



Safeguarding

Child Protection Policy

True Colours Theatre's designated Child Protection Officer (CPO) is: Daniel Murphy (Chair of Trustees) and is supported by Safeguarding officer, Alison Henderson (Trustee)

Concerns about a child

True Colours Theatre has a duty to consider at all times the best interests of all members and take action to enable all members to achieve the best outcomes. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

True Colours Theatre has arrangements for listening to children and providing early help such as a designated CPO (Child Protection Officer) and members who have been trained in working with young people.

Definitions of Safeguarding and Types and Signs of Abuse

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Abuse can be:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse; and/or
- neglect.



Procedures for dealing with concerns about a child.

If a member of staff/Contractor/volunteer/trustee suspect or hear an allegation or complaint of abuse or neglect from a child or any third party, they must follow the relevant procedure below. Members should not assume that somebody else will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

All members should:

- listen carefully
- avoid asking leading questions
- reassure the individual that the allegation/complaint will be taken seriously
- not guarantee absolute confidentiality (as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child) and explain that the information needs to be passed to the appropriate person who will ensure that the correct action is taken.

All concerns, discussions and decisions (together with reasons) made under these procedures should be recorded in writing. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and detail of what was said by whom and in whose presence and signed by the person making it. Where the allegation relates to harmful sexual behaviours, if possible, the disclosure should be managed with two members of the committee present (preferably one of them being the CPO)

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will ensure the young member's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. This is particularly important in the context of harmful behaviours such as sexual harassment and sexual violence. We will manage this by:

- listening to the child's wishes and feelings - about their situation now as well as plans and hopes for the future;
- Providing children with honest and accurate information about the current situation, as seen by practitioners, and future possible actions and interventions;
- Involving the child in key decision-making processes;
- Providing appropriate information to the child about their right to protection and assistance;
- Inviting children to make recommendations about the services and assistance they need and/or are available to them;
- Ensuring children have access to independent advice and support (for example, through advocates or children's rights officers) to be able to express their views and influence decision-making;
- Considering with them, issues arising in relation to identity, diversity, culture, faith, sexual orientation language, disability, low confidence and trust.



True Colours Theatre operates its processes with the best interests of the young member at heart.

What staff/volunteers/trustees should do if they have concerns about a child

If members (including staff, contractors and volunteers) have any concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger), they should, where possible, speak with the Group's CPO or safeguarding manager to agree a course of action, although members can make a direct referral to the local authority (contact details below). All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing and kept securely by the secretary, after having been discussed with the chairman who has oversight for the group.

What staff/volunteers and trustees should do if a child is in danger or at risk of harm

If members believe that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, they should make an immediate referral to children's social care and/or the police. Anyone can make a referral. Any such referral must be made immediately and in any event within 24 hours (one working day) of members being aware of the risk. Parental consent is not needed for referrals to statutory agencies such as the police and children's social care. If anyone other than the CPO makes a referral, they should inform the CPO as soon as possible that a referral has been made. Society members and committee members should challenge any inaction and follow this up with the CPO and children's social care services as appropriate. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing and kept with the safeguarding officer.

Should concerns require support from other agencies there are a number of ways that issues relating to terrorism and extremism can be reported.

These include the following:

- Dept for Education Due Diligence & Counter Extremism Group: 020 7340 7264
- Anti-Terrorist Hotline: 0800 789 321
- Crime stoppers: 0800 555 111
- Email: specialbranch@northumbria.pnn.police.uk By phoning: 101 Ext 63854
- www.gov.uk/report-suspicious-activity-to-mi5
- www.gov.uk/report-terrorism

Advice and support can also be sought from children's social care services.

***new reporting system for charities**

The government have launched a new online safeguarding reporting tool for charities – you can use it to report concerns for anyone you come in to connect with as part of your work with True



Colours Theatre such as a member, staff, volunteers or trustees. Go to www.safeguarding.culture.co.uk and follow the instructions given.

Reporting concerns about another member of staff/volunteer or trustee

If members have concerns about a staff member, trustee or volunteer, then this should be referred to the CPO. Where there are concerns about the CPO, this should be referred to the Vice Chair of trustees. If there are still concerns, members should contact the local authority child protection services directly – you can also use the safeguarding reporting tool through the Gov.uk website above

Management of safeguarding

The Charity's CPO is Daniel Murphy who is chairman of the Trustee committee. The CPO role is to take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection matters in the charity. The CPO's responsibility is to maintain an overview of safeguarding within the group, to open channels of communication with local statutory agencies, support members in carrying out their safeguarding duties and to monitor the effectiveness of the group's policies and procedures in practice. Alison Henderson is our safeguarding manager and supports Daniel in his role.

Performance licensing

There are strict rules about children performing on stage (under 16) and in some situations a license must be obtained from the Local Authority.

There are two types of license:

- a) Individual Performance License - for each individual performer.
- b) Body of Persons approval - which approves the organisation, therefore all performers.

The Body of Persons approval is preferable and there are strict guidelines for applying. It is the CPO's responsibility to check all the necessary requirements will be met before applying for the Body of Persons approval. A medical form is required to be filled in for each performer, which is kept on site during the performance.



Chaperones

Children must have a chaperone to accompany them backstage during performances. Unless the child's parent/carer/guardian is the one directly supervising them then they must have a designated chaperone.

It is the CPO's responsibility to arrange the necessary chaperones for each performance, ensuring that arrangements are made in good time of a performance. If the necessary paperwork is not in place, then, after consulting with the local authority, the child may not be allowed to go on stage. It is the CPO's responsibility to arrange the necessary chaperones. Each chaperone should have a current local authority chaperone license or be a parent/carer.

Local authority contact

Any concerns may be directed to the local authority's Child Protection Services. For the North Tyneside area this is the front door service 03452000109

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