

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The School believes that everyone has the right to be protected from abuse of any kind and is committed to promoting the health, safety and welfare of students and staff members alike.

The School will therefore aim to establish and maintain an environment where children and vulnerable adults feel safe, supported and listened to.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring all staff are aware of potential safeguarding issues and of their responsibility to report any concerns they may have in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy;
- Taking effective, timely and robust action in response to a disclosure of abuse or a concern being raised by a third party;
- Maintaining a commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting of staff;

All concerns of potential risk to self/others and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by staff and responded to appropriately and sensitively. In some cases this may require referral to the relevant external agencies.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Definition of a child

A child is legally defined as any person under the age of 18.

It should be noted that all those joining the Two Year Actor Training at The School must be at least 18 years of age at the start of their training. Therefore, contact with children shall be limited to any occasion where a prospective student may be 17 years old at the time of their audition, or where someone under the age of 18 may attend, as an audience member, a production in The School's public season and where they would normally be accompanied by a responsible adult.

2.2 Definition of a vulnerable adult

A vulnerable adult is defined by law as someone aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reasons of mental health or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

However, it is important to note that there are no hard and fast rules in terms of what makes an adult vulnerable. Vulnerability may be caused by an inherent characteristic - for example, having a learning disability, a mental health issue or frailty due to old age - and this can be lifelong, acquired or temporary. However, a personal characteristic in itself does not make someone vulnerable. For example, it is very important not to assume that somebody is vulnerable merely on account of their age or of their having a disability.

What makes someone vulnerable is the interaction of their personal characteristic(s) with an inability to protect themselves from harm at a particular moment in time.

Vulnerability may also exist due to the circumstances that a person is living in; for example if they are homeless, living in an abusive relationship or having a mental health crisis of some kind. What makes someone vulnerable in these circumstances is an inability to protect themselves against significant harm.

2.3 Definition of significant harm

For both children and vulnerable adults, what triggers safeguarding action is a concern that the individual is experiencing or at risk of significant harm, which is defined by law as 'the threshold which justifies compulsory intervention in family life.'

Significant harm therefore triggers action that must involve statutory agencies, usually the local authority (see key contacts in section 5 below).

Concerns about harm should never be ignored, even if they seem minor. However, they may not warrant a formal or immediate referral to the local authority and this decision is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer.

2.4 Definition of abuse

Abuse consists of a single or repeated act of harm or exploitation that may be physical, emotional/psychological, sexual or as a result of neglect or omission. Neglect is defined as the failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's basic physical and psychological needs.

For vulnerable adults, abuse can also occur when an individual is persuaded to enter into a financial arrangement or a sexual relationship to which they have not (or could not have) given their consent.

3. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Responsibilities of The School

The School will be responsible for ensuring that all staff and students are aware of this safeguarding policy. Any disclosures of abuse or reports of concern will be investigated in a timely fashion and the relevant action taken, in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy. Where abuse is identified or suspected, the relevant agencies will be notified.

3.2 Responsibilities of staff

All staff have a responsibility to make sure they are familiar with the safeguarding policy and able to follow procedures if appropriate, reporting any incidents or concerns in a timely fashion. Staff are also responsible for their own professional conduct and must be aware of the welfare of students (physical and emotional) in relation to their own working practices.

3.3 Rights of those who report abuse

Anyone reporting abuse, raising a concern or making an allegation should be reassured that they will be listened to and taken seriously and that their concerns will be acted on in accordance with this policy. Any reports of concerns of abuse will be treated with confidentiality as far as possible.

3.4 Rights of all staff and students

All staff and students of The School have a right to be listened to and have any alleged incidents and concerns taken seriously and acted on appropriately. All staff and students have the right to see this policy.

4. SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

4.1 Signs of abuse - what to look out for

Abuse is always caused by someone else (although self-harm and self-neglect can be indicators that abuse is taking place). Abusers may be: family members; professional staff; paid or voluntary workers; other adults at risk; friends; young people; carers; strangers

Recognising signs of abuse in vulnerable adults:

Psychological or emotional abuse

may include enforced social isolation, removing mobility or communication aids, failing to respect privacy, preventing activities, intimidation, coercion, harassment, use of threats, humiliation, bullying, threats of harm or abandonment.

Indicators:

- an air of silence when a particular person is present;
- withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person;
- insomnia;
- low self-esteem;
- uncooperative and aggressive behaviour;
- a change of appetite, weight loss/gain;
- signs of distress, tearfulness, anger;
- apparent false claims, by someone involved with the person, to attract unnecessary treatment

Physical abuse

may include assault, hitting, biting, scalding, burning, excessive restraint, bullying, force-feeding or withdrawing food, over-medication.

Indicators:

- no explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened;
- injuries are inconsistent with the person's lifestyle;
- bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps;
- frequent injuries;
- unexplained falls;
- subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person;
- signs of malnutrition;
- failure to seek medical treatment or frequent changes of GP

Sexual abuse

may include rape, attempted rape or sexual assault, inappropriate touching, any sexual activity that the person lacks capacity to consent to, indecent exposure.

Indicators:

- bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks, upper arms/ marks on the neck;
- torn, stained or bloody underclothing;
- bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area;
- unusual difficulty in walking or sitting;
- pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse;
- the uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language or significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude;
- self-harming;
- poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance;
- excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships

Neglect

is a persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development. This may involve failing to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate support and supervision, failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Self-neglect

Self-neglect is failure of a person to take care of themselves that causes, or is reasonably likely to cause serious physical, psychological or emotional harm (or damage to or loss of assets); An act of self-neglect may be intentional (active) or non-intentional (passive), This may involve malnutrition, refusal to seek medical advice and self-harming.

Domestic violence or abuse

may be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional, including threatening behaviour, coercive control, FGM and forced marriage.

Indicators:

- low self-esteem;
- feeling that the abuse is their fault;
- physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones;
- verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others;
- fear of outside intervention;
- damage to home or property;
- isolation, not seeing friends and family;
- limited access to money

Financial or material abuse

may include theft of money or possessions, fraud, scamming, undue pressure, duress or threat.

Indicators:

- missing personal possessions;
- unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle;
- unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts;
- failure to provide receipts for shopping or other financial transactions carried out on behalf of the person;
- disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources

Other forms of abuse

Modern slavery: human trafficking; forced labour; servitude; sexual exploitation

Discriminatory abuse: unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, gender and sexual orientation

Organisational/institutional abuse

Radicalisation

4.2 Disclosure guidance

DO

- Remain calm & keep an open mind
- Recognise your own feelings, but keep them to yourself
- Use language the person can understand
- Reassure them that you believe they are telling the truth, that they are doing the right thing by telling you and that they are not to blame for the situation
- Listen carefully to what you are being told
- Explain what will happen next
- It is a good idea, after speaking to the individual, to make a note of the date, time and what has been said. This may be useful if a written report is needed at a later date.

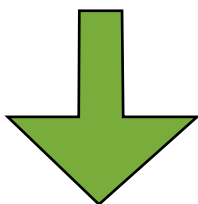
DON'T

- Panic or delay
- Express strong feelings of upset or anger
- Use jargon or express opinions
- Probe deeply for information
- Question the individual, other than to clarify what they are saying
- Use leading questions
- Make them repeat their story
- Promise unconditional confidentiality (You must make it clear at the earliest opportunity that you have a duty to pass on the information given to you to the Safeguarding Officer.)

4.3 Reporting a concern - flowchart

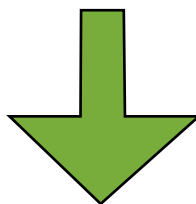
If you believe someone to be in immediate danger, you should alert the Police Public Protection Unit on 0207 601 2941 or dial 999 in an emergency.
If you are unsure, speak to the Safeguarding Officer. In the case of child protection, you can also call the NSPCC helpline for guidance on 0808 800 5000.

If a child or a vulnerable adult makes a disclosure to you that they are being harmed or abused



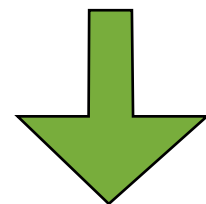
- Follow the disclosure guidance outlined in section 4.2 above.
- Record any information provided, along with the date and time, and refer the matter to the Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours. They will decide what action to take.

If you have concerns that a child or vulnerable adult may be subject to abuse or harm

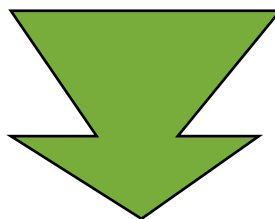


- Make a written and dated note of any observations
- Inform the Safeguarding Officer, who will investigate & refer if necessary.

If the behaviour of a staff member or student gives you cause for concern in relation to safeguarding



- If the behaviour of the individual is potentially threatening the wellbeing of a child or vulnerable adult, report your concerns to the Safeguarding Officer. Any allegations will be treated confidentially.



Always notify the Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours of any incident or concern.

The Safeguarding Officer will make a decision on what action to take.

- If the risk to the individual is high or the situation urgent, they may deem it necessary to take immediate action to protect, e.g. calling an ambulance, notifying the police or involving social services.
- If it is not deemed necessary to make a referral to social services, the Safeguarding Officer may instead refer the individual to a counsellor or other professional services or put measures in place to monitor the situation in case of any further cause for concern.
- In the case of a concern being raised regarding the behaviour or a staff member or student; where it is not deemed necessary to refer the matter to an external agency, an internal investigation will take place which may result in the staff member or student concerned being subject to disciplinary action.

5. KEY CONTACTS

Safeguarding Officer: Sarah Kelly 07508318443 salkelly1980@yahoo.co.uk

Social Services referral:

Adults - Islington Access Service - 020 7527 2299 access.service@islington.gov.uk

Children - Islington Children's Services - 020 7527 7400 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)

Out of hours Duty Social Worker - 020 7226 0992

NSPCC helpline (guidance) - 0808 800 5000

Police:

City of London Public Protection Unit - 020 7601 2941

Non-emergency - 101

Emergency - 999