

## Young Actors Theatre - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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## 1. Policy Statement

Young Actors Theatre is a community arts theatre in Islington, that combines a drama school and agency that operates with a strong welfare focus. The main activity at YATI is providing acting classes for over 800 children and young people aged 4-24years old at the Theatre space.

The core charitable aim of Young Actors Theatre Islington is:

- To promote and advance the education of children and young people, particularly in the art of drama, by means of giving instruction in and promoting a study practice programme and teaching of all subjects connected with theatre and drama.

The charitable objectives of Young Actors Theatre Islington are:

- To have fun through performing arts
- To develop performing arts, social and life skills through excellent teaching
- To foster an appreciation of the arts
- To recognise, nurture and develop talent
- To create an environment which welcomes and encourages all members of the community to participate in activity.

Young Actors Theatre is committed to safeguarding all children and young people that come into contact with our work. We believe that all children have an equal right to protection from abuse, emotional abuse and neglect regardless of their age, race, religion, ability, gender, language, background or sexual identity and consider the welfare of the child to be paramount.

This policy follows statutory guidance and legal frameworks that underpin the policy/procedure Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018) and defines a child or young person as anyone under the age of 18 (The Children's Act 1989, 2004 & Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006). This policy recognises that there may be additional needs associated with children and young people with disabilities, from minority ethnic backgrounds or who are otherwise excluded from mainstream services. We also recognise that some of our work is with young adults over 18 years, some of whom may be vulnerable at different times in their lives. The principles of this policy also, therefore, apply to anyone under the age of 25 who may use Young Actors Theatre's services.

We enable our staff and those who work with us to make informed and confident decisions regarding safeguarding issues and take all suspicions and allegations of abuse, emotional abuse and neglect seriously. We expect everyone (staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre) to have read, understood and adhere to this policy and related procedures, except where it has been formally agreed that another appropriate policy provides greater protection for children.

Young Actors Theatre will take every reasonable step to ensure that children and young people are protected where:

- Our own staff are directly involved in a project or programme

- We broker the relationship between a school/ young people's setting and a creative practitioner/ organisation
- We contract a creative practitioner/ organisation to work with a school/ young people's setting
- We work in partnership with another organisation or agency

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Taking leadership responsibility at senior board level and via a clear line of accountability for our safeguarding arrangements
- Adopting this policy and adhering to our associated procedures and code of conduct for staff
- Recruiting trustees, staff, creative practitioners and other adults working in schools/young people's settings safely, including the requirement for individuals to obtain criminal records checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service for eligible posts and the completion of all other elements of our recruitment procedure
- Sharing information about safeguarding and child protection with school staff, partners and our staff and trustees promptly, ensuring that staff are trained and supervised adequately, carry out their roles competently and that they work in an environment where they feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role
- Ensuring that children, young people and parents are able to raise concerns where they exist and are aware of our policy on safeguarding and child protection
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know involving children, school staff and parents appropriately and without delay, in accordance with our procedures for sharing information
- Ensuring that staff, trustees, partners, and others working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre are fully informed about the processes for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Adopting a clear policy around the management of allegations against staff and practitioners, in liaison with our partners
- ensuring that all staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre knows the name of the designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene and their role.
- ensuring that all staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene; Alexis Keene alexis@youngactors.org.uk 020 7278 2101 ext. 1.

We are committed to reviewing this policy and procedures annually, updating our processes as appropriate. This policy was last updated Feb 2019 and is reviewed by Jamie Lynch; the Development Manager, Alexis Keene; the DSL, Andrew Harries; the artistic Director and the Board of Trustees.

## **2. Understanding Child Abuse**

### **Abuse and Neglect of children**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person. They may result in a child suffering or being likely to suffer significant harm. 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 a stranger. They may be abused by an adult, or another child or children. Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2013) defines various forms of abuse, including:

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

#### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and /or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Children harming other children**

It is part of our duty of care that we make sure children are protected from harm from other children. At Young Actors Theatre Islington, where we work with children under five and with some children who have complex needs, biting, pushing, scratching and hitting may occur at times. Please refer to part 4 Code of Conduct for managing these incidents.

If you think that a child is targeting another child, it is important to raise this with the DCP immediately.

In recording and reporting incidents it is important that the identity of the child that did the hurting is not disclosed. This is part of our duty of confidentiality to all children and families. If a parent asks who has hurt their child, show understanding of their upset, anger or pain but explain that we are not able to share this information.

### **E-safety and use of digital devices**

Young Actors Theatre Islington will adhere to Islington's E Safety Policies

Our aim is to:

- Protect children and young people who receive Young Actors Theatre Islington's services and who make use of information technology (such as mobile phones, games consoles and the internet) as part of their involvement with us
- Provide staff and volunteers with the principles that guide our approach to e-safety
- Protect professionals
- Ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use information technology

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the children/young people who come into contact with our services is paramount and governs our approach to the use and management of information communications technologies
- Mobile phones and digital devices can present a number of problems when not used appropriately
- Phones and personal devices can allow internet access and bypass the centre security settings and filtering
- Mobile phones with integrated cameras could lead to child protection, bullying and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images of children or staff.

### **Internet**

The internet is not to be made available to children on Young Actors Theatre Islington premises except on specific occasions for research and at all times only with supervision by a member of Young Actors Theatre Islington staff.

Parents are requested not to allow their children access to the internet on their personal devices while at Young Actors Theatre Islington except within the context of a working or research exercise within a class.

### **Cameras**

It is not the intention to prevent parents/carers from taking pictures, but to ensure that photographic practices are monitored and to reduce the risks of inappropriate photography/filming.

No one is permitted to photograph or record images in the following areas:

- Changing areas
- Toilet areas
- Children /young people can only be photographed if permission of parents/carers is given
- Those taking photos, including staff/volunteers must identify themselves
- Staff should not use personal devices such as mobile phones or cameras to take photos or videos of the children and will only use designated equipment for this purpose.
- Photographers will be required to have formal identification which must be worn at all times
- Children's/young people's images will not be used for promotional or press releases unless parents/carers have consented
- Unsupervised access to children/young people or one-to-one photo sessions are prohibited
  - Photo sessions outside the organisation/organisation's activities or at a child's/young person's home are not allowed
  - Personal details which might make a child/young person vulnerable, for example, address, email address, phone number, should never be revealed.

### **Mobile phones**

- Parents, carers and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones while on the premises. Staff will remind parents of the policy by asking them to leave the activity room and take calls in the foyer when necessary.
- Parents are also requested to avoid giving their children access to their mobile phones for other activities particularly any that involve access to the internet.
- Staff should not have mobile phones with them whilst working with children at Young Actors Theatre Islington.
- Teaching staff mobile phones should be kept in bags and used only when staff are on break time in the staff room or outside the setting.
- Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phones for contacting Young Actors Theatre Islington families outside the setting in a professional capacity.
- The Young Actors Theatre Islington landline should be used for staff expecting a personal call or as an emergency contact and the Young Actors Theatre Islington mobile may be used when working off site.

### **3. Child Protection Procedures**

#### **Designated Child Protection Person (DCP)**

Young Actors Theatre will ensure that it has a Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene who has received appropriate training and support for this role. The role of the DCP is to:

- Assume overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection for Young Actors Theatre
- Ensure that staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre understand the key issues in relation to safeguarding and the cultural/ education sectors
- Be a point of contact within Young Actors Theatre for staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre in relation to safeguarding and child protection
- Be aware of local statutory safeguarding procedures and networks
- Make decisions about safeguarding and child protection
- Receive and assess information from staff and creative practitioners who have a child protection concern
- Consult with a statutory child protection agency to test any doubts or uncertainty about the concerns
- Make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay
- Take responsibility for managing allegations against staff, in consultation with the individual's line manager.
- Record the concern and action in the child protection log

It is not the role of the DCP; Alexis Keene or Young Actors Theatre to decide whether abuse has taken place or not. It is however, our role to ensure that concerns are shared with appropriate agencies and relevant action taken.

The DCP for Young Actors Theatre is Alexis Keene [alexis@youngactors.org.uk](mailto:alexis@youngactors.org.uk) 020 7278 2101 ext. 1. or in their absence or in addition, the Artistic Director; Andrew Harries. It is their responsibility to ensure that all staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre are aware of the policies and procedures for working with children and keeping them safe. In the event of action needing to be taken in respect of child protection, it is the DCP; Alexis Keene who must be informed and will take lead responsibility.

#### **How concerns about abuse might arise**

Awareness of the possibility of a child being abused might be raised in a number of ways:

- A child may disclose abuse or give reason to suspect that they or another child are being abused or at risk of significant harm
- An adult may raise concern about a child
- A member of staff may be suspected of abusing a child.

#### **Responding to suspected abuse**

If anyone acting for or employed by Young Actors Theatre has reason to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, then the safety and welfare of that, or any other child likely to be affected is the paramount consideration in deciding what action needs to be taken. We have a statutory duty to notify agencies if we have a concern about children's safety and welfare (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015).

- Where there is a concern about a child's welfare or wellbeing or a concern that a child is in need of protection, this should be recorded on the concern form and then passed on to the DCP or DDCP for action (or if unavailable then seek advice from Children's Social Care)
- These running records should be kept securely in the child's file
- All staff and volunteers are aware that they must report concerns immediately
- All records of concerns, emails, notes of phone conversations and actions are filed confidentially and securely in the child's file

Staff know that when they have concerns about a child's welfare they need to:

- Focus on the needs of the child – their physical and emotional welfare
- Be sensitive
- Talk it over with one of the Designated Members of Staff
- The flowchart for 'Making a child protection referral to children's social care' is displayed and attached to this policy. This Safeguarding Policy is accessible to all parents and carers on site.
- Concerns will be discussed with parents unless this would put the child at further risk of serious harm
- Unless we are advised otherwise by Children's Social Care the recording forms will be shared with parents

### **Managing a 'disclosure'**

Staff should:

- Stay calm and listen to the child
- Ask questions for clarification only. Avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Consider how to explain to the child about our policies and procedures so that they know what is going to happen
- Tell them who you are going to tell so that they can be made safe – children may fear that what they have said will be passed on to everyone and they need to know that this will not be the case
- Control expressions of panic or shock
- Use the child's language or vocabulary
- Offer comfort bearing in mind the age and needs of the child
- If the child has disclosed sexual abuse, ask them when it happened but nothing more. Whether a child is asked this question will depend upon the child's age and understanding
- Tell them that they were right to tell you and it was not their fault and they are not bad
- Do not be tempted to give false reassurances to the child but tell them that you will do your best to protect or help them

Information concerning the disclosure, or any other child protection concerns, should be recorded as soon as possible. Recording is a tool of professional accountability and is central

to safeguarding and protecting children. It is not always possible to know whether a small or vague concern held today may increase as the days or weeks pass and later form the substance of a child protection referral. For this reason, it is vital that concerns are recorded accurately so that they can be monitored, and emerging patterns noticed. The record should include:

- The date and time of the interview or disclosure
- The child's account
- Any physical or other signs of injuries noted, e.g. discomfort when passing urine, crying or inappropriate behaviours
- An assessment made by the staff member as to why the information given constitutes a child protection concern
- Action taken by the staff member
- Record any subsequent events and actions

The record should be signed and dated, and a copy sent to Young Actors Theatre's Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene; Alexis Keene alexis@youngactors.org.uk 020 7278 2101 ext. 1.

It is not your responsibility to decide if a child has been abused. Any disclosure must be raised with the Designated Child Protection Person. Under S31 (10) of the Children Act 1989, where the question of whether harm is significant turns on the child's health and development, his/ her health and development shall be compared with that which could be reasonably expected of a similar child.

Children can only be interviewed once, and this interview must be conducted by a trained police officer and social worker under Home Office 'Achieving Best Evidence' guidance. If a child has already been interviewed, it means that the police may not be able to pursue the matter.

A child may recall former abuse once in a safe situation. Although they may be under no current threat to their safety, any disclosure must be raised with the Designated Child Protection Person and followed through appropriately.

You may also have concerns about a child's welfare where there has not been any disclosure or allegation. In the best interests of the child / young person, these concerns should be raised with the Designated Child Protection Person and followed through appropriately.

### **Reporting abuse**

Any action to be taken will be determined by the urgency and seriousness of the circumstances. If the personal safety of the child is immediately threatened, it is vital that urgent action is taken. Often, this will mean contacting the staff member in the school or youth setting with responsibility for child protection, or occasionally the duty social worker or an out-of-hours duty social worker or NSPCC child protection helpline. In exceptional circumstances, a referral can be made to the police.

The child must be informed, whenever possible, about any action being taken on their behalf and what is likely to happen. If there is no immediate danger, it is advisable to give the child time to fully understand what action is being pursued and why before proceeding.

## **Confidentiality**

In the unlikely event that a child divulges information to Young Actors Theatre staff member about being abused, mistreated or in danger, but requests that such information is not passed on to others, the following steps should be taken:

- The child should be informed that it may not be possible to protect his/ her confidentiality
- The staff member should inform the child that he/ she will have to discuss the matter with his/ her line manager and colleagues
- The staff member or Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene should make all efforts to help the child understand the need for seeking appropriate help.

If it is felt that the child is at risk of significant harm, it will be necessary to refer the matter to Children's Social Care, thereby breaching the child's confidentiality. However, the child should be informed as fully as possible of what is happening and why.

***Islington's Children's Services Contact Team  
Targeted and Specialist Children and Families Services***

***Children's Services Contact Team  
(Monday to Friday 9am-5pm)  
020 7527 7400***

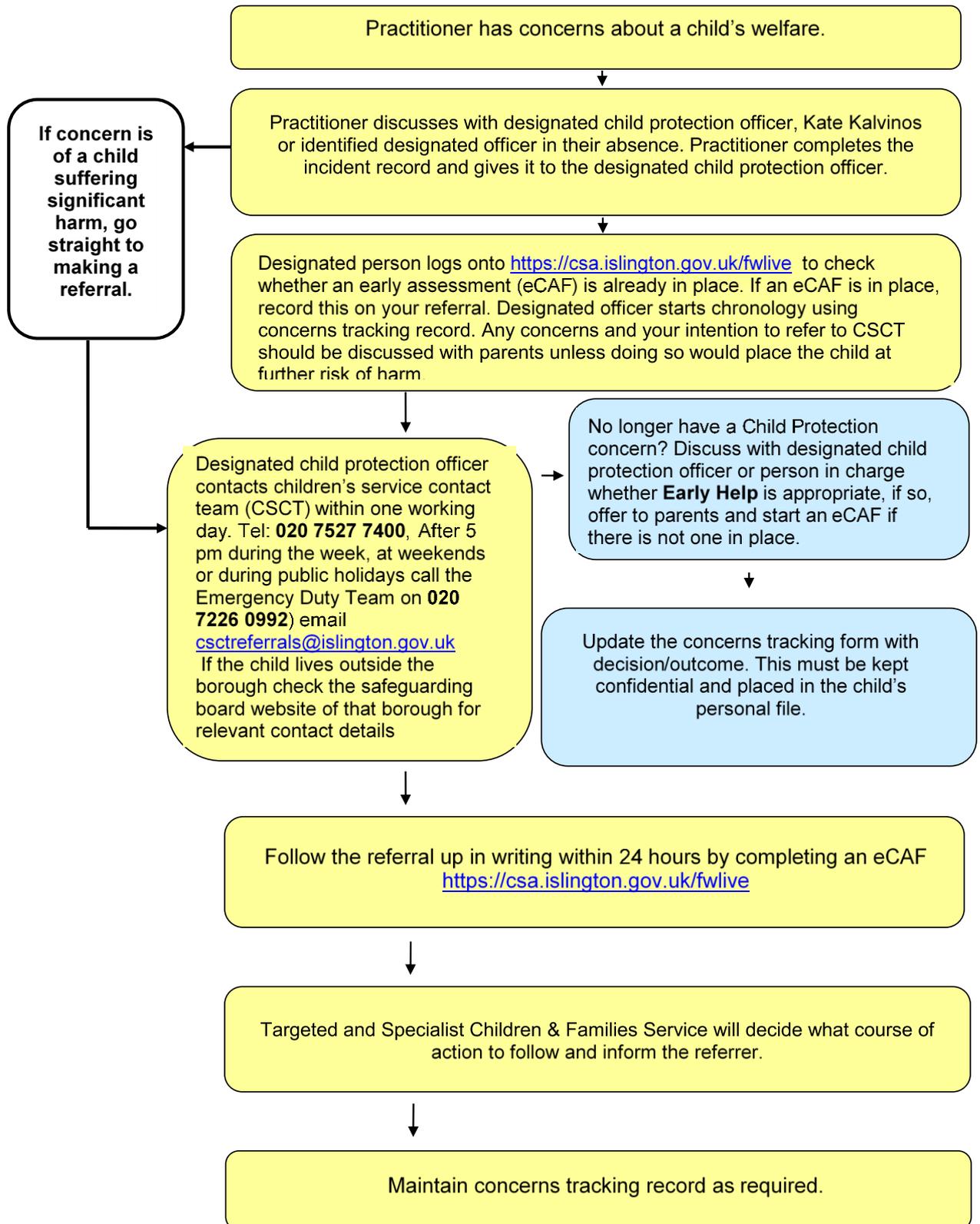
***Emergency Duty Team (5pm to 9am,  
Weekends and Bank Holidays)  
020 7226 0992***

***Laura Eden - Local Authority  
Designated Officer (LADO)***

***Information about services for  
children can be found on the  
Islington Family Directory  
[www.islington.gov.uk/familydirectory](http://www.islington.gov.uk/familydirectory)  
020 7527 8102***

***Police Referrals - Child Abuse  
Investigation Team (CAIT)  
020 8733 6495 or 020 8733 6500  
For Emergencies 999***

## Outline reporting procedure



## **Prohibited behaviour**

The following types of behaviour are never acceptable when working with children as staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers or working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre and will always lead to disciplinary action:

- Hitting or striking a child
- Verbally abusing (including shouting or swearing at) a child
- Deliberately humiliating or undermining a child
- Inappropriate intimate touching or intimate conversations
- Encouraging or knowingly being involved in a child committing a crime
- Taking illegal substances before or during workshops or meetings
- Being intoxicated at a Young Actors Theatre event involving children.

Any staff member who suspects or is aware of a colleague behaving in any of the above ways, should immediately inform his/ her line manager. If the person concerned is the line manager, the Artistic Director; Andrew Harries should be informed.

## **Allegations of abuse against a staff member**

This often-difficult issue is discussed at staff training so that all staff understand what is meant by the term 'whistle-blowing' and their responsibilities with regards to it and are able to raise concerns with the DCP. If the behaviour of a staff colleague, trustee, partner, agency staff, volunteer or anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre causes you concern:

- do not ignore your concerns.
- do not confront the person about whom you have concerns
- The flowchart 'Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff' is displayed in the theatre and attached to this policy
- discuss your concerns with the Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Kate Kalvinos, or in their absence the Artistic Director; Andrew Harries of Young Actors Theatre
- If the Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene or Artistic Director; Andrew Harries are not immediately available, you should speak to your line manager.
- Do not delay in passing on concerns to someone who is in a position to take them forward and ensure that a proper investigation takes place
- Do not worry that you may have been mistaken. It is better to have discussed it with someone with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment.

In the case of allegations against a staff member or volunteer, an investigation may have three related strands:

- If the allegation reaches the threshold of significant harm, the matter should be referred to children's social care who will undertake child protection inquiries relating to the safety and welfare of any children involved
- Where circumstances warrant it, there may be a police investigation into a possible crime

- If it appears that allegations may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct, Young Actors Theatre's disciplinary procedures should be invoked.

It is essential that the facts of the alleged abuse are dealt with appropriately under each of these strands of investigation. The fact that a prosecution is not possible does not mean that action to safeguard the child is not necessary or feasible. For example, an allegation may relate to behaviour below the threshold of significant harm such as a smack on the hand. Whilst this behaviour would not be referred to children's social care, it should be investigated under Young Actors Theatre's disciplinary procedures.

Any member of staff who is charged with a criminal offence against a child, either in a personal or professional capacity will be immediately suspended pending the outcome of the criminal proceedings.

Staff about whom there are concerns should be given information to help them understand the concerns expressed, the processes being invoked and be informed of the outcome of any investigation and the implications for disciplinary processes. The investigation should be completed as quickly as possible, consistent with its effective conduct. In any case involving a criminal investigation, the decision as to when to inform the suspect of the allegations should always be jointly agreed between the police and other relevant agencies.

Parents and carers should be given information on any concerns, advised on the processes to be followed and informed of the outcomes, except in circumstances when the allegations involve the parent/ carer directly. Professional advice should be sought as to what can be said to parents/ carers.

All enquiries into allegations will be overseen by the Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene who will liaise with police, children's social care, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Disclosure and Barring Service (if appropriate), and other interested parties, and attend relevant meetings as required, keeping staff informed as appropriate.

The Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Kate Kalvinos, in consultation with senior management in Young Actors Theatre, should inform the LADO within one working day if there is an allegation made against a member of staff.

If an individual is removed from regulated activity with children (or would have been removed if they had not left) because the person is considered by Young Actors Theatre to pose a risk of harm to children, Young Actors Theatre is obliged to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

### Flowchart: Allegations Made Against A Member of Staff.

If an allegation is made that a member of staff has harmed a child; is alleged to have behaved in a way in their private life that may suggest they are unsuitable to work with children and young people; *\*or if a disqualified person lives or is employed in their household*, the designated child protection officer Kate Kalvinos or in their absence identified designated child protection officer, must be informed immediately. If the allegation concerns the manager/designated child protection officer, the chair of the board of governors/management committee/proprietor must be informed.



To assess the most appropriate course of action, the following initial information must be collated:

- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure,
- the exact words spoken by the child/staff/member/parent/volunteer as far as possible,
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported ( with date and time),
- the names of any other person present at the time,
- wider relevant knowledge or background information.

**(Note: it is not appropriate at this stage to conduct formal interviews or take written statements from staff, as this could compromise a later or police investigation)**



The Local Authority designated officer (LADO) **must be informed within one working day** on Tel: **020 7527 8066**. The LADO will clarify if and how the matter will be taken forward and what appropriate course of action should be taken. In serious situations, the LADO will advise whether a suspension should take place immediately.



After discussing the situation with the LADO, it may become clear that a referral to Children's Services Contact Team is required.

After discussing the situation with the LADO, it may become clear that a referral to Children's Social Care is **not** required and the setting is to follow their own complaints and disciplinary procedures.



Refer the allegation to Children's Services Contact Team: 020 7527 7400 email [csc referrals@islington.gov.uk](mailto:csc referrals@islington.gov.uk) and follow this up in writing within 24 hours by completing the eCAF referral <https://csa.islington.gov.uk/fwlive/>



Children's Social Care will contact the setting as to how to proceed. A formal strategy meeting will take place between Children's Social Care, the settings representative and the police (as appropriate). This meeting will agree what action is required immediately to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, and/or provide interim services and support.

The member(s) of staff may be suspended on full pay (advice from the LADO will support you with this decision). This overall decision to suspend is vested in the chair of the board of governors/management committee/proprietor. Suspension is a neutral act and allows a full investigation of facts to take place.

#### 4. Code of conduct

Young Actors Theatre will ensure that all staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre is familiar with our Code of Conduct which outlines our expectations of anyone working in schools or young people's settings and states that staff should:

- Always put the welfare and safety of the child or young person first
- Treat all children and young people equally, with respect and dignity
- Do not have, or be perceived to have, favourites
- Ensure you have agreed roles, responsibilities and standards of behaviour with other adults involved, including teachers
- Never agree to work with children or young people without a teacher or other responsible adult in the room
- Wherever possible avoid spending time with individual, or small groups of children or young people unobserved
- If it is absolutely necessary to be alone with a child or young person:
  - Make sure another adult knows where you are and approximately how long you will be
  - Invite the child or young person to bring a friend
  - Leave the door open of the room you are in
  - Move into the centre of the room so you are in plain view
- Avoid physical contact with children or young people unless it is necessary for a particular activity or if a child or young person has been, or is about to be injured
- If physical contact cannot be avoided, seek permission of the child or young person first and ensure they are comfortable with what you are going to do
- Listen to what children and young people have to tell you
- Ensure that children and young people understand that you will treat what they tell you confidentially, unless you believe them, or another young person, to be in danger
- If a child or young person discloses something to you, or you see something that concerns you, contact the Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene at Young Actors Theatre who will be able to advise you on the best course of action
- If you see something that concerns you regarding an adult, contact the Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene at Young Actors Theatre who will follow an appropriate course of action
- Do not contact children and young people outside of the school/ youth setting or hours
- Do not give children and young people your personal telephone number or email address
- Do not develop social or sexual relationships with the children or young people you are working with

- Never accept, or give, gifts or money to children and young people
- Support and watch out for colleagues you are working with to ensure they are not being drawn into situations that could be misinterpreted – remember how colleagues view each other's practice will indicate how outsiders will view it

It is possible that a child, young person or vulnerable adult who is suffering, or who has suffered, abuse will confide in you. This is something that must be handled carefully. The following actions are meant as a guide should the situation arise:

- Remain calm and in control but don't delay in acting
- Listen carefully to what is said. Allow the person to tell you at his/ her own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask leading questions that suggest a particular answer
- Don't promise to 'keep it a secret'. Use the first opportunity you have to say that you will need to share the information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell people who need to know and who should be able to help
- Reassure the person that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone
- Tell the person what you are going to do next
- Speak immediately to the Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene at Young Actors Theatre aware of the situation

- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a written account of the disclosure. The report should include:
  - The date and time of the interview or disclosure
  - The child's account
  - Any injuries noted
  - An assessment made by the staff member as to why the information given constitutes a child protection concern
  - Action taken by the staff member

The record should be signed and dated, and a copy sent to Young Actors Theatre's Designated Child Protection Person (DCP); Alexis Keene; Alexis Keene alexis@youngactors.org.uk 020 7278 2101 ext. 1.

- Social services will liaise with the relevant departments on a 'need-to-know' basis and will, if appropriate, inform the police.

It is not your role to decide whether a child has been abused or not.

## 5. Recruitment practices

In its recruitment and selection procedures for permanent and agency staff, Young Actors Theatre will take all practical measures to ensure that people unsuitable for working with children are not recruited to positions where they will have contact with children during the course of their work. In respect of all such applications:

- Applicants will be asked to account for gaps in employment history
- References will be checked before new members of staff begin work
- Referees will specifically be asked to state whether concerns of any kind have been raised about the candidate's relationships and work with children
- Unless they subscribe to the DBS update service, and this reveals that their record is clear and their disclosure is at the relevant level and up to date, all potential new staff, including freelance staff, will be asked to undertake an enhanced DBS check if their role is eligible for such a check. If they are undertaking regulated activity, this check will include a check against the list of those barred from working with children and young people
- If a new DBS check is necessary, new staff will be asked to subscribe to the DBS update service as a condition of their appointment
- Prior to appointment, applicants will be asked to indicate in writing that they have read and understood Young Actors Theatre's child protection statement, and that they will abide by it if appointed
- Once appointed, they will be inducted in the child protection policy and procedures.
- DBS checks are required to be updated every two years.

### **Training provision**

On starting employment with Young Actors Theatre, on either a permanent or freelance basis, staff will receive copies of all Young Actors Theatre's policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection and will be inducted in the organisation's policies. For staff regularly working in schools/ young people's settings, an annual assessment will be made as to the training needs of these individuals and action will be taken accordingly.

Creative practitioners contracted to work on specific projects by Young Actors Theatre will be required to familiarise themselves with Young Actors Theatre's Child Protection policies and related procedures and abide by Young Actors Theatre's Code of Conduct.

### **6. Related policies and procedures**

In addition to adhering to Young Actors Theatre's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, all staff, trustees, partners, agency staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Young Actors Theatre will receive child protection and safeguarding training appropriate to their role, and as advised by the Islington Safeguarding Children Board and ensure their knowledge is up to date on safeguarding issues.