

Stagedoor Theatre Productions



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Stagedoor Theatre Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding Policy Statements

- Stagedoor Theatre acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring that safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities and government guidance.
- The policy applies to all, committee members and society members of Stagedoor Theatre and where practicable, to volunteers assisting at performances.
- The policy recognises that the welfare and protection of children are paramount in all circumstances.
- The policy aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children and young people under 18 years of age have the right to equal protection from all types of harm, abuse or prejudice.
- The safeguarding policy and procedures of the Society will be reviewed by the Society Committee at least annually or in the following circumstances:
 - changes in legislation and/or government guidance
 - as a result of any other significant change or event.
- Stagedoor Theatre will inform trustees, society members, volunteers, parents/carers of the policy and procedures as appropriate. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.
- The Society Committee will appoint a Safeguarding Officer to oversee the implementation of the policy and procedures and to be the first point of reference in the event of a complaint or suspicion of abuse. Such person shall, if possible, be the holder of a clear DBS certificate.
- The Society Chair will act as the Deputy in the absence of the Safeguarding Officer.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide protection for children and young people aged under 18 years of age who participate in, play with or support Stagedoor Theatre activities
- ensure that Stagedoor Theatre provides a safe and welcoming environment to all, both adults and child society members and their families
- provide Stagedoor Theatre members with guidance on procedures to follow should a concern arise as to a child's welfare and to ensure that their own actions/behaviour follows best practice in terms of the welfare of children who are Stagedoor Theatre members or supporters.
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals

Safeguarding procedures

These procedures supplement the statement of policy set out above. References to a "young person", "young people" or "children" apply to young people under 18 years of age. These procedures are intended first to protect young people from abuse while engaged in the activities of the society and secondly to avoid allegations of abuse against officers and other members of the society.

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

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for members of Stagedoor Theatre .
- Recruiting staff, trustees and volunteers safely,
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, young people, parents and members of Stagedoor Theatre
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people and parents/carers appropriately

Photography & Filming

We will not permit photographs, video or other images of children or young people to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and children. Should Stagedoor Theatre require photographs, video or other images of children or young people for our own promotional purposes we will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. Anyone who becomes aware that these images are being used inappropriately should inform the Safeguarding officer or the society Chair immediately.

Online Safety & Social Media

It is recognised that the internet provides unique opportunities to promote the society including

- vacancies and performances using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and You Tube.
- These guidelines aim to protect individuals within the society and to encourage them to take responsibility for what they write, exercise good judgment and common sense.
- Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to the society's reputation, and can jeopardise compliance with legal obligations.

Society Websites and Social Media pages.

- It is important to have permission of children/parents/carers prior to posting images of society members on official and websites and social media pages.
- Personal details such as phone numbers and email addresses will not be posted on the internet without the permission of the individual.
- The age range of society members will always be considered when posting images, and comments on pages and Stagedoor Theatre will ensure that these are appropriate and in keeping with the society ethos.

Individuals within the Society

- It would be best practise for adult members of the society not to be social media friends with children, young people or vulnerable adults who are members of the society.
- This is particularly important with social media forms that allow individual private communication.
- These members can still communicate with each through social media in a group setting such as the society's social media page or website.
- Any content which raises a safeguarding concern should be reported to the Society Welfare Officer using the procedure outlined in the society's safeguarding procedures.

Good Practice

- Normally the activities of the society will be in full rehearsal and at engagements when young people will be encouraged to develop drama and socially in an unthreatening, open environment.
- Occasionally members may rehearse, socialise or travel in small groups and all members should be aware that physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of a young person can occur and is more likely in such circumstances.
- Avoid being alone with a child or children on a car journey, however short, unless there is no other option and the child's or children's parents have given permission
- one-to-one tuition should be as open as possible, spending no more time alone with children than is necessary to conduct the lesson
- physical contact with children should be avoided
- never make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to, about or in the presence of a child, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted
- avoid personal verbal abuse and inappropriate use of electronic communication and social media

- ensure, so far as possible, that photographs published by the Society do not expose any young person to risk
- do not encourage or condone the illegal acquisition or consumption of alcohol by young people and, where consumption of alcohol is legal, for example with a restaurant meal, try to ensure that a young person does not drink to excess
- report any concerns as to a child's welfare in accordance with the reporting procedure below.

Safeguarding Officers

• Stagedoor Theatre has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any child protection concerns. In their absence, a deputy will always be available. The named persons for Child Protection within Stagedoor Theatre are:

- **Safeguarding Officer**

Name: Mrs Teresa Anderton

Mobile number: 0780 304 5892

- **Deputy Safeguarding Officers**

Name: Deb Lyons

Mobile number: 0773 199 6925

Mr Chris Anderton

Mobile number: 0780 304 5876

- The role and responsibilities of the named persons are:
- To ensure that all staff are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person may be subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concerns about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- • The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential

Reporting procedures

- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken very seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- A child should never be deterred from making a "disclosure" of abuse through fear of not being believed. Therefore, if a Child makes an allegation of abuse to a Stagedoor Theatre Member, he/she should listen and reassure the Child, taking care not to question what is being said. Stagedoor Theatre Members should never promise to keep the information secret but can explain that it will only be told to those that "need to know" in order to help and that the matter will not become common knowledge.

If any member of the society is concerned that abuse has occurred or may occur to themselves or another person, he or she should refer the matter immediately to the Safeguarding Officer or, if he/she is not available or the complaint relates to the conduct of the Safeguarding Officer, to the Chair of the Society.

- Concerns of abuse should be reported immediately to Bolton's Referral and Assessment Team, part of the Multi-agency Screening and Safeguarding Service (MASSS) - 01204 331500
- The above number is office hours only – 9.00am-5.00pm.

- If there is a concern outside these times you can contact Bolton Emergency Duty Team – 01204 337777
- Or alternatively concerns can be discussed with the NSPPC in the following ways:

T – Freephone 0800 800 5000

E – help@nspcc.org.uk

text – 88858

- Or in an emergency situation contact the police

- Where an Stagedoor Theatre member becomes aware of a concern as to a Child's welfare (whether by disclosure or otherwise) it is important that an accurate record be made as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen and giving a time, date and location and logged with the Safeguarding Officer or in his/her absence (or if the allegation is made about him/her), to the Society Chairperson.

- Any such report will be referred to the Bolton's Referral and Assessment Team (or if urgent and made out of hours, to the Police). Any further disclosure about the cause for concern/allegation should only be made in the manner and to the extent advised by Social Services and/or the Police and unless or until advised otherwise, will be kept confidential.
- Any member of the Society who finds himself or herself in a compromising situation should immediately withdraw from that situation and speak to a trusted friend or seek other advice about it. Similarly anyone who observes another Society member putting himself or herself at risk of an allegation should speak to the member concerned or to the Safeguarding Officer with a view to discreetly avoiding embarrassment.

Whistle Blowing Procedure

Procedures to deal with in house allegations against other society members/volunteers

- It can be very difficult to report concerns about a member of the society or volunteer but all society members and volunteers have a duty to do this. It is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from suspected abuse or harassment by a member of the society or volunteer should be reported immediately.
- As a first step, concerns should normally be raised either verbally or in writing with the Safeguarding Officer or Society Chair This may depend, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issue involved and who is suspected of the malpractice
- Should any uncertainty exist about how to proceed if there was a whistle blowing situation and you need immediate advice contact the Bolton Multi-agency Screening and Safeguarding Service (MASSS) on: 01204 331500

Avoiding accidents and running safe events

- The organisation will strive to identify and manage physical risks to children and young people when they take part in activities through:
 - carrying out risk assessments in advance of outings and special events;
 - ensuring that there are regular checks on equipment used by children, staff and volunteers in the organisation;
 - having clear guidelines on parental consent to activities and, where appropriate, the consent of young people.

Disseminating/Reviewing Policies and Procedures

Stagedoor Theatre will review this policy on an annual basis

Any changes/amendments will be clarified and shared with society members and where significant changes appear these must be relayed to parents/carers.

Approved By Special General Meeting - 11th May 2020