



BACKWELL PLAYHOUSE

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Version 1.0

Release Date 12/09/2023

Backwell Playhouse Safeguarding (Children and Adults At Risk) Policy

The aims of Backwell Playhouse are to advance the education of the public in the arts and in particular the arts of drama and literature, and to maintain the Playhouse as a Theatre for the benefit of the public.

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy statement is:

- To protect from harm children, young people and adults at risk who receive the Playhouse's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- To provide all those who use the Playhouse with information on the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

This policy applies to anyone working as part of Backwell Playhouse including the management committee, the board of trustees, volunteers, staff and members. External hirers are expected to have their own safeguarding policy. Where they do not, the Playhouse reserves the right to exercise the Backwell Playhouse Safeguarding Policy and Procedures with the aim of keeping everyone safe from abuse.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seek to protect children and adults at risk in England. It includes The Children and Young Persons Act 1933, The Children and Young Persons Act 1963 and The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014. A child is defined as someone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is found in the link below, which also includes an application form to the local authority for a license for child performance, should one be required.

[Child Performance - NNCEE - National Network for Children in Employment & Entertainment](#)

We believe that:

- Children, young people and adults at risk should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- Working in partnership with children, young people, adults at risk, parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare
- All children, young people and adults at risk have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse, regardless of their age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, gender or sexual orientation.
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues

- Extra safeguards may be needed to keep children and young people who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse (further information available from <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>)

We will seek to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a nominated safeguarding lead trustee/board member with deputy
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for all who use Backwell Playhouse
- Ensuring all necessary checks are made for those who are working with or caring for children, young people and adults at risk in the Playhouse
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, young people, adults at risk and their families via posters and one-to-one discussions
- Ensuring that children, young people, adults at risk and concerned families know where to go for help
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, adults at risk, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage appropriately any allegations against those who use the Playhouse
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, adults at risk, external hirers, volunteers and members, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where anyone who uses the Playhouse treats others with respect and is comfortable about sharing concerns.

Contact details

Backwell Playhouse child and adult safeguarding officers

Lead Name: Jenny Schaefer Phone 01275 851170 ja.schaefer@outlook.com

Deputy Name: Jon Coupe Phone 0797 422 3081 jon.coupe@talk21.com

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually

This policy was last reviewed on 4th August 2023.

Safeguarding Procedures (Children and Adults At Risk)

At the outset of any production involving children or young people, the Playhouse will, either through its own management committee members or through delegation to named external hirers:

- Monitor risk throughout the production process
- Engage chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it is needed.

Parents

- The Playhouse believes it to be important to have a partnership with the parents
- Parents have the responsibility to deliver and collect, or arrange for delivery and collection of, their children to and from the Playhouse. It is not the responsibility of the Playhouse to take children home.

Unsupervised Contact

- The Playhouse will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised one-to-one contact with children
- If possible there will always be two adults working with children
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimize risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a room with a door open
- Where a member of the Playhouse is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, they may be required to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check

Physical contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity, and only after asking the child's permission

Photographs

- Photographs of children will be used in connection with theatrical productions only

Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the Playhouse, please make this known to the Safeguarding Lead or, if they are not available (or is thought to be the source of the problem), the Deputy.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.

Disclosures of abuse

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Show you care, give them your full attention
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. The child can be reassured that the adult that they have a problem with, will not be reported back to. If you receive a disclosure, you can't promise not to tell anyone else, but you can say that you will only tell the person or people who need to know and who can help.
- Remain calm, let them take their time, respect pauses
- Reflect back what you understand
- Tell them "you've been brave telling me" and "you've done the right thing"
- Keep detailed and accurate notes, using the child's own words. Date, time, names, incident.
- Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others, but that you will only tell the people who need to know and can help
- Don't delay taking action – if they are in immediate danger call 999; if not follow the procedure below
- Share the information with the Safeguarding Lead who will liaise with the relevant authorities

Recording

- In all situations the details of an allegation or reported incidents will be recorded
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken (or reasons why no further action was taken)
- The record will be stored securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation

Rights and confidentiality

- Both the alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality. Any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.

Accidents

- If a child is injured while in the care of the Playhouse, the designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the Playhouse's accident book. This event should be brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead.
- If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book, and countersigned by the Safeguarding Lead. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later, and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

Criminal Record Disclosures

- If the Safeguarding Lead believes it is in the best interests of the Playhouse to obtain disclosure and barring service checks for anyone using the Playhouse, they will inform the individual of the necessary procedures. A standard disclosure would be required for anyone with supervised access to children; an enhanced disclosure for anyone with unsupervised access.

Chaperones

- Chaperones may be appointed by the Safeguarding Lead for the care of children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in “loco parentis” and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone’s care shall not exceed 12.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the Playhouse’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care. If unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a Disclosure and Barring Service check will be sought
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting
- During rehearsals and performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children and signing them into the building
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times
- Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised unless in the company of their parents
- Young children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the Playhouse.
- External hirers will be expected to meet similar standards to these, and if the Backwell Playhouse Management Committee considers that they do not, it reserves the right to cancel any performances/bookings.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

| VERSION | CHANGES | DATE OF RELEASE |
|---------|---|-----------------|
| 0.1 | Creation of document | 25/07/2023 |
| 0.2 | Various changes based on initial feedback Confirmation of Safeguarding Lead/Deputy | 04/08/2023 |
| 0.3 | Proposed final draft | 15/08/2023 |
| 1.0 | Released document | 12/09/2023 |