The Mark Youth Theatre (OTMYT)	<b>Contact</b>	enquiries@otmyt.co.uk
<b>Document owner</b>	Janice Craine	<b>Review date</b>	May 2027
<b>Applies to</b>	Staff, workers, freelancers and volunteers	<b>Status</b>	Current

### Statement of commitment

OTMYT is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all children and young people involved in our activities. We believe that every child has the right to participate in theatre and the performing arts free from harm, abuse or neglect.

The welfare of the child is paramount in all decisions and activities undertaken by OTMYT.

This policy applies to all staff, workers, freelancers, volunteers, licensed chaperones and anyone working on behalf of OTMYT.

### Purpose and scope

OTMYT provides weekly sessions, rehearsals, workshops, productions and occasional trips or events. These may take place at Christleton High School, theatre venues including Storyhouse, and other suitable locations.

OTMYT is led by an overall organisation lead and a Principal. The Principal oversees welfare, safeguarding and the smooth running of sessions and productions, while tuition and creative delivery are provided by a specialist team. This structure helps ensure that a senior member of staff is available during activities and performances.

### Safeguarding leads

Role	Name
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Janice Craine - Principal
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Simon Phillips - Artistic Director

The DSL and Deputy DSL are responsible for responding to safeguarding concerns, maintaining safeguarding records and ensuring appropriate action is taken where necessary.

## Guidance and legislation

This policy has been developed with reference to relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, where relevant to OTMYT practice
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
- Relevant local safeguarding procedures

## Safer recruitment, DBS and training

OTMYT is committed to safer recruitment and to ensuring that adults working with children are suitable for their roles.

- All permanent staff and regular volunteers working with children are required to hold an appropriate Enhanced DBS check.
- Staff and regular volunteers are expected to be registered with the DBS Update Service so checks can be kept current and monitored appropriately.
- Licensed chaperones working with children backstage during performances must hold appropriate local authority licensing and meet relevant safeguarding requirements.
- All staff, workers, freelancers and volunteers are expected to receive safeguarding guidance and training appropriate to their role.
- The DSL and Deputy DSL should complete appropriate safeguarding lead training and keep this refreshed.

## Equality, inclusion and additional needs

OTMYT recognises that every child and young person should have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe and child-centred environment. We aim to ensure that all children are protected from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation while participating in OTMYT activities.

OTMYT recognises that some children and young people may be more vulnerable due to additional needs, disabilities, communication differences, anxiety, previous experiences or personal circumstances. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to support safe participation.

## Safeguarding commitments

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- work in partnership with children, parents, carers and other agencies where appropriate
- ensure staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities
- maintain safer recruitment procedures and appropriate DBS checking processes
- ensure appropriate action is taken in response to concerns, allegations or disclosures
- maintain confidential, accurate and secure safeguarding records
- prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children and young people
- review safeguarding procedures regularly and update them where necessary

## Professional boundaries and communication

OTMYT recognises the importance of maintaining appropriate professional boundaries in all communication with children and young people.

- Staff and volunteers must communicate with members only through approved organisational channels and in accordance with safeguarding best practice.
- Personal or inappropriate communication between staff and young people outside OTMYT activities is not permitted.
- Photography and video should only be used in accordance with OTMYT permissions and safeguarding expectations.
- Staff should avoid unnecessary one-to-one situations with children and should ensure activities are appropriately supervised.

## Dealing with a disclosure

If a child or young person discloses information that raises a safeguarding concern, staff, workers, freelancers, volunteers or production team members should:

- remain calm and supportive
- listen carefully without judgement
- allow the child or young person to speak freely
- avoid asking leading questions
- not promise confidentiality
- reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing by speaking up
- explain that the information may need to be shared with appropriate people who can help keep them safe
- make a written record as soon as possible using factual language
- pass the information immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL

Staff and volunteers should never attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

## Concerns about adults

Any concern about the conduct of an adult working with OTMYT must be reported promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL. If the concern relates to one of those individuals, it should be reported to the other safeguarding lead. If there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services or the relevant local safeguarding service should be contacted without delay.

## Confidentiality and record keeping

Safeguarding information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis and handled in accordance with UK GDPR and data protection legislation. OTMYT will maintain confidential, accurate and secure records of safeguarding concerns and actions taken.

## Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually, following significant changes in legislation or guidance, following safeguarding incidents or concerns, or where operational changes within OTMYT require it. The most recent version will be made available to staff, volunteers, parents and carers.