

ATTIC THEATRE COMPANY SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Contents: 1. Adult at Risk Policy and 2. Child Protection Policy

Attic believes that the safety and welfare of adults at risk and children and young people is of the utmost importance. It is the duty of all our staff & volunteers to protect each child or adult at risk from abuse and to be alert to the possibility of abuse.

Note: In this document reference to Attic Theatre Company includes any of its youth drama activities or older person's activities.

The definition of 'child' or 'young person' relates to anyone under the age of 18, and also those above the age of 18 but under 25 who are adults at risk for reasons of mental and physical disability.

The definition of an adult at risk is wide, however this may be regarded as anyone over the age of 18 years who may be unable to protect themselves from abuse, harm or exploitation, which may be by reason of illness, age, mental illness, disability or other types of physical or mental impairment. Those at risk may live alone, be dependent on others (care homes etc.), elderly, or socially isolated. This definition of an Adult covers all people over 18 years of age.

This policy outlines the types of abuse both for children and young people and adults at risk individually. It is worth noting that whilst abuse shares some of the same characteristics between children and young people and adults at risk, there are important differences. For example, there may be a differing set of issues, a difference in the terms used, a difference in the procedures for reporting abuse and/or differing legislation. This policy contains separate policies and procedures to effectively safeguard both children and young people and adults at risk.

Attic Theatre Company

- fosters and produces new and experimental theatre, participatory arts and creative activities;
- is committed to creating a safe environment where adults at risk, children and young people can enjoy rewarding and stimulating experiences;
- recognises that adults at risk, children and young persons should be listened to and heard, valued and respected as individuals, respected for their identity and uniqueness, encouraged and praised, and involved in decisions as appropriate – age, regardless of gender, ethnicity, social class, disability, sexual identity, language or religious beliefs;
- takes any suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse very seriously, and the company Safeguarding Policy, sets out the supportive, confidential and professional nature of how suspicion, disclosure or allegations of abuse are dealt

with, both internally within the company and with regards to appropriate statutory authorities;

- believes that the value of a Safeguarding Policy lies not merely in its intention but in its practical delivery.

It is the responsibility of the Artistic Director, General Manager and the Creative Engagement Producer to monitor effectiveness, develop where necessary the Safeguarding Policy and its Code of Practice, and report to the Board of Trustees. Each member of the company has responsibility for their own compliance.

It is therefore important that staff are aware of, and confident in using, Attic Theatre Company's code of practice.

Attic Theatre Company aims to implement its Safeguarding Policy through a code of practice that applies to all its areas of action, as follows:

- adopting child Safeguarding through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with adults at risk, children and young persons, parents and carers, teachers, staff and volunteers;
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving adults at risk, children and parents appropriately;
- following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in line with the company's policies on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- providing effective management of staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- regularly monitoring and reviewing our policy and good practice.

This Policy has been adopted:

Signed



Victoria Hibbs
General Manager (Designated Person)

Signed



Peter Shore
Chairperson of the Board

Adult at Risk Policy

The following Policy has been adopted by the Trustee Board of Attic Theatre Company and has been based on [Merton's multi-agency 'No Secrets' policy and procedures](#).

The Trustees nominate the General Manager as the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the Company with day to day responsibility for ensuring that this policy is put into practice.

The policy is reviewed annually on rotation with all other policies.

Definitions

Adults at risk are people over 18, who:

- Are in need of care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and unable to protect themselves because of:
 - a mental or learning disability.
 - a physical disability.
 - age or illness.
- An inability to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.
(Definition from 'No Secrets' March 2000 Department of Health & Care Act 2014)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and;
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social abuse.

People who abuse are:

- often well known to their victims but can be strangers.
- might be a relative, partner, son or daughter, friend or neighbour, a paid or voluntary worker, or a health or social care worker.
- could be another adults at risk or service user.
- may not realise they are abusing and can sometimes act out of character and abuse because of the stress of caring.

Abuse can take place in a wide range of settings such as:

- The adults at risk's own home.
- A carer's home.
- A day centre.
- A care home.
- A hospital.
- The workplace.
- Educational institutions.

Recognition

The most common types of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse:** this is usually the use of force to cause pain and injury and signs might include:
 - A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries
 - Bruising in well protected areas, or clustered from repeated striking
 - Finger marks
 - Burns of unusual location or type
 - Injuries found at different states of healing
 - Injury shape similar to an object
 - Injuries to head/face/scalp
 - History of GP or agency hopping, or reluctance to seek help
 - Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence
 - Weight loss due to malnutrition, or rapid weight gain
 - Ulcers, bed sores and being left in wet clothing

- Drowsiness due to too much medication, or lack of medication causing recurring crises/ hospital admissions
- Also included is misuse of medication or forcing someone, for example, to stay in a care home against their wishes.
- **Neglect:** this is when an adult at risk does not have their basic needs met, such as adequate food or warmth or help with personal hygiene. Signs might include deteriorating health, appearance or mood.
- **Financial abuse:** this is when an adult at risk is exploited for financial gain.
- Often valuables will go missing in the home or there may be a change in financial circumstances that cannot be explained.
- **Sexual abuse:** this includes:
 - Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as 'It's a secret')
 - Medical problems, e.g. Genital infections, pregnancy, difficulty walking or sitting
 - Disturbed behaviour e.g. depression, sudden withdrawal from activities,
 - Loss of previous skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self-injury,
 - Showing fear or aggression to one particular person, repeated or excessive masturbation, inappropriately seductive behaviour,
 - Loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down.
 - Behaviour of others towards the adults at risk
 - Circumstances – e.g. two service users found in a toilet area, one in a distressed state
- **Psychological abuse:** this might be emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, enforced isolation, blaming or controlling behaviour, or verbal and racial insults. Signs may be fear, confusion or disturbed sleep.
- **Discriminatory abuse:** this includes any sort of abuse based on an adult at risk's race, gender or impairment such as their mental or physical health.
- **Institutional abuse:** this is poor professional practice, including neglect, and can take the form of isolated incidents right through to ill treatment or gross misconduct.

Action to be taken

- It is responsibility of all staff & volunteers to report abuse.
- If the adult at risk is in danger, first ensure they are safe and if immediate help is needed, call the emergency services on 999.
- Then follow the detailed reporting procedure set out below.
- A worker from Merton Social Services may then arrange an investigation that involves other agencies who work with adults at risk.
- Action will then be taken to ensure the adult at risk is protected in the future.
- Staff & volunteers who abuse will be dealt with through Attic's disciplinary procedures.
- Where a criminal offence has been committed the police will always be informed.

Reporting procedures for cases of alleged/suspected abuse

- Only ask the person sufficient questions to establish what has happened i.e. accident or possible abuse.
- If danger exists, ensure the person and any other adults at risk are protected.
- If the person is seriously injured seek immediate medical treatment – ringing 999 for ambulance and police if the injuries are serious.

- Immediately report the incident to your line manager and adhere to existing policies e.g. Health and Safety. Your line manager should decide if Social Services or National Care Standards Commission need to be informed, if the victim's relatives need to be contacted, and if the police should be informed.
- Outside of office hours, cases of suspected abuse should be reported to the emergency out of hours duty social worker, except mental health cases, which should be reported through the existing duty senior nurse.
- Be careful not to destroy or contaminate evidence.
- As soon as possible detailed notes should be made. Documentation is vital and if evidence might be required for criminal proceedings at a later date, a medical examination by a GP/hospital doctor or nurse would be advantageous.
- If the suspected abuser is a member of staff, the matter will be dealt with through Attic's disciplinary procedure. The police could be involved and s/he could be suspended pending an investigation.

Confidentiality

Our adults at risk have the right to expect that all staff and volunteers will deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information remains confidential and that only those with a 'need to know' should be privy to it.

Use of images and data

Attic Theatre Company recognises that taking pictures and videos of the achievements and activities of adults at risk is a wonderful way of capturing a memory and promoting successes, but consideration needs to be given to who might have access to those images in whatever media and who gives permission for their use. Attic Theatre Company endeavours to safeguard the rights of adults at risk in images by:

- always seeking written consent from the adults at risk BEFORE taking photographs.
- always being clear about how the image will be used and for how long;
- being careful when naming a adults at risk and never using the person's full name or the place where he or she lives in conjunction with a photograph.
- never publishing any images that could be used inappropriately;
- ensuring consent forms and images are stored safely and securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Use of social media

Attic Theatre Company recognises that social media provides opportunities to engage, connect and develop unique relationships with adults at risk in a creative and dynamic medium, where users are active participants, such as social networking sites e.g. Facebook, and other current platforms; micro-blogging services e.g. Twitter; video-sharing services e.g. YouTube; and photo-sharing services e.g. Flickr or Instagram. However, Attic Theatre Company also recognises the risks associated with user interactive services.

- Attic Theatre Company will:
- ensure that any Attic webpage/profile created specifically for a social media site adheres to this policy's guidelines relating to the privacy of personal information and the use of images;
- monitor the use of such sites, and comments made on the sites, to ensure that they are appropriate and not abusive;

- ensure that there is a dedicated manager of social media responsible for setting up, managing and moderating (overseeing / reviewing /responding to posted content) such sites. Attic Theatre Company will ensure that this person is trained in and understands online safeguarding issues, including warning signs of grooming and sexual exploitation and that they have a DBS check; and ensure compliance with Attic Theatre Company's policy on social media as detailed in this document.
- not ask users to divulge any personal details - including home and email addresses, schools or mobile numbers - that may help locate a child, young person or adults at risk;
- promote safe and responsible use of social networking to Attic Theatre Company audiences online

Use of Data

Attic Theatre Company recognises that the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 must be adhered to when handling the personal information of adults at risk. This means that personal information must be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully and kept securely; only disclosed in appropriate circumstances; and not held for longer than necessary.

It is best practice to gain verbal or written consent, from a adults at risk before any personal information relating to them is shared with another organisation. However, you may not need to seek consent to share information if it might be unsafe to seek (e.g. seeking consent might increase the risk to the adults at risk) or causes an unjustified delay or if it would prejudice the prevention, detection or Procedure for documenting suspicions or allegations of abuse.

All adults at risk protection concerns must be recorded accurately and immediately using clear and simple language. Staff must record information as soon as possible and all records must be signed, dated and timed. Records should an account of factual information and any view or judgement expressed about these facts should be clearly qualified as such. All records should be kept in a secure place (which are locked in a filing cabinet behind a separate door to the main office) and regarded as highly sensitive material. Please refer to the company's Data Protection Policy for details.

Safe Recruitment Procedures

Attic's recruitment policy stipulates that all staff (paid or voluntary) will have to submit a CV or complete an application form, detailing past work history and references. Individuals are then interviewed and references requested. Only on receipt of satisfactory references will a formal offer of employment or placement be made.

All staff and volunteers working directly with adults at risk are required to have an enhanced check through the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) before commencement of work or placement.

Staff members (voluntary or paid) are thus required to fill out a DBS form and produce evidence as to their identity, in accordance with the Disclosure Service.. This information is then witnessed by the Designated Person responsible for adults at risk and signed as an acknowledgement of information produced.

Copies of all returned DBS checks and documentation pertaining to any adults at risk issues will be kept confidentially and securely locked within the organisations administration office.

Staff can undergo training and induction whilst waiting for the checks to clear, but

cannot undertake any unsupervised face-to-face work until satisfactory checks have been received.

Attic Theatre Company is registered with both the LB Merton DBS department and the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) who provide an umbrella checking service. Attic will ensure that any newly appointed staff bringing their existing DBS certification should be issued within 3 years and following one year's continuous service for Attic will undergo a new check via Attic's checking routes (see above).

All staff should undergo a new DBS enhanced check at a minimum of every three years.

Safe Operational Procedures

Attic has a comprehensive series of policies and procedures which outline the expected standards of behaviour and codes of conduct for all those employed or volunteering with the company. These policies are presented alongside the contract and signed accordingly as part of their agreement with Attic.

It is a condition of employment that they adhere to these policies and procedures.

Attic maintains a risk assessment and register for all activities undertaken. The company holds Accident and Incident books, First Aid kits and specific data (stored securely) detailing each participant's requirements and any extra support they may need.

Designated person: General Manager, Victoria Hibbs
020 8640 6800 (work)
07836 575660 (mobile)

Deputy designated person: Artistic Director, Jonathan Humphreys
020 8640 6800 (work)
07977448814 (mobile)

Deputy designated person: Creative Engagement Producer,
Bryony Farrant Davis
020 8640 6800 (work)
07984 769218 (mobile)

Emergency Number: 999

Police Station: 0208 947 1212 (Wimbledon)
call 999 if you believe a child or adult is in immediate
danger

Social Services: 0208 545 4227 (duty social worker)

Attic Office 020 8640 6800

Reviewed December 2021
V Hibbs - General Manager
Ratified by the Board of Trustees

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Procedures and Guidelines

1. Purpose and Aim of Procedures

It is very important that there are procedures in place to ensure a speedy and effective response for dealing with concerns about the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children or their neglect.

These procedures relate to ALL members of staff working for Attic Theatre Company, whether freelance, core staff or volunteers.

The procedures will help all members of staff to accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children harm. This will help to create a safe environment where children and young persons can enjoy stimulating experiences of new and experimental work.

2. Training

The following information is intended as a reference and guidance document for company procedures relating to Child Protection, and will be accompanied by adequate training in Child Protection issues for all members of staff. Training should be undertaken and refreshed no less frequently than every three years

3. Recruitment

All members of staff working for Attic Theatre Company, on a temporary or permanent, voluntary or paid basis and involved in projects where they are required to work with children or young people directly, are subject to the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers, in particular DBS checks (as outlined in Appendix 5 on Safer Recruitment).

4. Designated Person

The designated person at Attic Theatre Company responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse is the General Manager. Their deputy is the Creative Engagement Producer, alternatively the Artistic Director.

The role of the designated person is:

- to carry out a risk assessment prior to any project involving direct work with children or young persons and monitor or, if necessary, reassess, the assessment and initiate appropriate changes;
- to receive information from staff, volunteers, children, young persons, parents, carers or teachers who have child protection concerns and record it;
- to assess information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate;
- to consult initially with a statutory child protection agency to test out doubts or uncertainties;
- to make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay.

Within participatory projects, the leader(s) of the group may be the first point of contact for the above. They will be identifiable to children, parents and carers. Any information

received by the group leader(s) will be referred immediately to the designated person who will manage points the above in conjunction with the group leader (s).

5. How you might become aware of the actual or likely occurrence of abuse

- a child might tell you;
- someone else might report that a child has told them or that they strongly believe that a child has been or is being abused;
- a child might show some signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation;
- a child's behaviour may indicate to you that it is likely that s/he is being abused;
- something in the behaviour of another member of staff or a young person, or in the way a member of staff or young person relates to a child, alerts you or makes you feel uncomfortable in some way;
- you might observe one child abusing another.

6. Responding to signs or suspicions of abuse

At any time a member of Attic Theatre Company staff may be approached by a child or other adult alleging or disclosing abuse, or may see signs which lead them to suspect abuse.

In the case of participatory projects the group leader(s) will be the designated contact, but other staff may be approached.

Any sign or suspicion of abuse should be recorded by the staff member using the check list provided in Appendix 1. This should be done immediately when you suspect abuse.

It should then be reported immediately to the Designated Person who, in conjunction with the staff member will make further records and notes about the issue using the Incident Record Form in Appendix 4 and refer the matter to appropriate authorities within 24 hours.

7. Responding to a child disclosing abuse

At any time a member of Attic Theatre Company staff may be approached by a child or other adult alleging or disclosing abuse.

In the case of participatory projects the project leader will be the designated contact, but other staff may be approached.

Any disclosure of abuse should be recorded by the staff member using the check list provided in Appendix 2. This should be done immediately when the abuse is disclosed.

It should then be reported immediately to the Designated Person who in conjunction with the staff member will make further records and notes about the issue using and the Incident Record Form in Appendix 4 and refer the matter to appropriate authorities within 24 hours.

8. Responding to allegations of abuse against a member of Attic Theatre Company staff ("whistle blowing")

At any time a member of Attic Theatre Company staff may be approached by a child or other adult alleging or disclosing abuse against a member of Attic Theatre Company staff.

The details of any allegation of abuse should be recorded by the staff member using the check list provided in Appendix 2. This should be done immediately when the abuse is alleged.

It should then be reported immediately to the Designated Person who in conjunction with the staff member will make further records and notes about the issue using the Incident Record Form in Appendix 4 and refer the matter to appropriate authorities within 24 hours.

In the event of an allegation being made against the Designated Person, it should be reported to the Chair of Attic's Board of Trustees who in conjunction with the staff member will make further records and notes about the issue using the Incident Record Form in Appendix 4 and refer the matter to the appropriate authorities within 24 hours.

In either case, a member of the board will be informed once proceedings are set in motion.

At all times, all concerned are bound to treat with utmost confidentiality the (fact of) the allegation and the identity of the person against whom the allegation has been made.

The Designated Person (or the Chair of the Board of Trustees) will normally suspend the person against whom the allegation has been made with immediate effect in such a manner as not disclose its reason, pending further advice, decisions and actions by the appropriate authorities.

For the avoidance of doubt the person is to be told they are suspended pending investigation.

9. Responding to allegations of abuse against someone not working for Attic Theatre Company

At any time a member of Attic Theatre Company staff may be approached by a child or other adult alleging or disclosing abuse against an individual not involved in Attic Theatre Company.

The details of any allegation of abuse should be recorded by the staff member using the check list provided in Appendix 2. This should be done immediately when the abuse is alleged.

It should then be reported immediately to the Designated Person who in conjunction with the staff member will make further records and notes about the issue using the Incident Record Form in Appendix 4 and refer the matter to appropriate authorities within 24 hours.

10. Regular Review of the Child Protection Policy

This Policy is to be reviewed regularly, at least annually.

The Designated Person will initiate a review of the Policy after each reported incident to assess whether the Policy has been applied adequately, and to assess whether the Policy is still adequate.

The Designated Person will ensure that they are up to date with any developments in law and best practice regarding child protection which may require modifications of this Policy, in which case a review will be initiated immediately.

11. Use of Images

Attic Theatre Company recognises that taking pictures and videos of the achievements and activities of children and young people is a wonderful way of capturing a memory and promoting successes, but consideration needs to be given to who might have access to those images in whatever media and who gives permission for their use. Attic Theatre Company endeavours to safeguard the rights of children and young people in images by:

- always seeking written consent from the parent/guardian or carer for children and young people under the age of 18 BEFORE taking photographs.
- always being clear about how the image will be used and for how long;
- being careful when naming a child or young person and never using the person's full name or the place where he or she lives in conjunction with a photograph.
- never publishing any images that could be used inappropriately e.g. children wearing swimming costumes;
- ensuring consent forms and images are stored safely and securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Use of social media

Attic Theatre Company recognises that social media provides opportunities to engage, connect and develop unique relationships with children and young people in a creative and dynamic medium, where users are active participants, such as social networking sites

e.g. Facebook, and other current platforms; micro-blogging services e.g. Twitter; video-sharing services e.g. YouTube; and photo-sharing services e.g. Flickr or Instagram. However, Attic Theatre Company also recognises the risks associated with user interactive services including sexual exploitation, online grooming and cyber bullying. Most children and young people use the Internet positively, but sometimes behave in ways that may place themselves at risk and some risks do not necessarily arise from the technology itself but result from offline contact following interaction on social media.

Attic Theatre Company will:

- ensure that any Attic webpage/profile created specifically for a social media site adheres to this policy's guidelines relating to the privacy of personal information and the use of images;
- monitor the use of such sites, and comments made on the sites, to ensure that they are appropriate and not abusive;
- ensure that there is a dedicated manager of social media responsible for setting up, managing and moderating (overseeing / reviewing /responding to posted content) such sites. Attic Theatre Company will ensure that this person is trained in and understands online safeguarding issues, including warning signs of grooming and sexual exploitation and that they have a DBS check; and ensure compliance with Attic Theatre Company's policy on social media as detailed in this document.
- use an official organisation email address when creating a profile on a networking site such as Facebook (e.g. @attictheatrecompany.co.uk rather than @hotmail.com), in order to reduce the risk of impostor or fake profiles;
- keep the log-in details to the account (including the password to the account and webpage/profile) secure in order to reduce the risk of someone hacking into online information;
- set appropriate privacy levels;
- set the 'accept comment' setting in order to check messages; and ensure that all messages are checked before they appear on the webpage / profile, and block any inappropriate messages and, if necessary, report them to the service provider.
- include contact details on the webpage / profile so people can contact the Theatre directly, including a website address and telephone number, in order for users to get in touch and verify the organisation;
- promote the theatre's social networking page on the theatre's website to help users to find the social networking page and reduce the risk of people finding fake profiles;
- take all possible measures not to target or encourage potential users who are likely to be under the minimum age for the social media service (which is usually 13 years old), and report underage users to the service provider and to the young person's parents (if possible);
- not accept 'friend' requests from underage children;
- not ask users to divulge any personal details - including home and email addresses, schools or mobile numbers - that may help locate a child, young person or adults at risk;
- promote safe and responsible use of social networking to Attic Theatre Company audiences online

12. Confidentiality Policy

Data

Attic Theatre Company recognises that the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998, GDPR 2018 and more recently the UK GDPR must be adhered to when handling the personal information of children and young people. This means that personal information must be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully and kept securely; only disclosed in appropriate circumstances; and not held for longer than necessary.

The legislation allows for disclosure of information without the consent of the subject in certain conditions, including for the purposes of the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension of offenders. The need to safeguard children from harm should be considered within these parameters.

The European Convention of Human Rights Article 8 also addresses the need to disclose information for 'the protection of health and morals, for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others and for the prevention of disorder or crime... Disclosure should be appropriate for the purpose and only to the extent necessary to achieve that purpose'.

It is necessary to gain verbal or written consent, from a child or parent/ carer before any personal information relating to them is shared with another organisation. However, you may not need to seek consent to share information if it might be unsafe to seek (e.g. seeking consent might increase the risk to the child) or causes an unjustified delay or if it would prejudice the prevention, detection or Procedure for documenting suspicions or allegations of abuse.

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded accurately and immediately using clear and simple language. Staff must record information as soon as possible and all records must be signed, dated and timed. Records should an account of factual information and any view or judgement expressed about these facts should be clearly qualified as such. All records should be kept in a secure place (placed in a locked box within a locked cupboard within the main office) and regarded as highly sensitive material. Please refer to the company's Data Protection Policy for details.

13. Code of Behaviour

To be made available to all staff, children and young people working with Attic Theatre Company.

These guidelines are intended to reduce situations where abuse of children may occur, and help protect staff by promoting good working practice. General Guidelines should be observed at all times in any situation; other guidelines should be referred to in the relevant circumstances / places where work is carried out.

Attic Theatre Company is committed to practice that protects children from harm.

All staff in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm.

The term 'staff' is here used to include everyone working with Attic Theatre Company, whether as freelance, temporary company member, core staff, or volunteer.

General Guidelines:

- For each project, adequate supervision should be in place at all times, the level of which is to be planned in advance by the Designated Person in conjunction with the Creative Engagement Producer);
- Everyone working with children should be sensitive as to what is appropriate physical contact, both in general terms, and in relation to a specific individual. Staff need to be conscious of situations in which their actions, however well intended, could be misconstrued by others as harmful;
- Treat all young people with respect. Listen to them carefully;
- It is not good practice to spend unreasonable amounts of time alone with children away from others;
- Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid situations where a leader and individual child are completely unobserved;
- Children should never be left unattended or be excluded from the group;
- If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure leaders where possible work in pairs, and also not to enter changing rooms of the opposite sex;

- Leaders must place the well-being and safety of the young person above other considerations at all times;
- If a child or young person is injured whilst involved in an Attic Theatre Company project, the injury is to be recorded and countersigned by the parent or carer of the child;
- If a child or young person arrives at an Attic Theatre Company project session with an injury, the injury should be recorded and countersigned by the parent or carer. This might be useful if an allegation is made at a later date and also records that the injury was not sustained during an Attic Theatre Company activity;
- Do not take children to your home where they will be alone with you;
- It is not good practice to take children to any separate space where they will be alone with you;
- Be aware of and avoid using inappropriate language;
- Be aware of and avoid using inappropriate physical contact;
- There may be times when physical contact is unavoidable or positively desirable or necessary, such as providing comfort and reassurance to a distressed child, or physical support, for example when working with a disabled child. Physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose of the contact should be made clear;
- Act on and record any allegations made by a young person or member of staff;

Other Guidelines:

In Schools

- Do not accept the help of pupils with any set up or preparation;
- Attic Theatre Company staff should stay in the workshop / activity area and avoid wandering around the school;
- Find out where the staff toilets are – never use the pupils' toilets;
- Alcohol and recreational drugs should not be taken onto school premises under any circumstances and staff should not consume alcohol before arriving at the activity session;
- Do not smoke on school premises;
- Where it is necessary to take prescribed drugs onto the premises, they should be kept hidden and out of reach of young people;
- Ensure language and conversation is appropriate;
- Report any suspicions or allegations of abuse to the Designated Person or Leader of the Activity;
- Avoid being left alone with a single young person;
- Do not initiate physical contact with pupils – it should not be necessary. If the nature of the workshop / activity requires any physical contact with pupils, this should be discussed with their teachers in advance;
- If a child initiates physical contact (i.e. approaches you for a hug), deflect them if possible (e.g. offer them a handshake instead);
- Attic Theatre Company staff are not in the school in a disciplinary capacity of any kind (any action taken in this regard is to come from the teachers);
- Never reprimand or shout at a child;
- Avoid getting involved in issues that arise amongst the pupils. If a child informs you of a problem, tell a member of the teaching staff. Do not interfere while the teacher deals with the situation;
- Occasionally Attic Theatre Company staff might be approached by pupils with personal problems. Without being dismissive, explain that you will have to report this to a teacher. Do not promise to keep the issue secret. You must report this to the lead staff member present and the school head teacher;

- If something a pupil tells you leads you to suspect they are being abused, you are obliged to report it to the lead Attic Theatre Company staff member and the head teacher;

One to one situations

A one to one situation creates a more heightened environment – facilitators should be aware of this and act professionally and accordingly.

As far as possible, any one to one situations should take place in an environment that can be observed.

Appendix 1:

Checklist – responding to a child making allegations of abuse

- Stay calm
- Be non-judgemental
- Listen carefully to what is said without interrupting
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - **do not promise to keep secrets**
- Make it clear that you take them seriously
- Allow the child to continue at his / her own pace
- Record only what the child has said (see Appendix 4 for an Incident Report Form). Many cases fall down where it is possible to infer that leading questions were asked even at these early stages
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Reassure them that you are going to do everything you can to help. Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as often as possible in a clear and factual manner
- Information that should be recorded includes: date and time of incident and / or disclosure, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given, what was said or done by whom, any action taken by the organisation, where relevant: reasons why no referral to a statutory agency was made - and ensure that the record is signed and dated
- Record every incident of suspected, alleged or disclosed abuse you encounter
- The information will be received by the Project Leader/Designated Person and stored in accordance with the requirements detailed in the UK GDPR. It will then only be shared by those who need to know, i.e. senior management of the company, the chairman, and social services staff as necessary.

Things to avoid:

- Do not quiz for more information
- Do not speculate or make assumptions
- Do not voice negative judgements about the situation or the abuser
- Do not make promises you cannot keep
- Do not promise that 'everything will be alright'
- Do not offer to keep it confidential

Remember:

It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the first person who encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse

has occurred. That is the task of a professional child protection agency, following a referral to them of concern about a child.

Appendix 2:

Definitions and signs of Child Abuse

Child Abuse

"A child is considered to be abused, or at risk of abuse by parents or carers when the basic needs of the child are not being met through avoidable acts of either commission or omission."

A child may be abused or neglected by someone inflicting harm, or by knowingly not preventing harm. There are four main kinds of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Common signs of abuse

A child may be experiencing abuse if he or she is:

- frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed
- left in unsafe situations or without medical attention
- constantly "put down", insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- seems afraid of parents or carers
- severely bruised or injured
- displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age
- growing up in a home where there is domestic violence
- living with parents or carers involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse

Remember, this list does not cover every possibility. You may have seen other things in the child's behaviour or circumstances that worry you. If in doubt, contact the NSPCC Helpline and talk to one of our counsellors, who are all trained child protection officers. They can give you expert advice and will take action to protect the child if necessary.

Abuse is always wrong and it is never the young person's fault.

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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

The signs of physical abuse

Bruises, black eyes and broken bones are obvious signs of physical abuse, but they are not the only ones. Other signs include:

- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly
- Untreated or inadequately treated injuries
- Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely, such as thighs, back, abdomen
- Bruising which looks like hand or finger marks
- Cigarette burns, human bites
- Scalds and burns

Sometimes if a child is being physically abused they may show changes in behaviour, such as:-

- Becoming sad, withdrawn or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Behaving aggressively or being disruptive
- Showing fear of certain adults
- Showing lack of confidence and low self-esteem
- Using drugs or alcohol

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause ever 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve 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 ill-treatment 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, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may involve looking at, or the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Children who are being abused may show a number of physical and emotional changes. But remember that these signs do not always mean that a child is being abused - there may be other explanations.

Physical signs of sexual abuse

- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal areas.
- Genital discharge or urinary tract infections
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Sexually transmitted infections
- If the child is suffering from any of these symptoms, action should be taken immediately.

Behavioural signs of sexual abuse

- A marked change in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unusually aggressive. Or they may start suffering from what may seem to be physical ailments, but which can't be explained medically.
- The child may refuse to attend school or starts to have difficulty concentrating so that their schoolwork is affected.
- They may show unexpected fear or distrust of a particular adult or refuse to continue with their usual social activities.
- They may start using sexually explicit behaviour or language, particularly if the behaviour or language is not appropriate for their age.

- The child may describe receiving special attention from a particular adult, or refer to a new, "secret" friendship with an adult or young person.

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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Effects of Abuse

Without appropriate intervention and treatment, the sustained abuse or neglect of children physically, emotionally or sexually is likely to have major long-term effects on all aspects of the child's health and well-being, such as:

growth and development,

- own self-image and self-esteem
- difficulties in forming or sustaining close relationships
- getting established in the work force
- developing the attitude and skills necessary to be an affective parent

Children may suffer or be at risk of suffering significant harm. Harm may be attributable to:

- ill treatment which may include sexual, physical or emotional abuse or
- the impairment of physical or mental health or
- the impairment of physical, intellectual or behavioural development

This may be the result of:

- a deliberate act by a parent, carer or other adult or child
- a failure to act or to provide proper care
- or both of these

How is harm deemed to be 'significant'?

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm.

Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, and the extent of premeditation, degree of threat and coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements in child abuse.

Each of these elements has been associated with more severe effects on the child and / or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the ill-treatment.

Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm (e.g. violent assault, poisoning or suffocation).

More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances where their health and development are neglected. For them it is the corrosiveness of long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case it is necessary to consider any ill-treatment alongside the family's strengths and supports.

It is important to always take account of the child's reactions, and his or her perceptions, according to the child's age and understanding.

Minor shortcomings in health care or minor deficits in physical, psychological or social development should not require compulsory intervention unless cumulatively they are having or are likely to have, serious and lasting effects upon a child.

Sources: ITC, NSPCC, Department of Health 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'; ACE 'Keeping arts safe'; DfES/1568/2005 'Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings'; Company of Angels Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 3:

Basic Information on who abuses & barriers to implementing procedures

Who abuses?

- you cannot tell by looking at a person whether they are an abuser – they do not appear different from the rest of society
- abusers come from all classes of society, all professions, ages and backgrounds
- abuse of children may sometimes be carried out by strangers, but it is much more common that the abuser is known to the child and is in a position of trust and / or authority
- it is not only adults who abuse children – children may suffer abuse from other children and young people

Barriers to implementing procedures

Adults:

- finding it hard to believe what we are hearing – shock, disbelief, fear or denial
- not being able to believe that the suspicion is about someone they know
- the fear of 'getting it wrong' and the consequences for the child, family and themselves
- worrying about making it worse for the child
- believing that services are stigmatised
- not wanting to be involved
- not having the information of what to do or who to contact

Children:

- being scared because they feel / have been threatened
- believing they will be taken away from home
- believing they are to blame
- thinking it happens to all children
- feeling embarrassed
- feeling guilty
- not wanting the abuser to get into trouble
- having communication or learning difficulties
- not having the vocabulary for what happened
- being afraid they won't be believed
- believing they have 'told' (maybe by dropping hints) and haven't been believed, so 'what's the point in trying again'

General:

- disability: children with a disability are known to be particularly adults at risk due to dependency on others, communication issues, isolation, having difficulty in recognising inappropriate behaviour, not being able to physically leave an abuse situation

- racism: evidence suggests ethnic minority families often fail to receive appropriate services from statutory authorities
- faith issues: strong beliefs about redemption and forgiveness can mark abusers
- and many others (the above summary is just citing the main / most common barriers)

Appendix 4:
Incident Record Form
- strictly confidential -
Attic Theatre Company (London) Ltd.

Your name:	
Project Name and Your Position:	
Child's Name:	
Child's Address:	
Parents/Carers Name and Address:	
Child's Date of Birth:	
Date and Time of Incident:	
Your Observations:	
Exactly What Child Said and What You Said: (remember not to lead the child, record actual details. Continue of separate sheet if necessary)	
Action Taken So Far:	
External Agencies Contacted (Date & Time)	
POLICE Yes/No	If yes – which: Name and Contact number: Details of Advice Received:

<p>SOCIAL SERVICES</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of Advice Received:</p>
<p>LOCAL AUTHORITY</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of Advice Received:</p>
<p>Other (e.g. NSPCC)</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of Advice Received:</p>
<p>Signature:</p>	
<p>Print Name:</p>	
<p>Date:</p>	

Appendix 5:

Guideline and Procedure for Safer Recruitment

Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at every stage of the process. It starts with the process of planning the recruitment exercise, and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants.

Main elements of the process include:

- ensuring the job description makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- that the person specification includes specific reference to suitability to work with children;
- obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies;
- obtaining independent professional and character references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns;
- a face to face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his/her suitability for the post;
- verifying the successful applicant's identity;
- verifying that the successful applicant has any academic or vocational qualifications claimed;
- checking his/her previous employment history and experience;
- verifying that s/he has the health and physical capacity for the job;
- the criminal record check via the DBS (N.B. It is important not to rely solely on these checks to screen out unsuitable applicants. Those checks are an essential safeguard, but they will only pick up the small percentage of abusers who have been convicted, or have come to the attention of the police, or who have been listed).

A record is to be kept, signing off at each stage of the process which can be filed as a permanent record at the end of the process.

All staff and volunteers working directly with children and young people are required to have an enhanced check through the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) before commencement of work or placement.

Staff members (voluntary or paid) are thus required to fill out a DBS form and produce evidence as to their identity, in accordance with the Disclosure Service. This information is then witnessed by the Designated Person responsible and signed as an acknowledgement of information produced.

Copies of all returned DBS checks and documentation pertaining to any safeguarding issues will be kept confidentially and securely locked within the organisations administration office. Staff can undergo training and induction whilst waiting for the checks to clear, but cannot undertake any unsupervised face-to-face work until satisfactory checks have been received.

Attic Theatre Company is registered with both the LB Merton DBS department and the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) who provide an umbrella checking service.

Attic will ensure that any newly appointed staff bringing their existing DBS certification should be issued within 3 years and following one year's continuous service for Attic will undergo a new check via Attic's checking routes (see above).
All staff should undergo a new DBS enhanced check at a minimum of every three years.

Appendix 6:

Contact Details

Designated person:	General Manager, Victoria Hibbs 020 8640 6800 (work) 07836 575660 (mobile)
Deputy designated person:	Creative Engagement Producer 020 8640 6800 (work) 07984 769218 (mobile)
Local Safeguarding Arrangements:	Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership 020 8545 4226 candfhub@merton.gov.uk www.mertonscp.org.uk
Emergency Number:	999
Police Station:	0208 947 1212 (Wimbledon) call 999 if you believe a child is in immediate danger
Social Services:	0208 545 4227 (duty social worker)
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline:	0808 800 5000 (24hrs; can refer to foreign language services)
Attic office	020 8640 6800
Attic General Manager	Victoria Hibbs 020 8640 6800 (work) 07836 575660 (mobile)

Reviewed December 2021
V Hibbs - General Manager
Ratified by the Board of Trustees