Safeguarding Policy 2027

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Policy Responsibility: **Sam Gibbs (Principal)**
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Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): ***Sam Gibbs***
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): ***Jess Eaton***
Next Scheduled Review: ***November 2027***

PERFORMERS THEATRE COMPANY

"EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED AND IT IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT CHILDREN"

INTRODUCTION AND SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

Performers Theatre Company is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person participating in its activities.

We believe that all children have the right to feel safe, respected, valued and supported, regardless of their background, identity, abilities or circumstances.

Safeguarding is fundamental to our organisational culture and is embedded within our teaching, rehearsals, productions, workshops, holiday programmes and wider activities.

Our approach is founded upon the principle that **people come before performance**. No artistic outcome, production requirement or organisational objective takes precedence over the safety and wellbeing of a child.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that protecting children requires clear procedures, professional boundaries, effective communication and appropriate action whenever concerns arise.

Performers Theatre Company is committed to:

- Creating a safe, inclusive and supportive environment.
- Listening to children and taking their concerns seriously.
- Preventing abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm.
- Recruiting and supervising staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Maintaining clear professional boundaries.
- Identifying and responding promptly to safeguarding concerns.
- Working appropriately with parents, carers and statutory agencies.
- Maintaining accurate and confidential safeguarding records.
- Reviewing safeguarding arrangements and learning from concerns and incidents.

Our organisational values - Enhance, Engage, Empower and Enthuse - underpin this commitment.

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the safeguarding and child protection arrangements adopted by Performers Theatre Company.

Its purpose is to ensure that everyone involved in delivering or supporting our activities understands their responsibilities, can recognise potential safeguarding concerns and knows how to respond appropriately.

The policy provides a consistent framework for prevention, reporting, referral, recording and safeguarding accountability.

It operates alongside the organisation's Governance & Compliance Framework and relevant supporting policies and procedures.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All employed and freelance teaching staff.
- The Principal and Leadership Team.
- Volunteers, assistants and work experience students.
- Visiting practitioners, workshop leaders and contractors, where relevant to their activities.
- Production teams, backstage personnel and chaperones.
- Students and participants under the age of 18.
- Adults participating in activities alongside children, in relation to their conduct and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Other individuals acting on behalf of Performers Theatre Company.

For safeguarding purposes, a child is anyone under the age of 18.

This policy applies across regular classes, rehearsals, productions, performances, holiday programmes, masterclasses, off-site activities and digital communications associated with the organisation.

Adult participants aged 18 and over are also entitled to a safe environment. Where an adult has care and support needs and is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, relevant adult safeguarding arrangements will be considered.

SAFEGUARDING LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Sam Gibbs - Principal & Director
Email: admin@performerstheatrecompany.com
Telephone: 07413 306363

The DSL is responsible for coordinating safeguarding arrangements and acting as the principal organisational contact for child protection concerns.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintaining and reviewing safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Providing advice and support to staff.
- Receiving and assessing safeguarding concerns.
- Coordinating referrals to appropriate statutory agencies.
- Maintaining secure safeguarding records.
- Monitoring safeguarding training and awareness.
- Overseeing safer recruitment arrangements.
- Supporting appropriate communication with families and external agencies.
- Identifying improvements following safeguarding incidents or reviews.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Jess Eaton
Telephone: 07516 767067

The DDSL supports the DSL and assumes safeguarding coordination responsibilities when the DSL is unavailable or where an appropriate alternative reporting route is required.

Responsibilities of All Staff and Volunteers
All staff and volunteers must:

- Understand and follow this policy.
- Complete safeguarding induction and relevant training.
- Remain alert to indicators of abuse or neglect.
- Listen to children and take concerns seriously.
- Report concerns without unnecessary delay.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Record concerns factually and accurately.

- Respect confidentiality and information-sharing procedures.
- Cooperate with safeguarding enquiries.
- Never investigate allegations independently.

Staff must not assume that another person has already reported a concern.

Responsibilities of the Principal and Company Leadership
The Principal is responsible for the operational implementation of this policy.

The company's director, in this case, the Principal, retains his applicable legal and governance responsibilities for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding systems, resources and oversight arrangements are in place.

Safeguarding responsibility is shared across the organisation and is not transferred exclusively to the DSL.

RECOGNISING ABUSE, NEGLECT AND HARM

All staff must remain alert to signs that a child may be experiencing harm.

The four commonly recognised categories of child abuse are:
Physical abuse: Deliberate physical harm, including hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning or otherwise causing injury.
Emotional abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatment that adversely affects a child's emotional development, confidence or wellbeing.
Sexual abuse: Involving or enticing a child into sexual activity, including contact and non-contact abuse, exploitation and online abuse.
Neglect: Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs, potentially resulting in significant harm.

Safeguarding concerns may also involve:
- Bullying, cyberbullying and discriminatory behaviour.
- Child-on-child abuse and sexual harassment.
- Domestic abuse and its effects on children.
- Child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation.
- Grooming and online abuse.
- Radicalisation and exposure to extremist influences.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Honour-based abuse and forced marriage.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Inappropriate relationships or professional boundary violations.
- Emotional distress, self-harm or significant changes in behaviour.
- Abuse involving adults in positions of trust.

Indicators do not automatically establish that abuse has occurred. Staff must report concerns rather than attempting to reach their own conclusions.

RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE

A child may disclose abuse directly, indirectly or through changes in behaviour.

When a child raises a concern, staff must:
1. Remain calm and listen carefully.
2. Allow the child to speak in their own words.
3. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking.
4. Avoid leading questions or unnecessary requests for detail.
5. Never promise secrecy or absolute confidentiality.
6. Explain that information may need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe.

7. Record the disclosure promptly, using the child's words wherever possible.
8. Report the concern to the DSL or DDSL without delay.
9. Take immediate protective action where there is an urgent risk.

Staff must not confront an alleged perpetrator, conduct their own investigation or attempt to establish whether an allegation is true.

A child's disclosure must be treated seriously even where there is no visible evidence of harm.

REPORTING AND ESCALATING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Immediate Danger
Where a child is in immediate danger, requires urgent medical attention or a crime is taking place, staff must contact the emergency services on **999**.

The child's immediate safety must be prioritised.

The DSL or DDSL should be informed as soon as it is safe and practicable to do so.

Other Safeguarding Concerns
Where there is a concern about a child's safety or welfare, staff must:
1. Take reasonable immediate steps to keep the child safe.
2. Report the concern promptly to the DSL.
3. Complete the Safeguarding Concern / Incident Report Form as soon as practicable.
4. Record facts, observations, disclosures and actions taken.
5. Follow instructions regarding further safeguarding action.

The DSL will assess the information available and determine whether advice, early support or referral to children's social care or another appropriate agency is required.

Where a child may be at risk of significant harm, a referral must not be delayed for administrative reasons or to await an internal investigation.

Where the DSL Is Unavailable
Staff must contact the DDSL.

If neither is available, or if waiting would place a child at risk, staff must contact children's social care or the police directly.

No member of staff requires permission from the DSL to contact statutory safeguarding services where a child may be at risk.

The DSL must subsequently be informed where appropriate.

Decisions Not to Refer
Where a concern does not meet the threshold for an external referral, the DSL must record:
- The nature of the concern.
- Information considered.
- The decision and reasons.
- Any advice obtained.
- Protective or supportive actions.
- Monitoring and follow-up arrangements.

Concerns must be reconsidered if new information emerges or a pattern of concerns develops.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will ordinarily be informed of safeguarding concerns where appropriate.

However, information must not be shared where doing so could increase risk to a child, prejudice an investigation or conflict with advice from statutory safeguarding agencies.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, VOLUNTEERS OR OTHER ADULTS

Any allegation that a member of staff, volunteer, visiting practitioner, chaperone or other adult working with children has harmed or may pose a risk to a child must be taken seriously.

This includes concerns about behaviour within or outside Performers Theatre Company where relevant to the person's suitability to work with children.

Allegations must be reported immediately to the DSL, unless the concern involves the DSL.

The DSL will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the applicable allegations threshold may be met.

Where a safeguarding allegation or concern involves the Principal, Sam Gibbs, the matter must be reported directly to Jess Eaton (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) and/or Alex Fentiman (Vice-Principal).

Alex Fentiman will act as the designated independent senior management contact, working alongside the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and relevant statutory agencies, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), where appropriate.

Alex will coordinate the organisation's response, including immediate safeguarding arrangements, appropriate external advice, record-keeping and any necessary interim management measures, subject to the authority delegated to him and applicable employment or contractual requirements.

The Principal must not investigate, oversee or make decisions concerning allegations against himself. Where the allegation meets or may meet the LADO threshold, advice must be sought promptly and before undertaking an internal investigation.

Any individual may contact the LADO, children's social care or police directly where appropriate, without requiring internal authorisation.

Performers will:

- Prioritise the safety and welfare of children.
- Seek appropriate statutory advice.
- Avoid prejudicing police or social care enquiries.
- Consider proportionate interim protective arrangements.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.
- Treat the person subject to the allegation fairly.
- Keep accurate records of decisions and actions.
- Consider any legal duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Suspension will not be treated as an automatic response to an allegation. Any employment or contractual measures will be considered proportionately and with appropriate advice.

Concerns that do not meet the allegations threshold may still require action under the Staff Code of Conduct or Low-Level Concerns procedures.

WHISTLEBLOWING AND INDEPENDENT REPORTING

Performers Theatre Company encourages a culture in which safeguarding concerns can be raised openly and without fear of inappropriate retaliation.

Staff and volunteers are expected to report unsafe practice, inappropriate conduct or failures to follow safeguarding procedures.

Concerns should ordinarily be raised with the DSL.

Where the concern involves the DSL, or where internal reporting is inappropriate or ineffective, individuals may contact the DDSL, children's social care, the LADO or another appropriate external agency.

Staff may also seek advice from the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

No individual will be penalised by Performers for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

SAFER RECRUITMENT AND DBS CHECKS

Performers Theatre Company recognises that effective safeguarding begins with appropriate recruitment and selection.

Recruitment arrangements include, as appropriate to the role:

- A completed application and employment history.
- Identity verification.
- An interview assessing suitability and safeguarding awareness.
- Appropriate references.
- DBS checks at the legally permitted level.
- Verification of relevant qualifications and experience.
- Safeguarding induction and training.
- Clear contractual and professional expectations.

DBS Requirements

All regular teaching staff are required by Performers Theatre Company to hold an Enhanced DBS certificate with Children's Barred List information where their role is legally eligible for that level of check.

The organisation assesses the eligibility of each role individually, considering the activities undertaken, frequency, responsibilities and applicable regulated activity requirements.

From 1 September 2026, qualifying teaching, training, instruction, care or supervision of children may constitute regulated activity even where the individual is supervised by another member of staff.

Performers will not request a DBS check at a level for which the role is not legally eligible.

A DBS certificate is one component of safer recruitment and does not independently establish suitability.

DBS Update Service and Renewals

Where an individual subscribes to the DBS Update Service, Performers may undertake appropriate status checks with the individual's consent and in accordance with eligibility requirements.

Where the Update Service is not used, the organisation will ordinarily arrange a new DBS check every three years as an internal safeguarding standard.

DBS certificates do not have a statutory expiry date.

Checks will be reconsidered sooner where duties change, new concerns arise or circumstances require reassessment.

Recruitment Records

The Principal will maintain a confidential record of recruitment and safeguarding checks, including:

- Name and role.
- Identity and reference checks.
- DBS level, workforce and certificate date.
- Barred-list eligibility and confirmation where applicable.
- Update Service status.
- Safeguarding training dates.
- Review and renewal arrangements.

Access will be restricted to authorised individuals.

Volunteers and Visiting Practitioners

Volunteers, visiting professionals and contractors must be assessed according to their specific activities and level of contact with children.

Appropriate supervision and safeguards must be established before they begin.

Individuals must not undertake regulated activity where required suitability checks and safeguards have not been satisfactorily completed.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES AND COMMUNICATION

Staff must maintain professional relationships with children at all times.

Communication must be appropriate, transparent and connected to legitimate organisational activities.

Staff must not:

- Develop inappropriate personal relationships with students.
- Use personal social media accounts to establish private relationships with children.
- Send inappropriate or unnecessary private messages.
- Share confidential information without an appropriate reason.
- Use personal devices to photograph children outside authorised arrangements.
- Engage in favouritism, intimidation, humiliation or inappropriate physical contact.

Organisational communication channels should be used wherever practicable.

Any exceptional direct communication with a child must have a legitimate safeguarding or operational justification, be appropriately documented and follow organisational procedures.

Performers operates a mobile phone-free approach during student sessions, subject to agreed exceptions.

Staff must comply with the Social Media Policy, Photographs and Images Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Staff Handbook.

CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE AND BULLYING

Performers recognises that children can harm or abuse other children.

This may occur in classes, rehearsals, productions, changing areas, group chats, social media or outside organised activities.

All allegations of child-on-child abuse must be taken seriously.

Staff must not dismiss harmful behaviour as banter, ordinary growing-up behaviour or an inevitable part of group activities.

When concerns arise, Performers will:

- Prioritise the immediate safety of those involved.
- Listen to affected children without prejudgement.
- Record and report the concern.
- Consider the needs and welfare of all children involved.
- Implement appropriate protective measures.
- Seek external safeguarding advice or make referrals where required.
- Communicate with parents or carers where safe and appropriate.
- Review arrangements to prevent further harm.

Bullying concerns will also be addressed in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy. Where a safeguarding concern is present, the matter must not be managed solely as a disciplinary issue.

SAFEGUARDING IN CLASSES, REHEARSALS AND PRODUCTIONS

Safeguarding arrangements apply to all activities organised by Performers Theatre Company.

Appropriate staffing, supervision and risk management arrangements must be established for each activity.

Particular consideration must be given to:

- Arrival and collection arrangements.
- Attendance monitoring.
- Appropriate staffing and supervision.
- Changing rooms and toilet access.
- Backstage and dressing room arrangements.
- Physical movement, choreography and stage effects.
- Emotional wellbeing and performance pressures.
- Appropriate physical contact.
- Medical needs and reasonable adjustments.
- Visiting professionals and production personnel.
- Photography, filming and online content.
- Emergency procedures and incident reporting.

Children must not be left without appropriate supervision.

Adult performers participating alongside children must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and must not automatically be treated as authorised supervisors or chaperones.

CHILD PERFORMANCE LICENSING AND CHAPERONES

Performers Theatre Company will comply with applicable child performance licensing requirements.

Before a production, the organisation will establish whether individual child performance licences or an appropriate exemption or Body of Persons Approval arrangement is required.

Applications and supporting information will be prepared within the relevant local authority's timescales. Where approved chaperones are required, Performers will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place.

Chaperones must:

- Understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Know the designated welfare and safeguarding contacts.
- Maintain appropriate supervision of children in their care.
- Monitor children's health, welfare and wellbeing.
- Understand venue emergency procedures.
- Maintain appropriate signing-in and signing-out arrangements.
- Report concerns promptly.
- Avoid undertaking other duties that interfere with their chaperoning responsibilities.

The statutory maximum of 12 children per chaperone must not be treated as an automatically suitable staffing ratio. Lower ratios may be necessary depending on the ages, needs and circumstances of the children and the nature of the production.

Where a child is unwell, distressed or at risk, their welfare must take priority over the continuation of a performance.

Chaperones must be empowered to take appropriate protective action, including preventing continued participation where necessary.

All production arrangements must comply with applicable licensing conditions and relevant local authority guidance.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

Parents and carers are ordinarily responsible for arranging transport to and from Performers activities.

Where the organisation arranges or authorises transport, appropriate safeguards must be established in advance.

These include:

- Parental consent where appropriate.
- Suitable and authorised drivers.
- Appropriate insurance.
- Safe vehicle and passenger arrangements.
- Clear journey details.
- Emergency contact information.
- Appropriate supervision.
- Procedures for unexpected delays or incidents.

Staff should not transport individual children privately without appropriate authorisation, safeguards and a documented legitimate reason.

Privately arranged transport between families remains the responsibility of those making the arrangements, subject to any safeguarding concern becoming known to Performers.

EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Performers Theatre Company is committed to safeguarding every child without discrimination.

Safeguarding arrangements must recognise that some children may face additional barriers to disclosing concerns or accessing support.

This may include children with disabilities, communication differences, additional learning needs, language barriers or previous experiences of harm.

Staff must not assume that changes in behaviour or signs of distress are solely attributable to a child's disability or additional needs.

Reasonable adjustments and appropriate communication methods will be considered to enable children to participate safely and raise concerns.

All children must be treated with dignity and respect.

SAFEGUARDING RECORDS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Safeguarding concerns must be recorded accurately, promptly and securely.

Records should distinguish factual observations, disclosures, professional assessments and decisions.

They should include:

- The child's identity.
- The date, time and location of the concern.
- The nature of the concern or disclosure.
- The child's own words where relevant.
- Individuals involved or present.

- Immediate protective actions.
- Referrals and external advice.
- Decisions and reasons.
- Follow-up actions and responsible individuals.

Safeguarding information will be accessible only to those who have a legitimate need to know.

Information may be shared with relevant agencies where necessary and lawful to protect a child.

Data protection requirements must not be interpreted as preventing appropriate safeguarding information sharing.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely, with appropriate retention and disposal arrangements established under the organisation's data protection and records management procedures.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND AWARENESS

All staff and volunteers must receive safeguarding information appropriate to their role.

Induction must include:
- The Safeguarding Policy.
- Identification of the DSL and DDSL.
- Recognition and reporting of concerns.
- Professional boundaries.
- Relevant Codes of Conduct.
- Emergency procedures.
- Recording and confidentiality requirements.

Training will be refreshed at appropriate intervals, with additional updates provided where legislation, guidance or organisational arrangements change.

The Principal will maintain a record of relevant training and ensure that staff understand how to access safeguarding support.

MONITORING, REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Safeguarding arrangements will be monitored through:
- Policy reviews.
- Recruitment and training records.
- Safeguarding concern records.
- Risk assessments.
- Feedback from children, families and staff.
- Incident reviews.
- Relevant statutory guidance and local safeguarding arrangements.

Safeguarding concerns and incidents will be reviewed where appropriate to identify lessons and improvements.

The Principal will coordinate the annual policy review, with appropriate leadership and company-level oversight.

This policy will also be reviewed sooner where significant legal changes, safeguarding incidents or operational developments require it.

LEGISLATIVE AND GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK

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

- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended.
- Children and Young Persons Act 1933.
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963.
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014.
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Relevant Disclosure and Barring Service guidance.
- Relevant Hampshire safeguarding partnership and local authority procedures.

Keeping Children Safe in Education may be used as a source of relevant good practice, but its school-specific statutory requirements are not automatically applicable to Performers Theatre Company as an independent performing arts provider.

RELATED ORGANISATIONAL DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read alongside:

- Governance & Compliance Framework.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Staff Handbook.
- Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Low-Level Concerns Policy, where adopted.
- Whistleblowing Policy or Procedure, where separately maintained.
- Child Collection Policy.
- Missing Child Procedure.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Health & Safety Risk Assessment.
- Social Media Policy.
- Photographs and Images Policy.
- Production and Rehearsal Policy.
- Student and Parent/Carer Codes of Conduct.
- Student Work Experience Placement Policy.
- GDPR Policy.

APPENDIX 1

Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Safeguarding Concerns

Purpose

This appendix provides guidance to staff, volunteers, chaperones and other individuals working on behalf of Performers Theatre Company to help them recognise potential indicators of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding concerns may arise during classes, rehearsals, productions, performances, workshops, holiday programmes or through communication outside organised activities.

All concerns must be taken seriously and reported in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy. Staff are not responsible for investigating suspected abuse or determining whether abuse has occurred.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves deliberately causing physical harm to a child. This may include hitting, shaking, kicking, burning, poisoning or otherwise causing injury.

Potential indicators include:

- Unexplained injuries, bruising or marks.
- Injuries that do not appear consistent with the explanation provided.
- Repeated injuries or frequent unexplained accidents.
- Fearfulness around particular individuals.
- Flinching, withdrawal or unusual responses to physical contact.
- A child expressing fear about returning home or being with a particular person.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse involves persistent behaviour that negatively affects a child's emotional development, confidence or wellbeing.

This may include humiliation, intimidation, threats, rejection, controlling behaviour or consistently making a child feel worthless.

Potential indicators include:

- Significant changes in confidence or self-esteem.
- Persistent anxiety, fearfulness or withdrawal.
- Extreme reactions to criticism or perceived failure.
- Excessive pressure to achieve or perform.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing.
- A child describing persistent humiliation, threats or rejection.

Within a performing arts environment, staff must remain particularly alert to inappropriate performance pressures, public humiliation, intimidation and behaviour that undermines a child's confidence or dignity.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves a child being forced, persuaded or manipulated into sexual activity. It may involve physical contact or non-contact activities, including online abuse, grooming or exposure to sexual material.

Potential indicators include:

- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour.
- Fear or avoidance of particular individuals.
- Unexplained distress associated with changing rooms, physical contact or specific activities.
- Disclosure of inappropriate touching, sexual comments or requests.
- Evidence of grooming, coercion or inappropriate online communication.
- Sudden changes in behaviour, confidence or relationships.

Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by adults or other children.

Any disclosure or concern must be reported promptly through the organisation's safeguarding procedures.

Neglect
Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs, potentially resulting in harm to their health or development.

Potential indicators include:
- Persistent hunger or inadequate clothing.
- Poor hygiene or consistently unmet basic needs.
- Repeated unexplained tiredness or exhaustion.
- Untreated medical needs.
- Inadequate supervision or unsafe collection arrangements.
- Frequent indications that a child lacks appropriate care or support.

Staff should recognise that individual circumstances may have different explanations. Concerns should be considered sensitively and without making assumptions about families.

Child-on-Child Abuse
Children can experience abuse or harmful behaviour from other children.

This may occur in person or online, including during rehearsals, performances, changing arrangements, social activities and group communications.

Examples include:
- Physical violence or intimidation.
- Bullying, cyberbullying and discriminatory harassment.
- Sexual harassment or sexual violence.
- Harmful sexual behaviour.
- Coercive or controlling behaviour.
- Sharing intimate images without consent.
- Humiliation, threats or exclusion intended to cause harm.
- Initiation or hazing activities involving abuse or intimidation.

Harmful behaviour must never be dismissed as banter, joking, normal teenage behaviour or an inevitable part of working in a group.

All children involved must be treated appropriately, with safeguarding and welfare needs considered individually.

Online Safety, Grooming and Exploitation
Safeguarding concerns may arise through social media, messaging platforms, online communities and other digital environments.

Potential indicators include:
- Secretive or concerning communication with adults or peers.
- Requests for inappropriate images or personal information.
- Threats, coercion or blackmail involving online content.
- Unexplained gifts or money associated with online relationships.
- Distress following online interactions.
- Inappropriate communication between staff and students.
- Signs of sexual or criminal exploitation.

Staff must follow the Social Media Policy and relevant professional boundaries when communicating with students.

Additional Safeguarding Concerns
Staff must also remain alert to other forms of harm, including:
- Domestic abuse and its impact on children.
- Child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation.
- Radicalisation and extremist influences.
- Female genital mutilation.
- Forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

- Discriminatory abuse.
- Harmful relationships or coercive control.
- Self-harm, suicidal thoughts or serious emotional distress.
- Abuse involving adults in positions of trust.

Some concerns may require specialist advice or immediate referral to statutory services.

Safeguarding in Performing Arts Settings

Performers Theatre Company recognises that performing arts activities can present particular safeguarding considerations.

Staff should remain alert to:

- Inappropriate physical contact during teaching, choreography or rehearsals.
- Unnecessary one-to-one situations without appropriate safeguards.
- Emotional pressure, humiliation or excessive criticism.
- Unsafe changing room or backstage arrangements.
- Inappropriate relationships between adult and child performers.
- Unauthorised photography, filming or sharing of images.
- Inadequate supervision during rehearsals and performances.
- Concerns involving visiting professionals, production personnel or chaperones.
- Children feeling unable to raise concerns because of casting decisions, performance opportunities or perceived authority.

No artistic, educational or production objective should compromise a child's safety, dignity or wellbeing.

Responding to Indicators of Harm

The presence of one or more indicators does not necessarily mean that abuse has occurred. Equally, the absence of visible indicators does not mean that a child is safe.

Staff must:

1. Remain professionally alert and observant.
2. Listen carefully if a child raises a concern.
3. Avoid making assumptions or conducting investigations.
4. Record relevant facts and observations accurately.
5. Report concerns promptly to the DSL or DDSL.
6. Take immediate protective action where a child is at risk.
7. Contact statutory safeguarding services directly where necessary.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If something does not seem right, it must not be ignored.

All concerns must be managed in accordance with the Performers Theatre Company Safeguarding Policy and associated reporting procedures.

Performers Theatre Company Safeguarding Concern / Incident Report Form

This form is designed to report any safeguarding incidents or concerns. It should be completed by the member of staff or volunteer who has been disclosed to, who witnessed the incident, was most directly involved or who provided first aid if relevant. Once completed it must be submitted as per Performers' reporting protocols.	**REFERENCE NUMBER**

Name & role of person completing this form:	
Contact details:	**Date/time form completed:**

Details of child or young person at risk or making disclosure:

Name:	**Address:**
Contact number:	**Gender:**
Date of birth:	**Have parents/carers been informed of the incident? Yes / No**

Incident Details:

Date/ Time:
Location of incident:
Description of the incident or concern: (continue on separate sheet if necessary & include reference number): *(Include relevant information such as what happened and how it happened, description of any injuries sustained, behaviour witnessed and whether the information provided is being recorded as fact, opinion or hearsay)*
Child or young person at risk account of the incident or concern: (use their own words)

Witness account of incident or concern: *(include further accounts on separate sheets as necessary. Include reference number on each accompanying account)*		
Details of any witnesses:		
Name(s): *(Consider anonymising where this will not negatively impact the ability to take immediate response actions)*	Relationship to child, young person or adult at risk:	Contact details:
Details of any persons involved in the incident or alleged to have caused the incident, injury or presenting risk:		
Name(s): *(Consider anonymising where this will not negatively impact the ability to take immediate response actions)*	Relationship to child, young person or adult at risk:	Contact details:
Outcome of incident & immediate actions taken: (tick box and details where relevant)		
First aid provided Y/N Ambulance/medical attention required Y/N Police attended Y/N Any disciplinary actions?	Notes:	
Signed By Author:	Name:	Date:

Reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) section: *(to be completed by DSL)*

Date & time DSL notified of incident/concern:
Date & time this form passed on to DSL (if different from above):
DSL comments: *(actions taken / impact on rest of programme / external agency involvement / initial lessons learned / follow-up actions required):*
External agency referral:

Social services notified? Y/N Date & time of referral: Name of contact person: Contact number / email: Agreed action or advice given:	LADO notified? Y/N Date & time of referral: Name of contact person: Contact number / email: Agreed action or advice given:	Other referral made? Y/N Agency: Date & time of referral: Name of contact person: Contact number / email: Agreed action or advice given:

Signed By DSL:	Name:	Date:

For Office Use Only:

Follow-up action required:		
Action:	Due date:	Whom responsible:

APPENDIX 3

Safeguarding Escalation Procedure

Immediate danger or urgent medical emergency: Contact 999 and take immediate protective action.

Safeguarding concern or disclosure: Inform the DSL promptly and complete the safeguarding concern record.

DSL unavailable: Contact the DDSL.

Neither safeguarding lead available, or urgent action required: Contact children's social care or police directly.

Concern involving a staff member: Report to the DSL and seek appropriate LADO advice.

Concern involving the Principal / DSL: Report directly to Jess Eaton (DDSL) and/or Alex Fentiman (Vice-Principal and designated independent senior management contact). Seek appropriate LADO advice and contact statutory safeguarding services directly where required. The Principal must not manage or investigate the allegation.

Concern not resolved internally: Escalate to the relevant external safeguarding agency.

The organisation will maintain a separate, readily accessible safeguarding contact sheet with current local authority, LADO, emergency and advice service details.