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**Safeguarding Policy**

This policy is specifically for Children under the age of 18, please see the adult safeguarding policy for those over 18

**Purpose of this Statement**

Children and young people are at the heart of Prime Theatre, whose aim is to make sure every young person has access to all art forms.

As a small organisation every member of Prime Theatre staff has some degree of contact with children and must adhere to its policy. Throughout this policy statement and associated procedures, the guidance applies equally to all staff regardless of age of child they work with or the setting. All adults have a duty to keep children safe.

**We aim to:**

* To protect children and young people who receive Prime Theatre’s services from harm
* To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection

Prime Theatre will adhere to the legal framework provided for England & Wales and are committed to keeping children safe and protecting them from harm

**We believe:**

* No child should ever experience any form of harm or abuse
* We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, to keep them safe and to practices in a way to protect them

**We recognise:**

* Children’s welfare is of paramount importance when planning, organising or delivering activities and all decisions
* Regardless of age, gender, sexuality, ability or race all children should be protected from harm equally
* Working with parents, carers and other agencies alongside children is essential in promoting their welfare
* We recognise that not all children can be treated the same, everyone is different and has their own unique circumstances that can make some additionally vulnerable such as, previous experiences, their level of dependency and communication needs
* Extra measures should be put in place for those who are additionally vulnerable
* Everyone is responsible for keeping children safe

**We will seek to keep children safe by:**

* Respecting, valuing and listening to them
* Having a Designated Safeguarding Leads and a nominated trustee in charge of safeguarding
* Embedding best practice into our policy and procedures and have a code of conduct for staff
* Advise & protect staff, volunteers and associates in all matters of safeguarding by providing training and support through effective management
* Ensure that all those working with staff, volunteers and associates are carefully selected and recruited safely with all check being made. They should understand and accept responsibility for the safety of others in their care
* Adhere to Data Protection legislation by recording and storing and using information professionally and securely,
* Making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
* Sharing concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
* Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
* Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
* Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
* Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.
* Provide a safe environment for children, staff & volunteers to feel safe by applying health and safety measures
* Monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy & procedures on a regular basis

**CONTACTS:**

**Designated Safeguarding Leads**



Mark Powell

Artistic Director

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Sarah Wrixon

Company Manager

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PHONE NUMBERS

**Trustees in charge of Safeguarding**

Sharon Hodge & Dr Nick Capstick

trustee@primetheatre.co.uk

**Staffing**

Every member of staff and volunteers should provide a safe environment for the children, they should demonstrate appropriate behaviour and provide a safe secure environment.

Everyone has the responsibility for safeguarding and reporting anything disclosed to them or incidents they see, they should:

* Be vigilant of the signs that may indicate a child/young person is experiencing harm or is at risk of harm
* Report any disclosures or concerns, as soon as possible, to the Designated Safeguarding Officer
* When taking a disclosure from a child/young person remembering not to ask any leading questions
* No adult should be left alone with any child

The Designated Safeguarding officers are in charge of the companies safeguarding policy and its implementation. They will be:

* Reviewing and updating the organisation’s safeguarding policy on an annual basis or when necessary
* Leading upon contact with Local Authority Social Services in the event that a child/young person is at risk of harm
* Managing complaints about poor practice and allegations against staff/volunteers
* Referring relevant issues of safeguarding to the Board of Trustees for consideration
* Collecting monitoring data on all safeguarding activities across the organisation
* Ensuring safer recruitment procedure and promoting safeguarding across the organisation

The DSO will be supported by the Lead Safeguarding Trustees who will:

* Advise DSO when needed
* Ensure that the policies and procedures are correct and in place
* Inform the board of any serious safeguarding incidents

Safer Recruitment, interview, and DBS checks

Prime Theatre implement safer recruitment procedure. These are in place to safeguard all those engaging with Prime Theatre, having these in place minimises risk to children and to identify and deter any people who should not or have been identified as not being able to work with children.

Interviews will include safeguarding questions at various levels depending on the role and will every panel will have a safeguarding trained member of staff included and references will be under taken.

Every member of Staff, Trustee and volunteer will have a DBS check when they join the company and this will be checking every 2 years. We encourage people to sign up to the update service.

When the certificate returns if anything is reported, this will be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Trustees and recorded. Appropriate action will be taken, including reporting to police if that person is not allowed to work with children.

Training

All staff, Trustees, and volunteers undergo safeguarding training to an appropriate level. This will take place as part of the induction process, and will be delivered by Prime Theatre staff. Volunteer training sessions are held every year, with workshop assistants having termly updates.
All staff will undertake the NSPCC online Introduction to Child Protection (or equivalent) training

Company training with external advisors takes place every 2 years.

DSO will have at least level 3 training and this will be renewed every 2 years.

Reporting

All staff, trustees and volunteers will have access to the incident reporting form and understand the structure of reporting. If a member of staff or volunteer feels they must report another member of staff this can be done via the whistle blowing policy and will be taken seriously. Likewise if a parent/carer makes a complaint this will also be taken seriously, listened to and investigated fully.

Partnership working

Prime Theatre work in partnership with many other organisations, within each project a contract will be put in place to indicate who will be responsible for safeguarding the project and outlining the reporting process.

When working in a school or community setting, the safeguarding policy and procedures for that organisation will take precedence and any Prime Theatre members of staff will adhere to those and have a copy of their policy so they can report through that procedure.

If an incident occurs Prime Theatre will keep records as appropriate but the partnership organisation will lead on any investigation.

Data

Safeguarding also means to ensure correct data handling and storage. Prime Theatre adheres to GDPR regulations.

All personal data including that of children are kept confidential and only those who need access are given it.

Prime Theatres main safeguarding form is online to ensure sensitive data is kept safe.

Personal data include photographs and recordings of children. Any recordings used publicly will only be used with permission from the child and their parent/carer.

Performances

All children who perform have their welfare protected by the Children in Entertainment legislation.

This requires Prime Theatre to make sure appropriate licences are in place for any performance and that the local authority are aware. Appropriate chaperone levels will be put in place.

For every production, safeguarding needs will change depending on venue, the content and those taking part. A Safeguarding risk assessment will take place to ensure everyone will be kept safe and procedures can build around the Safeguarding in Performances procedure.

Workshops

All workshops need appropriate safeguarding measures whether they are in person or online.

Physical activity

All staff adhere to a code of conduct and company policies. All children are given a code of conduct that by attending workshops they agree to. This is regularly reviews and Children can add to, and this will then be reminded to all at least once a Youth Theatre term.

Online

All workshops or meetings with children are started from a Prime Theatre zoom or Teams account, no personal accounts should ever be used. Procedures for Children are issued and they are regularly reminded. All online activity is recorded and kept for 6 months.

Anti bullying

Bullying is a form of abuse and can take many forms, and is extremely harmful to anyone including children. It can take place in person, online or via mobile phones.

In Youth Theatre settings children are encourage to come up with their own code of conduct based around points raised by staff and the children. Zero tolerance on bullying will always be included. The code will be reminded to all children regularly, they will also be told the details of the DSO so they always know who to talk to.

If bullying is reported or witnessed this will be dealt with appropriately depending on who is involved, their situation and the seriousness of the bullying.

Prime Theatre is aware that bullying can occur between anyone whether children or adults. Bullying by staff towards other staff/volunteers or children is not tolerated and we expect all to follow the expected standards of behaviour in the Staff Handbook.

This policy was written in consultation with NSPCC guidelines, Lesley Wood Freelance advisor and the National Youth Theatre Safeguarding Policy.