



SOMERSET
YOUTH
THEATRE CIC

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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Somerset Youth Theatre CIC provides safe spaces for young people to create, explore and find their voice through theatre and the arts.

We do this because all young people's voices matter.

Somerset Youth Theatre CIC put young people at the heart of all their activities.

We believe in fun, we believe in community and we believe we are making a difference.

- a. Somerset Youth Theatre (SYT) acknowledges its responsibility for the safety and welfare of all volunteers, contractors, partners and participants is paramount. This includes children, young people and adults of any experience and/or ability.
- b. SYT recognizes that good safeguarding policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone and we are committed to providing a safe environment for anyone we work with.
- c. SYT believes that everyone regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, has the right to equal protection from all types of harm and/or abuse.
- d. SYT believes that working in partnership, and promoting clear communication, is essential to promoting welfare.
- e. SYT's Safeguarding statement is provided to all SYT volunteers, contractors, partners and participants. This full policy is available on request.
- f. SYT stands for equality, representation and inclusion for all. We value the unique diversity of communities that make Somerset the place it is. Upholding this statement is part of our Safeguarding responsibility.
- g. Abuse may be emotional, sexual, physical and/or neglect.

Somerset Youth Theatre (SYT) are dedicated to protecting all children and young people who are engaged with our services, our safeguarding commitment to them is built on the following principles:

- That safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We recognise our duty to safeguard children and young people, and we recognise that working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents and carers is essential to this.*
- That children and young people's safety and welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration.*
- That all children and young people, regardless of their background, have the right to be protected from abuse, exploitation, or harm.*
- That all safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse must be taken seriously, reported, and responded to appropriately.*

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and it is the duty of SYT to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This is our core safeguarding principle.

We update this policy at least annually to reflect changes to law and guidance and best practice.

2.Purpose of the Policy

To ensure everyone engaging with SYT whatever their culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual orientation has the right to protection from harm and/or abuse.

To ensure all staff, contractors, volunteers, partners and participants understand how to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns.

SYT will respond immediately to concerns about the suitability of employees and volunteers once they have begun their role, with robust communication between SYT safeguarding team.

To ensure all staff, contractors, volunteers, partners and participants have a clear understanding of the principles and practices involved safeguarding and protection.

To provide information to all staff, contractors, volunteers, partners and participants outlining the responsibilities of, and approach taken by, SYT in the protection of children.

To ensure all staff, contractors, volunteers, partners and participants of SYT activities understand that all disclosures of harm and abuse will be reported by SYT to the appropriate agency/authority

To ensure all staff, contractors, volunteers, partners and participants understand SYT's commitment to equality, representation and inclusion for all, and what happens if this is not upheld.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other Somerset Youth Theatre CIC policies including Safer Recruitment, Health & Safety & Whistleblowing.

3. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Somerset Youth Theatre CIC, including Board of Directors and the Directors, paid staff, freelance staff, volunteers, contractors and partners.

4. Employing and Recruiting Staff through Safer Recruitment

SYT asserts that all contractors, volunteers, partners and participants working routinely with children as part of their role at/for SYT, undertake an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) every three years as recommended by the DBS.

SYT does not require administrative staff or volunteers who do not have routine contact with children and vulnerable adults to undertake a DBS disclosure as recommended by the DBS.

SYT will verify on first engagement, and yearly thereafter, DBS enhanced disclosures online where the employee is registered for online tracking.

SYT will ensure robust safeguarding and protecting of all children and young people by implementing robust safer recruitment practices.

SYT will identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people

SYT will respond immediately to concerns about the suitability of employees and volunteers once they have begun their role, with robust communication between SYT safeguarding team

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Officer, Jo Evans.

Safeguarding Officer, Selina Keedwell

Board of Directors, appointed Safeguarding Advisor, Fiona Hulme

5.1 The Role of the Designated and Safeguarding Officers

To liaise with, and make referrals to, appropriate agencies where there are concerns/incidents relating to safeguarding

To ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is updated annually, and that all contractors, volunteers, partners and participants read and understand the policy.

To ensure that policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are fully implemented.

To manage clear, accurate and secure record keeping systems.

To ensure our own safeguarding training is up to date.

To ensure all relevant training is cascaded to other staff.

To ensure that a register is kept of staff who have completed training.

6. Addressing Safeguarding Incidents

- a. All reported and/or identified safeguarding incidents will be taken seriously by SYT and will be recorded on our Safeguarding reporting form.
- b. It is the responsibility of all SYT staff, contractors, volunteers and partners to report all incidents relating to the designated and/or safeguarding officer.
- c. All SYT staff, contractors, volunteers, partners recognise that collective accounts from several SYT contractors, volunteers, partners and participants may highlight trends and all concerns, no matter how small, should be reported to the designated and/or safeguarding officer.
- d. In the event of an incident being reported to or identified by the Safeguarding Officer, the Safeguarding Officer will communicate with the Designated Safeguarding Officer and agree on a necessary course of action.
- e. All decisions will be recorded and securely retained for a period of 25 years.
- f. All decisions taken by the safeguarding officers will remain confidential and be communicated only to the individual(s) involved, their responsible parent/carer where relevant and any other agency as appropriate.

7. Anti-Radicalisation

- a. SYT recognises and understands that staff, contractors, volunteers, partners and participants may 'play out' reality and current topical subjects within sessions. Within this context SYT promotes democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- b. SYT recognises the difference between 'playing out' within sessions and real life, and is alert to the potential signs and symptoms of radicalisation, which include, but are not limited to, a sudden but continuing change in:
 - Physical appearance or dress code
 - Physical and behavioural attitudes towards others
 - Use of inappropriate, discriminatory and offensive language
 - Sharing of inappropriate images
 - Encouraging others to use offensive or discriminatory language

8. Duty of Care Sustenance

SYT in acknowledging its duty of care with regard to sustenance will make tap water available at all times to all children, young people, and vulnerable adults in its charge. In addition the SYT will provide a healthy snack where appropriate for children and vulnerable adults engaged with SYT for four or more hours and a hot meal when engaged for eight or more hours.

9. Allegations and concerns around staff and other adults working with young people and vulnerable adults

All Somerset Youth Theatre CIC staff and volunteers are expected to report any concerns regarding colleagues/volunteers and any person working with and with access to children and young people.

The purpose being to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children and young people and protect them from abuse/exploitation.

Following the correct procedure will safeguard staff members from possible allegations of collusion and or unprofessional conduct.

SYT is committed to protecting children/young people accessing our service and we recognise staff and volunteers need clear guidance on who to report concerns to and the process of how to refer.

SYT's Whistleblowing Policy allows staff to raise concerns or make allegations and for an appropriate enquiry to take place.

[SYT What is whistleblowing](#)

It is vital that staff and volunteers report any concern, following the process above, no matter how small, and even if no more than a sense of unease or “nagging” doubt that a colleague may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly to a young person
- having favourites
- taking photographs of young person on own devices
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language
- over sharing with a young person
- using personal phone to make contact as opposed to work phone
- engaging with the young person over social media
- being accepting/not challenging inappropriate comment

The subsequent investigation will consider if the adult in question: -

- behaved in way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children and/or;
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

9.1 Procedure to report

It is important that all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about any adult working with and having access to children/young people.

Concern regarding a member of staff/volunteer

Concern around a colleague/volunteer – forward direct to DSO Jo Evans: outreachsyt@gmail.com or SO Selina Keedwell: somersetyouththeatre@gmail.com

Concern regarding Designated Safeguarding Officer – forward direct to Safeguarding Officer Selina Keedwell: somersetyouththeatre@gmail.com

Concern regarding Safeguarding Officer - forward direct to DSO Jo Evans: outreachsyt@gmail.com

Concern regarding any member of Board of Directors – forward to Fiona Hulme: surfgirl@gmail.com

Staff may also report their concerns directly to Children’s Social Care or the police if they believe direct reporting is necessary to secure action.

9.2 Self reporting

If a member of staff/volunteer should feel that their behaviour toward a young person could be called into question SYT expect that member of staff/volunteer to contact either DSO or SO so this can be discussed. An example could be a young person messaging them over social media, finding out where they live, anything that could jeopardise the professional working relationship. Another example may be a young person or someone associated with that young person forming an unhealthy attachment to you or a colleague. These types of issues must be reported and recorded.

10. Allegations, Disclosures and Concerns around Children and Young People

10.1 Indicators of abuse

All SYT staff/volunteers are expected to be aware of the categories of and warning signs/indicators of abuse. Staff/volunteers are expected to demonstrate a professional curiosity into the wellbeing of all children and young people accessing the service.

10.2 Reporting concerns

Please refer to the Safeguarding Flow Chart which will detail how to report a concern about a child/young person.

[See Appendix 3]

All safeguarding concerns regarding young people must be reported to the DSO using outreachsynt@gmail.com and the safeguarding report form is filled in.

Never photograph an injury - always leave this to the professionals.

[Safeguarding Reporting Form](#)

If for whatever reason the person concerned was unable to access email they must ensure they make direct contact with the DSO or one of the wider safeguarding team immediately.

Where a child, young person or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure to a member of staff, staff should:

- Offer reassurance to the child/young person without leading (as mentioned below)
- Listen to the child/young person
- Explain to the child/young person/ the action that will be taken next.
- Where possible make detailed notes of the disclosure

10.3 Responding to Suspicions of Abuse

In line with the Somerset Safeguarding Child Protection Procedures, staff:

- **Notice, Listen, Record and Refer**
- Refer to DSO who will then discuss next steps.
- Only involve those who need to be involved, such as the DSO or SO if DSO not available.
- Staff should **never promise** a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- Look at the child or young person directly.
- Accept what the child or young person says.
- Do not adopt a critical approach.
- Do not press for information, use open questions e.g. tell me, explain, describe.
- Reassure them that they are doing the right thing by telling you, and that you will take what they say seriously.
- **Do not promise** to keep the information the child or vulnerable adult has disclosed a secret. **(repeat)**
- Let them know what you are going to do next, who you are going to tell, and why, and roughly what will happen.
- Finish on a positive note.

It is acknowledged that abuse of children and young people can take many different forms; physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. If a child / young person shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, staff should liaise with DSO regarding referring the concern on to partner agencies

Staff should deal with children and young people in these circumstances with sensitivity. Moreover, staff must take great care not to influence the outcome of any suspicion or concern either in the way that they speak to children / young people, or in the questions they ask

If staff members are unsure how to proceed, or indeed whether they should proceed, *they must speak to the DSO or their SO*. There should be no delay, as this might threaten the welfare of a child.

In an emergency and in the case of no-one being available, an immediate contact should be made to Somerset Children's Social Care on **0300 123 2224** or on line here <https://somensetsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/report-a-concern/>

All safeguarding concerns must be reported

When a concern arises, it must be reported within 24hrs

Do not delay.

Do not act alone.

Do not start to investigate.

10.4 Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

Where a concern has been identified, detail and actions must be recorded. The person identifying the concern will access the Safeguarding Reporting Form and enter all the relevant details . Working with the DSO the person raising the concern must keep the record updated with all actions taken, referrals made and the outcomes.

10.5 Informing Parents / Carers

Parents should normally be informed **unless doing so may place the child / young person at further risk**. This should be discussed and agreed with the DSO and national guidance followed.

11. Safeguarding Code of Conduct

SYT requires all contractors, volunteers, partners and participants to adhere to safe conduct and understand the position of responsibility, influence and trust they hold in working with children and vulnerable adults. To this end SYT expects all contractors, volunteers, partners and participants to adhere to the following guidelines:

To report any concern with regard to anyone's physical, emotional, sexual or neglect to the DSO as soon as practicable.

To ensure a minimum of two adults are present during all activities with children in the form of volunteer or parent/carer.

To communicate clearly and be inclusive at all times.

To ensure that children and young people fully understand any instructions given to them and that they allow and are accepting of different levels of engagement.

Physical interaction with children and young people is acceptable due to the practical nature of activities engaged in. However contractors or volunteers may only touch participants when it is necessary to the particular arts activity and agreement must be sought from the participants prior to any physical contact. All contractors or volunteers must refrain from any other action that may be constructed as inappropriate touch.

To treat all children and young people with respect at all times. The use of racist, sectarian, sexist, suggestive or inappropriate language is unacceptable.

Any SYT activity involving children and young people may only take place at a venue agreed in advance and appropriately risk assessed.

To never to meet a child or young person unauthorised outside of hours or at a non SYT approved venue

To never use physical punishments.

To never develop social or personal relationships with children or young people who participate in SYT activities.

SYT recognises that due to the nature of its activities, contractors or volunteers may come into contact with a child or young person who participates in a SYT activity in a social setting. SYT advises the contractors or volunteers to maintain a professional distance and pay attention to their own behaviour in such a setting.

To never use personal social media accounts to contact a child or young person who participates in a SYT activity online unless authorised, and visible by parents/carers.

To decline financial gifts from children or young people who participate in SYT activities, informing them how they can make a transparent donation to SYT.

Never to lend money to children or young people who participate in SYT activities. In the event that a participant is stranded, money to cover the cost of travel may be lent with the transaction clearly recorded and witnessed.

Never to enter into an agreement with a child or young people with regard to keeping disclosed information about their personal life secret; rather to inform the young person that they are obliged to inform the DSO, or SO if a disclosure is made. It is then the responsibility of the DSO or a member of the committee in their absence to contact the relevant agencies.

The use of any cameras or recording equipment is not permitted on the SYT site where children and young people are present, unless agreed in advance in accordance with the SYT GDPR policy.

Contractors or volunteers should encourage participation but not force any child or young person to undertake an activity they feel uncomfortable with for reasons of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Contractors or volunteers, children and young people are prohibited from smoking, drinking alcohol and taking illegal drugs while actively engaged in SYT activity.

Contractors or volunteers working with children and young people are expected to arrive a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the activity.

Contractors or volunteers working with children and young people must ensure adequate supervision.

Contractors or volunteers working with children and young people must ensure dressing rooms are split into single sex spaces where possible and appropriate.

On arrival children and young people will be registered on Class4kids and are then the responsibility of the SYT.

It is the parent / guardian / carer's responsibility to equip their child or young person for the activity taking place as detailed by SYT in advance in writing.

SYT will seek written parental / guardian / carer's consent for, but not limited to, activities such as: participants under 12 leaving premises used by SYT unsupervised, transportation of participants, the use of make-up / face paints.

Photographs, films or web-based materials of children or young people participating in any SYT project will only be taken with the consent of the parent / guardian / carer and in consultation with the child or young person involved. Where permission is sought, SYT permissions form will follow data protection guidelines.

SYT will not pass on details of children or young people to external organisations in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Children Act 2004 and The Safety of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Appendix 1 - Related Policies

The following policies/documents should be read in conjunction with this document:

- SYT Code of Practice for Artist Facilitators Sept 22
- SYT Safe Recruitment and Selection Policy
- SYT What is whistleblowing
- Health & Safety

Appendix 2 – Categories and Indicators of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse:

Physical

It can be difficult to know what you can do if you're worried about a child who's being physically abused. We have information and advice to help you feel confident in taking the next steps to keep children and young people safe.

What is physical abuse?

Physical abuse is when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. It includes:

- hitting with hands or objects
- slapping and punching
- kicking
- shaking
- throwing
- poisoning
- burning and scalding
- biting and scratching
- breaking bones
- drowning.

It's important to remember that physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a

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child or young person. It also includes making up the symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.

Signs of physical abuse

Bumps and bruises don't always mean a child is being physically abused. All children have accidents, trips and falls. And there isn't just one sign or symptom to look out for. But it's important to be aware of the signs.

If a child regularly has injuries, there seems to be a pattern to the injuries or the explanation doesn't match the injuries, then this should be reported.

Physical abuse symptoms include:

- bruises
- broken or fractured bones
- burns or scalds
- bite marks.

It can also include other injuries and health problems, such as:

- scarring
- the effects of poisoning, such as vomiting, drowsiness or seizures
- breathing problems from drowning, suffocation or poisoning.
-

Head injuries in babies and toddlers can be signs of abuse so it's important to be aware of these. Visible signs include:

- swelling
- bruising
- fractures
- being extremely sleepy or unconscious
- breathing problems
- seizures
- vomiting
- unusual behaviour, such as being irritable or not feeding properly.

Emotional

Emotional abuse is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare, humiliate, isolate or ignore a child.

Emotional abuse is often a part of other kinds of abuse which means it can be difficult to spot the signs or tell the difference, though it can also happen on its own.

Emotional abuse includes:

- humiliating or constantly criticising a child

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- threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names
- making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child

- blaming and scapegoating
- making a child perform degrading acts
- not recognising a child's own individuality or trying to control their lives
- pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- exposing a child to upsetting events or situations, like domestic abuse or drug taking
- failing to promote a child's social development
- not allowing them to have friends
- persistently ignoring them
- being absent
- manipulating a child
- never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes
- never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.

Signs of emotional abuse

There might not be any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse or neglect. And a child might not tell anyone what's happening until they reach a 'crisis point'. That's why it's important to look out for signs in how a child is acting.

As children grow up, their emotions change. This means it can be difficult to tell if they're being emotionally abused. But children who are being emotionally abused might:

- seem unconfident or lack self-assurance
- struggle to control their emotions
- have difficulty making or maintaining relationships
- act in a way that's inappropriate for their age.

The signs of emotional abuse can also be different for children at different ages.

Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse². A child might be left hungry or dirty, or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Types of Neglect

Neglect can be a lot of different things, which can make it hard to spot. But broadly speaking, there are 4 types of neglect.

- **Physical neglect**
A child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter, are not met or they aren't properly supervised or kept safe.
- **Educational neglect**

A parent doesn't ensure their child is given an education.

- **Emotional neglect**

A child doesn't get the nurture and stimulation they need. This could be through ignoring, humiliating, intimidating or isolating them.

- **Medical neglect**

A child isn't given proper health care. This includes dental care and refusing or ignoring medical recommendations.

Signs of Neglect

Neglect can be really difficult to spot. Having one of the signs doesn't necessarily mean a child is being neglected. But if you notice multiple signs that last for a while, they might show there's a serious problem. Children and young people who are neglected might have:

Poor appearance & hygiene

- being smelly or dirty
- being hungry or not given money for food
- having unwashed clothes
- having the wrong clothing, such as no warm clothes in winter
- having frequent and untreated nappy rash in infants.

Health and development problems

- anaemia
- body issues, such as poor muscle tone or prominent joints
- medical or dental issues
- missed medical appointments, such as for vaccinations
- not given the correct medicines
- poor language or social skills
- regular illness or infections
- repeated accidental injuries, often caused by lack of supervision
- skin issues, such as sores, rashes, flea bites, scabies or ringworm
- thin or swollen tummy
- tiredness
- untreated injuries
- weight or growth issues.

Housing and family issues

- living in an unsuitable home environment, such as having no heating
- being left alone for a long time
- taking on the role of carer for other family members.

Changes in behaviour

- becoming clingy
- becoming aggressive

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- being withdrawn, depressed or anxious
- changes in eating habits
- displaying obsessive behaviour

- finding it hard to concentrate or take part in activities
- missing school
- showing signs of self harm
- using drugs or alcohol

A child might not understand they're being neglected. This can make it a very difficult issue to tackle.

Sexual

Sexual abuse is when a child or young person is sexually abused, they're forced or tricked into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong. And they might be afraid to tell someone. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can happen in person or online. It's never a child's/young person's fault they were sexually abused – it's important to make sure children know this.

There are 2 types of sexual abuse – contact and non-contact abuse.

Sexual abuse can happen in person or online.

Contact abuse is where an abuser makes physical contact with a child. This includes:

- sexual touching of any part of a child's body, whether they're clothed or not
- using a body part or object to rape or penetrate a child
- forcing a child to take part in sexual activities
- making a child undress or touch someone else.

Contact abuse can include touching, kissing and oral sex – sexual abuse isn't just penetrative.

Non-contact abuse is where a child is abused without being touched by the abuser. This can be in person or online and includes:

- exposing or flashing
- showing pornography
- exposing a child to sexual acts
- making them masturbate
- forcing a child to make, view or share child abuse images or videos
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images or videos
- forcing a child to take part in sexual activities or conversations online or through a smartphone.

Signs of sexual abuse

Knowing the signs of sexual abuse can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children won't

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understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out. Some of the signs you might notice include:

Emotional and behavioural signs

- Avoiding being alone with or frightened of people or a person they know.
- Language or sexual behaviour you wouldn't expect them to know.
- Having nightmares or bed-wetting.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Self-harm.
- Changes in eating habits or developing an eating problem.
- Changes in their mood, feeling irritable and angry, or anything out of the ordinary.

Physical signs

If a child is being or has been sexually abused online, they might:

- spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Children and young people might also drop hints and clues about the abuse.

Effects of sexual abuse

Sexual abuse can have both short and long term effects. The impact of sexual abuse can last a lifetime. Children, young people and adults may live with:

- anxiety and depression
- eating disorders
- post-traumatic stress
- difficulty coping with stress
- self-harm
- suicidal thoughts and suicide
- sexually transmitted infections
- pregnancy
- feelings of shame and guilt
- drug and alcohol problems
- relationship problems with family, friends and partners.

Please use the link below to learn more about:

- Female Genital Mutilation
- Prevent/Radicalisation

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- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Upskirting

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse/>

It is vital that staff are aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the DSO. It is the responsibility of staff to report their concerns.

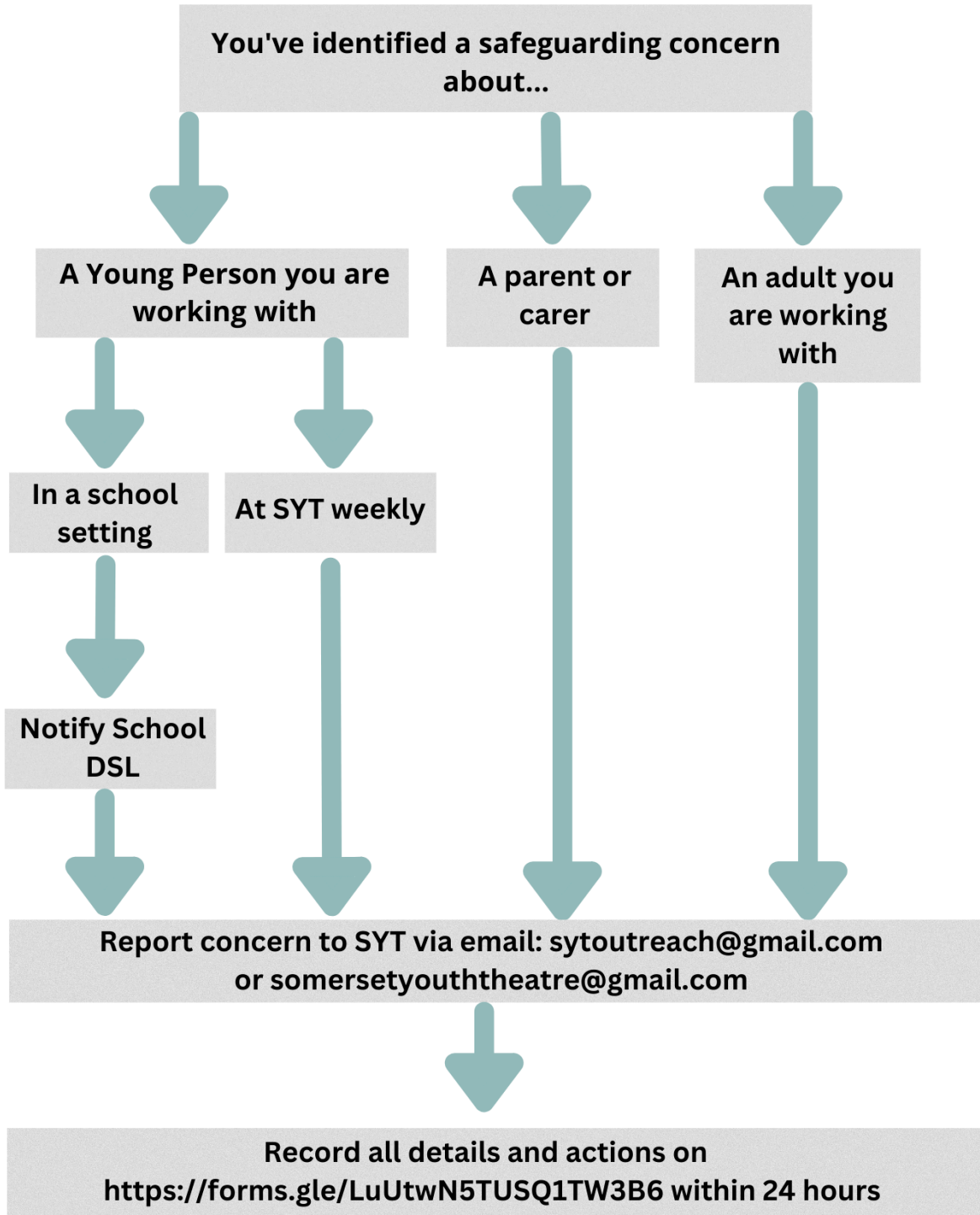
All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Anyone working with young people must also have an understanding of the concept of extra familial, Out of the Home safeguarding – please follow this link and watch the video contained therein:-

<https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/beaware-professionals/contextual-safeguarding/>

Appendix 3 - Flow charts

Safeguarding Flow Chart



Safeguarding Flow Chart

Responding to a disclosure / suspicion of abuse



Notice, listen, record & refer



Never promise a child that they wont tell anyone



Abuse of children can be emotional, physical, sexual and neglect



Deal with it sensitively and take care not to influence any outcome



If unsure how to proceed the should speak to DSO with no delay



If no one is available from SYT contact should be made with Children's Social Care 0300 123 2224



Record all details and actions on <https://forms.gle/LuUtwN5TUSQ1TW3B6> within 24 hours

SYT Recruitment and Selection Policy

1 Policy Statement

The organisation recognises that having the right people in the right place at the right time is crucial to the organisation's performance and improving trust and confidence in achieving our objectives.

This policy is intended to provide assistance to those members of staff involved in the recruitment process within the organisation and specifies the procedures through from advertising to offer of employment. It is also intended to provide advice on best practice to ensure that the organisation's recruitment process is consistent and effective.

This procedure applies to the recruitment by Somerset Youth Theatre of all employees who will be on permanent contracts or fixed-term contracts.

Recruitment Aims

Through its recruitment procedures the organisation aims to:

- have a fair, consistent and transparent approach to recruitment across the organisation
- recruit the right people with the right competencies into the right jobs
- have recruitment processes are cost and time effective
- ensure there is equality of opportunity in all recruitment
- have an objective and fair selection
- comply with all relevant employment legislation and codes of practice
- carry out recruitment in a professional manner and within an agreed framework and process

2 Equal Opportunities

- 2.1 The organisation's Equality Policy applies to all recruitment process and must be complied with at every stage of the recruitment process. This means that prospective applicants should not be discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, cultural or religious beliefs, disability and age. In addition candidates should not be discriminated against based on pregnancy.
- 3.2 Preparation of job descriptions, person specifications, advertisements, short-listing, interviewing and selection of applicants should reflect a commitment to achieving and maintaining equal opportunities within the workplace.
- 3.3 Interviewers should only ask role related questions.

3 Authority to Recruit

- 3.1 Before any vacancy can be advertised, it is necessary to obtain formal authorisation from a Director.
 - All posts other than the Artistic Director and Directors must be submitted to the Artistic Director, Department Director and Director of Finance for approval before the post can be advertised. The request for approval must include details of the job title, job description, person specification, reporting line and salary details as well as a rationale for the recruitment.
 - The Artistic Director's and Directors' posts require the approval of the Chair before the post can be advertised. The request for approval must include details of: the job title, job description, person specification, reporting line and salary details as well as a rationale for the recruitment.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the manager with the vacancy to obtain the necessary approvals via their Director. The Artistic Director will seek the approval of the Trustees where it is required.
- 3.3 When deciding whether to grant authorisation a Director shall consider the rationale for the vacancy e.g. replacement, restructure or expansion, to ensure that recruitment is justified.

4 Recruitment

- 5.1 Before a vacancy is advertised the following information should be prepared:
 - An updated job description
 - A person specification
 - Draft advertisement
 - Recruitment timeline and roles and responsibilities
- 5.2 Job packs will be available via our websites and these will be coordinated by Somerset Youth Theatre.

5 Job Description & Person Specification

- 5.1 A job description and person specification must be produced or reviewed and updated for any vacant post that is to be filled.
- 5.2 The job description should accurately reflect all elements of the post. Where a job description already exists for the vacancy then it should be reviewed to ensure that it still accurately describes the role and should be updated where necessary.
- 5.3 The person specification should state both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of skills, aptitudes, knowledge and experience that are required for the job, all of which should be directly related to the job and applied equally to all applicants. Care should be taken when drawing up the person specification to avoid including criteria that may have the effect of indirectly discriminating against certain groups of applicants. Guidance should be sought from Somerset Youth Theatre where needed.

5.4 It is the role of the Business manager and Artistic Director to prepare the job description and person specification.

6 Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure Checks

Somerset Youth Theatre meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and all applicants who are offered employment will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed. This will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings, as well as convictions.

7 Advertising/attracting applicants

7.1 The job advertisement should be prepared by the same author of the job description and person specification to ensure consistency. It should be based on the person specification and identify a number of the essential criteria in order to maximise the number of suitably qualified applicants.

In normal circumstances posts should be advertised both internally and externally thus allowing career development opportunities for existing employees whilst fulfilling equal opportunities requirements and potentially enhancing the diversity of the workforce. Adverts should be produced using the Organisation template which is available from the HR Department.

7.2 All posts are advertised on the Somerset Youth Theatre website and in other appropriate media, ie Arts Jobs. The cost of the advertisement must be approved in advance by the Finance Director, and any requests to use additional newspapers or other media must be made to the Department Director.

8.3 In certain circumstances it may be more effective to use a recruitment agency than to advertise externally. Approval to do so should be sought from the Artistic Director or the board of Directors.

8.4 Employees who have been acting-up in a position that subsequently becomes vacant will have to apply for the position when it is advertised. In such cases the position is likely to be advertised on an internal basis only.

8 Selection

9.1 Shortlisting - Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they are deemed suitable by the shortlisting panel. There is no set number of candidates who must be short-listed. The number will depend on the quality of the candidate's application and practical considerations, such as the time available for interviews. If none of the candidates meets over 50% on the essential criteria, the post may be re-advertised. The individual short-listing forms will be passed to the HR department and retained with one complete set of application forms for 12 months.

9.2 Interviewing - The interview must be conducted by a panel of at least 2 people and will normally include the Artistic Director and Participation Lead. Where appropriate the panel may also include the Business Manager or/and members of the board. All interviews for one post must be conducted by the same panel.

All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews and reviewed by the team to ensure their suitability. All questions must be related to the role requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role. Follow up questions should be asked to explore and probe the candidate's knowledge fully.

All candidates will be asked these questions and a scoring system will be used for selecting the successful candidate.

Further interviews may be necessary, they may be planned at the outset of the recruitment process, which may be of particular relevance to very senior posts, or follow on from first interviews, either as a result of panel members feeling they have not gathered sufficient information about any of the candidates and wish to re-interview them all, or where the panel is unable to decide between the top candidates and wishes to re-interview a number of them.

In all cases, the process will be the same as for first interviews: questions will be devised in advance that relate directly to the Job Description and Person Specification and reviewed by the HR team.

- 9.3 Assessment - an assessment such as a presentation or situational task may form part of the interview process if such assessments are used it should relate directly to the role in line with what has been outlined in the job description.
- 9.4 Aptitude Testing – Testing where relevant must be conducted on the day of the interview. All candidates in the selection pool will be set the same tests.
- 9.5 Confidentiality - All application details are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

10 Inviting Candidates to Interview

Somerset Youth Theatre will send a written invitation to those candidates who are to be invited for interview at least 5 working days in advance of the interview date except in exceptional circumstances. The invite will include a statement that relates to criminal convictions and other associated information being discussed after the interview with the successful candidate. All applicants called to an interview must also be asked to bring specified documentation with them to the first interview.

11 Prevention of Illegal Working Policy

- 11.3 Somerset Youth Theatre are required by law to ensure that all our employees are legally entitled to work in the U.K and are not subject to any immigration control which would prevent them from working for us. It is a criminal offence, under section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, to employ someone aged 16 years or older who does not have permission to be in or to work in the United Kingdom.
- 11.4 We will not be liable for contractors undertaking work on our behalf or the genuinely self-employed.
- 11.5 A procedure should be followed to avoid employing someone who does not have permission to be in or to work in the United Kingdom. In addition, and pursuant to our

Equal Opportunities Policy, the policy enables us to comply with these legal requirements during the recruitment process without discriminating unlawfully.

- 11.6 You must never assume that an applicant has permission to work in the United Kingdom regardless of his or her appearance, accent or background.
- 11.7 You must inspect the original document/s produced by the applicant as evidence of their right to work in the United Kingdom.
- 11.8 You must make a photocopy or a scan of the whole of the document/s produced to you.
- 11.9 You must keep a record of every document copied. You must not keep the original documentation for any longer than is necessary to obtain a copy. At the most therefore you should not retain them for longer than a day.

12 Appointment

Once the successful candidate has been decided all applicants should be written to as soon as possible by Somerset Youth Theatre. The successful candidates will be contacted to offer them the job, subject to references, DBS Disclosure and right to work checks being satisfactory to Somerset Youth Theatre. They will also send an offer letter stating the specifics of the job (subject to reference and Disclosure) and including all relevant documentation. The unsuccessful candidates who attended an interview will be notified and offer the opportunity to receive panel feedback. Staff will either be line managed by the Artistic Director or the Outreach lead. Meetings will take place at least once every term where concerns around work and child protection may be discussed further. During this time if there are concerns these will be discussed by the management team and followed accordingly.

13 References and Disclosures

- 13.1 It is Somerset Youth Theatre's policy to take up references on all potential employees, to check all employees using the Disclosure and Barring Service and to carry out checks on the individual's right to work in the United Kingdom. Gaps in employment will be checked and a minimum of two references are sought.
- 13.2 Somerset Youth Theatre will carry out the Disclosure check (in accordance with the details in the separate *Recruitment of Ex-Offenders* procedure) and will follow up any queries on the individual's right to work in the UK, if the check at interview stage was not conclusive. Will identify and reject applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.
- 13.3 Somerset Youth Theatre will also send the appropriate standard written reference request to referees. Information sought from referees should be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description should be provided. It should be noted that many organisations have a policy of not providing personal references and therefore references provided may only confirm details of current appointment.
- 13.4 Referees should not be contacted without the candidate's consent.
- 13.5 The information provided should be treated as confidential and should be used only to verify information collected through the selection process.

14 First Day of Employment

14.3 Preparations should be made for the arrival of the new entrant well in advance, for example, arrangements should be made to provide desk, equipment, etc. It is the responsibility of the recruitment manager with HR to make such arrangements.

Please refer to the Somerset Youth Theatre CIC recruitment folder which also includes expectations and inclusion information.

14.4 It is important to introduce new employees to their new workplace and colleagues at the earliest opportunity.

During the first day of employment, the successful applicant will also be introduced to the team and who they are responsible to (line manager). There will be a short induction, tour of office and if working with children will not be able to start until a valid DBS enhanced certificate is shown and copied by Somerset Youth Theatre cic. If relevant safeguarding training will be expected within the probationary period (one month).

14.5 Following their induction training a tour of the workplace should be arranged for new employees allowing the organisation to be viewed as a whole.

14.6 The new employees will want to get to know their colleagues and quickly become part of the team and time should be made for this process. Colleagues should be briefed on the new entrant's arrival.

14.5 New employees will need to bring specific documentation or information to the HR Department that needs to be produced on the first day. This may include:

- P45 tax form
- birth certificate (where appropriate)
- passport or national identity card
- work permit (where applicable)
- national insurance number
- personal contact details
- bank detail
- details of emergency contact and how they may be reached

15 Probationary Period

15.3 All new employees are appointed subject to a probationary period. During the Probationary Period your performance and suitability for the role will be reviewed monthly.

15.4 It is the line manager's responsibility to carry out the monthly review and make a record of what was discussed. A copy of this must be forwarded to HR. Please refer to the probation review form (appendix 2).

15.3 The organisation reserves the right to extend the probationary period should it be considered necessary by the organisation in the light of any review during the probationary period.

16 Review

Recruitment and selection procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they keep up to date with changes in the law and that they take account of any appropriate feedback received from new recruits or unsuccessful applicants. This procedure should be reviewed at least annually.

Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE complies fully with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE ensures that all those in SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences
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SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

At interview, or in a separate discussion, SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice and makes a copy available on request

SOMERSET YOUTH THEATRE undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Document control sheet

Document Name: Recruitment & Selection Policy
Issue Number: Issue 1

Document Owner: Title of responsible person
Date: MM YYYY
Review Date: MM YYYY
Document History: Issue 1 - 1st formal issue

Document approved by: Artistic Director and Directors
Date approved: Issue 1 – MM YYYY

Employee's comments:	
Action Plan/Outcome: State agreed action plan on what must be achieved.	
Performance Targets and Objectives for next period:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•••••	
Managers Signature: _____	Employee Signature: _____
Date:	_____

This sample document is provided for general information purposes only. Your use of this sample document is at your own risk, and we recommend you do not use it without first seeking legal and/or other professional advice.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY – August 2024

If you are worried about a child or young person contact -

Children's Social Care on **0300 123 2224**

by email at childrens@somerset.gov.uk

NSPCC Help for adults concerned about a child Help for adults concerned about a child

Call us on 0808 800 5000

or the police.

You can contact the police directly by dialling 101 and they will discuss with Children's Social Care what action should be taken.

If you feel a child is in immediate danger call 999

If you would like to speak to a social worker outside of office hours please phone the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on **0300 123 23 27**

Staff are expected to take up opportunities on enhanced safeguarding training and complete additional training when offered as part of continuing professional development (CPD).

<i>Signed by DSO and SO: Joanne Evans and Selina Keedwell</i>	
Signatures	<i>JEvans and SKeedwell</i>
Date	02.02.23
Review Date	February 2024

