

THEATRE ARTS ACTION TRUST



SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Revision 7 – July 2023

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1 THE POLICY AND ORGANISATION MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION AND POLICY STATEMENT

This policy has been developed by Theatre Arts Action Trust, a registered charity (No 1076399) operating as The Headgate Theatre.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, provide children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst participating in events at The Headgate Theatre and allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

The Headgate Theatre recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount, and will operate in a manner to try and ensure that all children and young people, without exception, have the right to be protected from abuse - regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs - whilst continuing to enjoy the benefits and fun that taking part in performing arts activity can bring.

This policy document and associated procedural guidance sets out to ensure that Theatre Arts Action Trust (hereafter referred to as The Headgate Theatre), takes into account the need to safeguard children in delivering the various aspects of its business. In carrying out its functions, The Headgate Theatre:

- acts as an employer of paid staff
- operates services with the assistance of volunteers
- hires the venue to organisations for performances which may include children.
- hires the venue to organisations who run classes which may include children.
- holds a licence for the sale of alcohol
- stages dramatic productions through its own production body, Headgate Theatre Productions.

The main legislation underpinning this document is the Children's Act 2004. Guidance and requirements for theatre and other performing activity is contained in *The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014*, which came into effect on 6th February 2015. These regulations replaced the *Children Performances Regulations 1968* as amended which were repealed in their entirety together with all guidance that related to them.

National guidance on the consistent implementation of the 2014 regulations was issued in May 2016, (*National Network for Child Employment and Entertainment – A guide to Child Performance Licensing in England; Lancs CC*) and this guidance has been incorporated into the policy, practice and procedures of The Headgate Theatre.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers contained in the Theatre's Safeguarding Leaflet (Appendix 1) recruiting staff and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

The policy document is supported by a number of detailed procedure documents as Appendices.

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Children and young people have a right to be safely cared for and protected from, (but not restricted to), neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Parents and carers need to have confidence that the organisations to which they entrust their children and young people will provide safe care.

All Trustees, employees and volunteers share responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, irrespective of individual roles.

The following definitions have been sourced from The National Network for Child Employment and Entertainment document *A Guide to Child Performance Licencing in England (May, 2016)*

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection.

Physical Abuse - May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

Sexual Abuse - Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, may involve: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities; or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse - The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, 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.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers directly engaged by The Headgate Theatre. The Headgate Theatre will adhere to the relevant legislation when working with children and young people under the age of 18 years as outlined in the following:

- Children Act, 1989
- Children Act, 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Licencing Act 2003

This policy is not directly applicable to hirers, who are required to make their own compliant arrangements in accordance with legislation and best practice, and procedures will be put into place to check that hiring organisations have taken the appropriate action. The Headgate Theatre does not provide chaperones to hirers, and will make that clear in all cases.

The Headgate Theatre recognises that the "entertainment industry" can be a very "adult" environment and we expect all staff, chaperones, parents/legal guardians, volunteers and anyone else who comes into contact with children to behave in an appropriate manner at all times, and to remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

A child is defined as anyone up to the age of 18 years. The regulations relating to children taking part in performances, activities (including modelling) applies up to statutory school leaving age, which is the last Friday in June of the school year in which they become 16. Organisations have a duty of care towards young people from statutory school leaving age until they are 18. They may not be required to be supervised by chaperones, but they still

need to be protected by Child Protection policies and procedures

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING

Overall responsibility for safeguarding rests with the Trustees. The responsibility for implementing and monitoring the policy has been delegated to a member of the Management Committee, and is currently held by Anthony Saitta who is referred to as the Nominated Person. In the event that he cannot be contacted, responsibility will be assumed by Michael Poole. This role is referred to Nominated Person Deputy.

Please note that it is NOT the role of The Headgate to decide whether a child has been abused or not. This is the role of the Local Authority Children's Social Care. It is however everybody's responsibility to ensure that concerns are shared and action is taken. Referrals should be made to Children's Social Care if it is thought that a child is being abused or at risk of abuse.

REVIEW OF POLICY

The policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Trustees, with a summary of any proposed changes occasioned by revision in legislation, guidance or learning from practical application of the policy being prepared by the Nominated Person.

2 THE HEADGATE THEATRE AS AN EMPLOYER OF PAID STAFF and VOLUNTEERS

All staff and volunteers should be aware of the Children's Safeguarding Policy during induction and of the procedure to follow for reporting possible/alleged cases of harm or abuse.

Updated training will be provided at regular intervals

REGULAR PAID STAFF

Whilst employees usually do not have a formal role in respect of children, they are the face of the Headgate Theatre, which is regularly occupied by children and young people as part of educational or leisure activity or as part of a performance activity, and the staff may be a point of contact for a child or young person in distress.

As such, The Headgate Theatre will require paid staff:

- to have Enhanced Disclosure through the DBS
- to be clear about how to report concerns, and to whom
- to conduct themselves in a manner which avoids over

familiarity In recruiting paid staff, The Headgate Theatre will:

- ensure that all applicants have completed a structured application form, which requests information regarding any gaps in employment history
- shortlist applicants in a fair and transparent manner
- interview shortlisted candidates, and include within that a question(s) that test the applicants' awareness of safeguarding issues, and the behaviour appropriate to the post
- ensure that at least one reference is from an employer or individual whose knowledge and experience is sufficient to enable them to provide an impartial view of the applicant
- generate a request for enhanced disclosure for the preferred applicant only
- not offer the post until references have been received, and make the offer subject to an Enhanced Disclosure certificate showing no relevant cautions convictions, reprimands or warnings, and no information from the list held under Section 142 of the Education Act 2002
- ensure that the induction for the employee includes an understanding of this policy which they know where and how to access

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are active in all aspects of the business of The Headgate Theatre. When volunteers are being recruited, they will be asked to complete an application form, and their contact details will be kept on a database with controlled access. All volunteers will be interviewed by the Volunteer Co- Ordinator or the Headgate Manager. References will be requested.

Volunteers must be over the age of 16 on application. All volunteers and paid staff will be given a copy of Safeguarding – Keeping Ourselves Safe Leaflet, attached as Appendix 1.

Where volunteers are asked to be involved in working with children as part of an educational event provided solely by The Headgate Theatre, or in partnership with another organisation, then The Headgate Theatre will:

1. Ensure that the Nominated Person is involved in reviewing and signing off the agreed cover arrangements for that event with the organiser
2. Seek an Enhanced Disclosure for that person through the Disclosure and Barring Service. Only experienced volunteers should be requested to take on such duties.

Where a volunteer is acting as a chaperone for children during a production, then the

volunteer should be required to obtain a Chaperone Licence, which also requires that they have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate.

3 THE HEADGATE THEATRE AS A HIRER TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

When considering the suitability of productions at the theatre, all hirers will be asked to identify where adult content or language may be inappropriate for children or young people, and this will be included as a warning within the Headgate advertising material.

Hiring to organisations associated with children under 16

The Headgate Theatre will hire space in the building to other individuals or groups who involve children under 16, usually, but not exclusively, associated with the performing arts.

Where the hire is to organisations operating in a business capacity, then The Headgate Theatre will establish ideally at the issue of the contract, and no later than 6 weeks prior to the event:

1. That the hirer carries their own insurance cover for public and employees liability, and that it is applicable to the hire.
2. That the hirer is aware of, and operating to, the best practice guidance relating to the child: adult ratio without recourse to The Headgate Theatre staff or volunteers;
3. That the hirer has policies in place for managing the safe entrance and exit of children from the premises without recourse to The Headgate Theatre staff or volunteers or assumptions about use of communal spaces.

Hiring for Public Performance

As part of the terms and conditions of hire, and where the hire is for a performance involving children or young people under 16, The Headgate Theatre will require the hirer to:

1. Establish with Essex County Council the requirements for the safeguarding of children that are associated with their specific activity by securing a Body of Person licence, or individual licences, as appropriate.
2. Provide a copy of the relevant licence for display,
3. Advise the theatre in advance of the production how the dressing rooms will be organised to meet best practice
4. Advise the theatre how the signing in and out of children at the theatre will be managed.
5. Ensure that the children are briefed on health and safety in the theatre environment, including fire escapes
6. Design a set which satisfies not only the usual Health and Safety requirements, but takes into account any possible risks to children.

7. Provide clear information to the Headgate Representative each evening about the names of chaperones on duty that evening, movement of children round the building and the signing in/out procedures.

Hiring for non-performance use

Any hirer who is planning to use the facilities for children under 16 must undertake their own risk assessment in advance of the hire, and discuss the outcome with the Headgate Manager or Hiring Manager. Hirers will be asked:

1. to produce a copy of their insurance and Safeguarding policy/policies (Children's and or Adult at risk of harm) where appropriate at the time of booking, and this policy may be requested to be viewed again at any time. All relevant paperwork required by Southend, Essex, and Thurrock Safeguarding can, and will, be requested to be checked at any time to ensure compliance is being maintained
2. Ensure that they maintain a register of attenders
3. Ensure that they brief participants on the arrangements for fire safety and basic health and safety
4. Advise the theatre how they plan to manage the signing in/out of attenders and discuss this with the theatre so that it minimises the impact on working environments

4 THE HEADGATE THEATRE AS A PROVIDER OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Headgate Theatre may provide educational activity relating to performing arts. In doing so it will:

1. designate a specific person to have overall responsibility for organising the event, who should provide a report to the Artistic and Programming sub-committee of the Headgate Theatre regarding the arrangements for each event.
2. Where facilitators are directly engaged to work with children, arrange to interview that person, obtain references and ensure that they either
 - Hold a current enhanced DBS
 - Work under the direct observation of a Headgate nominee who holds a current enhanced DBS
3. Ensure that any contractual arrangements with a third-party provider clearly document the contribution and responsibilities of each party. This could potentially include
 - the requirements for securing any Body of Persons or individual performance licence agreements,
 - the collection of workshop fees,
 - the provision of suitably qualified leaders and competent helpers
 - having robust administrative procedures to ensure the safety of the child and

management of any health or well-being issues. (This list is not exhaustive.)

4. Ensure that there are sufficient adult helpers to meet the best practice guidance issued by Essex County Council (see Appendix 2)
5. Ensure that there are sufficient competent volunteers to provide supervision of the children during breaks, at least one of which must hold a current enhanced DBS.

5 THE HEADGATE THEATRE AS A PROVIDER OF A BAR FACILITY

The Headgate Theatre provides a licenced bar facility within the venue, and has a Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS). The DPS is responsible for ensuring that the bar is staffed with competent volunteers. Those volunteers do not themselves have to be personal licence holders.

The DPS will ensure that all volunteers involved in bar work understand their duty to protect children and young people from harm by having a clear and published statement regarding the sale of alcohol to minors, under the Challenge 25. The requirements of Challenge 25 will be clearly explained in the training given to all volunteer bar staff. The DPS will arrange training for bar volunteers with sufficient frequency to ensure that the bar can be staffed in a sustainable manner by competent volunteers.

6 HEADGATE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS (HTP)

Headgate Theatre Productions (HTP) plans to deliver five or six productions each year. On occasion, a production will involve children or young people. In these circumstances, the production champion would ideally be a member of the Management Committee.

The production champion will work with the production director and Nominated Person for safeguarding to set up best practice arrangements for rehearsals and the production week, and will ensure that they:

- a. Get the necessary paperwork and licences completed in a timely manner. (Copies of the documentation associated with children in entertainment for HTP are attached as Appendices 5a-5d.)
- b. ensure that HTP registration forms are completed before casting is agreed, and consider the age, health and welfare of each child under consideration;
- c. develop a rehearsal and performance pattern that takes into account the ages of the children and young people involved, noting that:
 - i. a child may not perform on more than 6 consecutive days
 - ii. the technical and dress rehearsals count as part of the 6 consecutive days
- d. establish and maintain an ethos where children feel welcome and familiar with their environment and are informed of personal matters (toilets, dressing rooms etc) and emergency arrangements (fire exits, meeting points etc) and any Health and Safety

Procedures (Dangerous equipment, First aid etc)

- e. inform each child who the appropriate person or people are to speak to if they have any questions, problems or concerns.
- f. ensure that all children are treated with respect and dignity and are treated as individuals and offered equality of opportunities.
- g. always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and unnecessary physical contact with children) and involve/allow parents/chaperones wherever possible, to take responsibility for the child/children they are responsible for. (Parents must only have responsibility for their own child)
- h. acknowledge the individual needs of the child. e.g. recognising when a child may be tired and may need a break.
- i. ensure that children are supervised appropriately during rehearsals and performances.
- j. ensure that all Chaperones are registered with the local authority in which they reside and have a **current** enhanced DBS check.
- k. ensure that all staff and crew who don't necessarily have close contact with children but who are assisting in the production are aware of their conduct around children.
- l. as part of the registration process for the production, ensure that each young person or their parent is invited to give consent to the use of photographic or visual material in advertising or front of house display.

7 RECORDING INFORMATION ABOUT A CONCERN

It is possible that a Trustee, employee or volunteer at the Headgate Theatre may have cause for concern about the welfare of a child. This may arise because:

- ☐ A child/young person may state that something has happened.
- ☐ Physical actions or behavioural indications have been observed, which cause concern
- ☐ Someone else (adult/child or other young person) reported their concerns regarding the welfare of a child.

Any concerns regarding the welfare of a child within the Headgate Theatre should be reported as quickly as possible to someone who is not involved:

Nominated Person (Anthony Saitta, or in his absence, Michael Poole)

The Duty Manager or the Headgate Manager (Paul Button) or a

Trustee. Trustees will, like staff, require some training

REMEMBER: It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about a child.

DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

If a child confides in you that what seems to be abuse has taken place:

- remain calm and in control, (easier said than done!) but do not delay in taking action
- listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification.
- don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer. Use the following approach:
 1. T – Tell me
 2. E – Explain that to me
 3. D – Describe that to me
- don't promise to keep it a secret.
- reassure the child that they 'did the right thing' in telling someone.
- tell the child what you will do next. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share the information with others and that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the Nominated Safeguarding Lead, (the person with responsibility for child protection). It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually Children's Social Care or the Police
- never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child makes a disclosure
- as soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Be careful to record facts. If you are recording hearsay (*someone else said...*) or opinion, make this clear. Appendix 3 provides further guidance on the information that might be needed.
- note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave information to.
- make sure you sign and date your record. (Appendix 2b)

The Nominated Safeguarding Lead would discuss concerns with a parent/carer if this was

thought not to place the child at further risk. When the disclosure is about something a parent/carer has done, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should always seek advice from Children's Social Care

8 REPORTING CONCERNS

Where there is a need for advice about a situation, then this can be obtained from the Essex Children and Families Hub. This can be accessed by calling 0345 603 7627. Please state that you are a member of the public, and you will be put through to a Family Adviser.

Out of hours: (Monday - Thursday 5.00pm – 8.45am, Friday-Monday and Bank holidays Fri 4.30pm – Mon 8.45am) Telephone: 0345 606 1212 Email: emergency.dutyteamoutofhours@essex.gov.uk

If there is an immediate risk of harm to a child then also contact the Police on 999.

If you are generally worried about a child, contact the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000

In case of difficulty in contacting the Essex Children and Families Hub check the Essex County Council website currently under <https://www.essex.gov.uk/report-a-concern-about-a-child>.

Important:

Reporting the matter to the Police or Children's Social Care should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

Records should be securely maintained and only viewed by appropriate personnel, Children's Social Care personnel or the Police.

The matter must be kept confidential. It is the responsibility of the nominated person/deputy to notify the Trustees and to agree any management plan that may be felt to be required as set out in What Happens Next? below

9 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

This may include anyone directly employed by The Headgate Theatre in a paid or voluntary capacity working with children and young people. It is important for all trustees, staff and volunteers to remember to be aware that child abuse can happen outside of the home within other settings, including sport and leisure activities. Allegations must therefore be taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

However, it may be difficult for the Nominated Person/Deputy or person in charge (usually a Headgate Representative) to distinguish whether an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer is due to poor working practices or abuse. In this case seek help and advice from Essex County Council Children and Families Hub. It may be one of a series of instances, which, put together, can cause concern.

Allegations should remain confidential. There may be difficulties in reporting colleagues,

but the way in which they are dealt with should be professional and fair and most importantly protect the welfare of the child. Everyone needs the reassurance of their organisation that they would be supported for their action if they disclosed information about a colleague.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

An investigation will be led by Children's Social Care or the Police and involve any relevant member(s) of staff. Again, the main concern would always be for the welfare of the child or young person involved.

The Headgate Theatre should have in place procedures to deal with the outcome of any investigation including:

- Advice and reassurance to the public
- Media attention
- Dealing with staff in the event of allegations being unfounded
- Dealing with staff should an allegation about a staff member be true

10 E-SAFETY

Most young people will use mobile phones and computers. They are a source of fun, entertainment and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and e-mails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face to face meetings.

Staff or volunteers acting on behalf of The Headgate must not communicate with children who are 16 or under via their phone or on social media. Communication should just be with the parent/carer.

Adult volunteers and HTP performers should seriously consider the risk and appropriateness of becoming 'friends' on social media with any under 16's involved in Headgate Theatre activity.

Children obtaining indecent images or 'sexting'

If a child reports to a member of staff or volunteer that they have sent, or been sent, indecent images (sometimes referred to as 'sexting'), they should discuss the concern with the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The police and Children's Social Care should always be contacted if:

- somebody involved is over the age of 18 or under the age of 13
- there are concerns about the ability to give consent
- the images are extreme or show violence
- the incident is intended to cause physical or emotional harm
- there is reason to believe that the young person has been blackmailed, coerced or groomed.

Details of the incident and the actions taken must be recorded in writing. Staff should avoid scrutinising the image, video or message in question.

SAFEGUARDING USING VIDEO CONFERENCING (e.g. Zoom)

If a member of the Headgate Theatre is involved in a Zoom meeting with children, the member should ensure that parents are supervising the children whenever they are using Zoom and meetings are password protected. If it is a public meeting only the host can share their screen by turning on the function when setting up the call and the waiting room feature is on at all times and only let in people you know. Ensure that meeting details or passwords, publicly or on social media, including in 'closed' groups, and only share them privately with attendees you know and trust. Familiarise yourself with the security icon in the menu bar so you know how to lock the meeting, use the waiting room and remove participants and to follow the Headgate's Safeguarding Policy.

11 CHILDREN NOT COLLECTED FROM THE PREMISES

If parents/guardians have failed to collect a child from the premises following an event organised by the Headgate Theatre and all reasonable steps have been taken to contact parents/guardians on the contact numbers provided, then the Nominated Person or Deputy should be contacted, and the police notified on the non-emergency number 101.

12 THE ROLE OF THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS

All incidents which are brought to the attention of the Nominated person or Deputy should be brought to the attention of the Trustees. In addition to carrying out the immediate notifications the trustees will consider whether the matter warrants notification to the Charity Commission. The Commission expects to be made aware if:

- beneficiaries of a charity (adults or children) have been, or are alleged to have been, abused or mistreated while under the care of the charity, or by someone connected with the charity, for example a trustee, staff member or volunteer
- there has been an incident where someone has been abused or mistreated (alleged or actual) and this is connected with the activities of the charity
- there has been a breach of procedures or policies at the charity which has put beneficiaries at risk, including failure to carry out checks which would have identified that a person is disqualified in law, under safeguarding legislation, from working with children or adults.

13 CONCLUSION

There are many difficult and sensitive issues that are inherent with this subject. By following the guidelines both children and staff are protected and incidents should be

minimised and should incidents occur, staff or volunteers involved will be better placed to deal with the matter.

This document was originally drafted and approved January

2015 and Revision 1 – January 2016

Revision 2 – February 2017

Revision 3 - March 2018

Revision 4 – January 2019 Approved by Trustees 23/01/2019

Revision 5 – October 2019

Revision 6 – January 2022 Approved by Trustees 19/01/2022

Revision 7 – July 2023 Approved by Trustees 24/07/2023

Next Review Date - January 2024

JULY 2023

APPENDIX 1 - KEEPING OURSELVES SAFE LEAFLET FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS (2023)

Theatre Productions, and will ensure that appropriate guidance, risk assessment and licencing arrangements are dealt with. Dawn King is currently the person ensuring that Headgate Theatre Productions adopts best practice.

The responsibility for children who are performing as part of a hiring group rests with the hirer. In establishing a contract for performance, safeguarding arrangements will be dealt with in the contracting process. Paul Button is currently the lead for this. He also establishes and monitors the contract arrangements involving children which are not public performance, such as the dance schools.

Have a concern?

Any concern regarding the welfare of a child within the theatre should be highlighted with the Duty Manager or Headgate Manager if available. Where the issue relates to a hiring group, they should be advised of the concern at the time. If there is no-one on site then please make prompt contact with

Anthony Saitta 01206 543483

(Nominated Safeguarding Lead)

Or if he is not available

Michael Poole 07787 522335

Paul Button 07940519846

Dawn King (for Headgate Theatre Production matters)

In the event that none of the above can be contacted then please contact 'Essex Safeguarding Children Board' 0345 603 7627 (and for out of hours) 0345 606 1212 and advise the action taken to:

paul@headgatetheatre.co.uk

[The full policy document is available on the Headgate website under Venue Hire/Auditorium/Contracts and Policies](#)

THEATRE ARTS ACTION TRUST



Safeguarding Children

A Code of Conduct for volunteers undertaking front of house, bar duty or incidental tasks at The Headgate Theatre.

June 2023

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE

We can all play a part in keeping children safe whilst we are working/volunteering in or visiting The Headgate.

Keeping ourselves safe

We must take steps to keep ourselves safe. Our actions can sometimes be perceived in a way that is not intended. We want to promote safe working practice for everyone who comes into the theatre, whatever your role.

Things to Do

DO

- ✓ Do wear your form of identity at all times
- ✓ Do maintain confidentiality about the young people you may come into contact with
- ✓ Do be aware that verbal interaction with children and young people may be interpreted by them as offensive or harassment **even if this was not your intention.**
- ✓ Do report any unacceptable behaviour from a child or young person
- ✓ Do report any observation involving a child that concerns you to someone else on the premises
- ✓ Do report any incidences of indecent images or 'sexting'
- ✓ Do ensure that the child's parents are supervising if involved in Video Conferencing

Do be aware that contact made outside the theatre as a result of you coming into contact with a child whilst you are involved in activity at the theatre, may be misinterpreted.

Things to Avoid

- ✗ Do not instigate verbal or physical contact with a child/young person, unless it is appropriate and part of an agreed plan (such as measuring for costume)
- ✗ Do not respond to verbal or physical contact from a child or young person that you consider inappropriate, but discuss it with another adult on site
- ✗ Do not give personal information to any child/young person – for example your full name, address, telephone or mobile number
- ✗ Do not accept or respond to a child or young person attempting to give you personal information
- ✗ Do not confront an alleged abuser
- ✗ Do not instigate investigation into alleged abuse
- ✗ Do not be in unsupervised one to one situation with a child/young person whenever possible
- ✗ Do not accept friendship requests on social media
- ✗ Do not take photographs on Headgate premises which include children participating in any form of activity without parental consent.

IF A CHILD DISCLOSES SOMETHING

Do Not

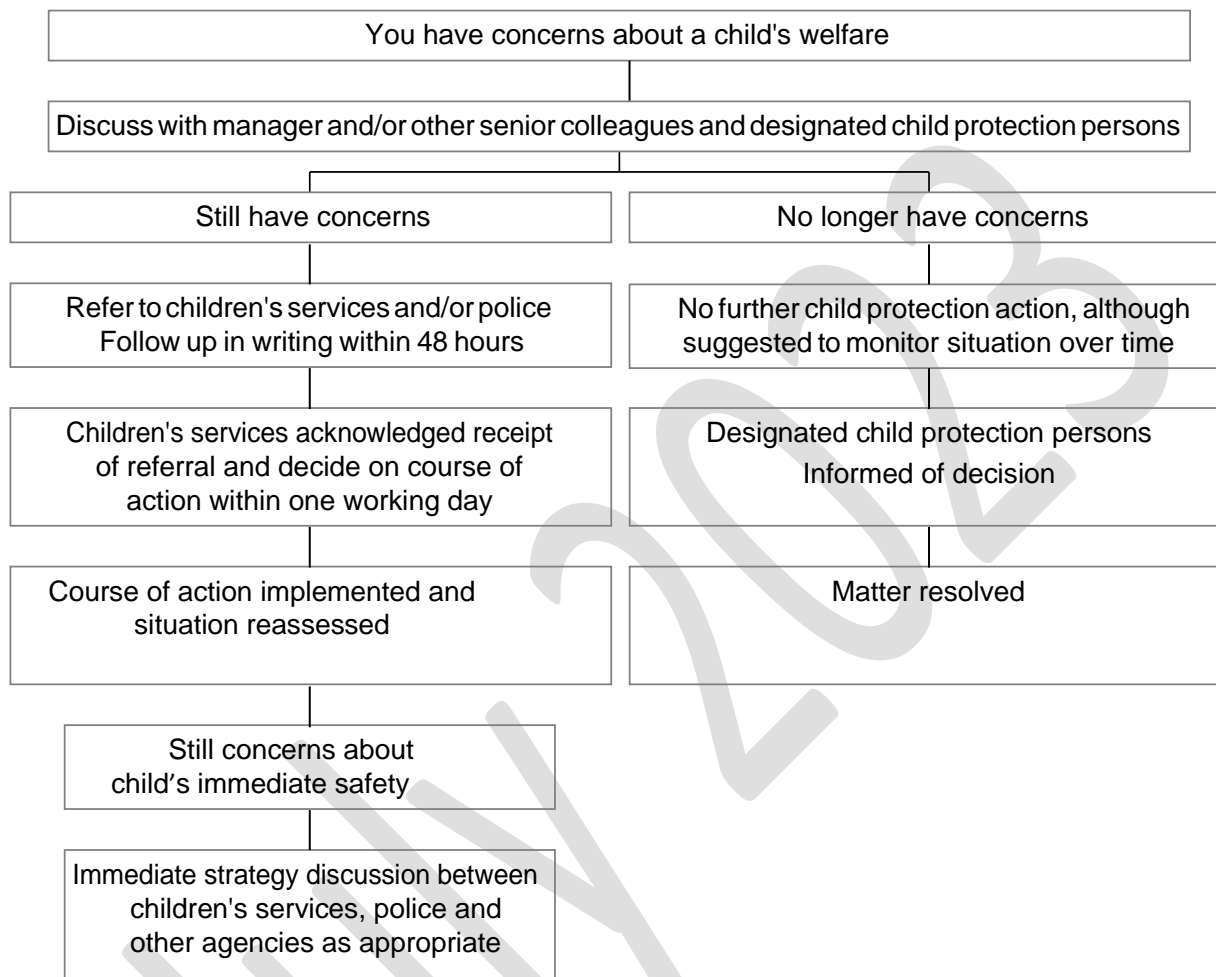
- ❖ Promise confidentiality
 - ❖ Ask any leading questions
 - ❖ Investigate in any way
- DO**
- ❖ Listen
 - ❖ Reassure
 - ❖ Tell them you will have to tell someone else
 - ❖ Write a true and accurate account of the disclosure

Please remember:

Any group that uses the theatre for a performance involving children is required to have a licence from Essex County Council for that performance and to have chaperones in attendance. This applies even if the tickets are sold direct to parents rather than through our box office. Some areas of the theatre building may be restricted to other users if children are using rooms as changing areas.

The Headgate has its own procedures, contained as appendices within the Safeguarding Policy, for any event that is organised through Headgate.

APPENDIX 2a - What to do if you have concerns about a child's welfare



Appendix 2b - Adult/Children's Safeguarding Report Form

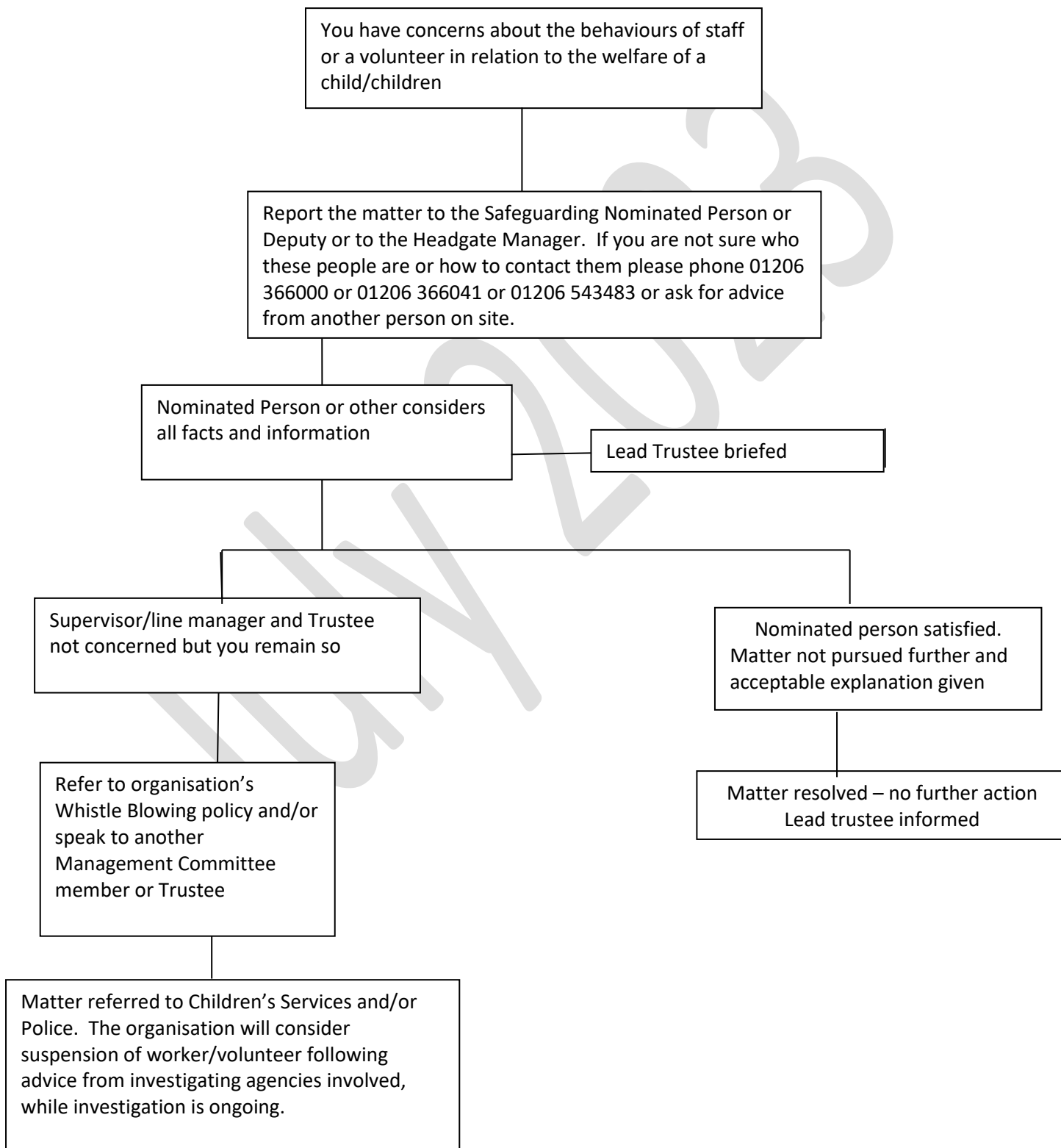
To be completed as fully as possible if you have concerns regarding an adult or child. If it is safe to do so, it is important to inform the person about your concerns and that you have a duty to pass the information onto the onsite manager if available or nominated safeguarding lead. The nominated person will consider the information and determine the most appropriate course of action.

Section 1 - Details of adult or child (you have concerns about)	
Name of adult or child	
Address	
Date of Birth/Age	
Contact Number	
Section 2 – Details of the person completing this form/Your details	
Name	
Contact phone number(s)	
Email address	
Your role in the organisation	
Section 3 – Details of concern	
Please explain why you are concerned. Please give details (including date and time) about what you have seen/been told/other that makes you believe the adult or child is at risk of harm or is being abused or neglected. Please use overleaf if necessary.	
Section 4 – Action Taken	

Nominated Safeguarding Lead – Anthony Saitta - 01206 543483

APPENDIX 2c

What to do if you have concerns about a member of staff or a volunteer in relation to child protection



APPENDIX 3 - Extract from Charity Commission guidance on reporting incidents relating to safeguarding to the police.

UK Criminal Incidents

Reporting offences committed in the UK to UK policing

Sometimes it will be immediately clear that an incident involves criminal issues and needs to be reported. Sometimes it will be clear what has happened is of concern, but not criminal. In some cases, the facts or whether what has happened just may not be clear at the stage you are made aware of it or looking into it.

Where it is clear the incident involves criminality, charities are expected to act responsibly and take action to report it to the authorities. In some situations, the report may need to be made to a statutory safeguarding or other authority aside from, or as well as, the police.

Where a criminal offence has been or has potentially been committed, in the UK, and/or there are safeguarding risks to a child or adult, it should usually be reported to the police force local to where the offence took place.

If the incidents have taken place across different police force areas, the charity should initially report the incident to the police force where the primary offence or greatest prevalence of offending took place.

Information required by UK Law Enforcement on such reports

The type of information the policing is likely to require if you report an incident involving a suspected criminal matter is set out below

- the name of the person suspected of committing the crime
- confirmation of their nationality or claim to UK residency status
- the role they had, for example trustee, employee, volunteer within the charity or relationship with it at the time of the incident
- details of what happened, including date(s) and location(s)
- details of the victim(s), including where known: name, age / date of birth, nationality, location at time of offence, and present location
- outline of the action taken by the charity locally in country, including any steps taken to protect the victim
- why the charity has not referred the matter locally to law enforcement overseas or why they believe the matter will not be progressed
- named contact points for the case within charity and/or local law enforcement

If you have it, the policing may also want

- the person's date of birth
- the person's address in the UK where known
- details of any witnesses, and what claims they have made
- what if any response the person has provided in relation to the allegations
- details of the person's employment history with the charity and/or others where known

APPENDIX 4 - PROVISION OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY

The level of supervision must be adequate for educational activity, whether at the organisation's venue or on a journey/ visit. Therefore, when deciding how many adults are required to supervise, The Headgate Theatre must take into consideration a range of practical matters:-

- The number and age range of participants in the group
- Other activity taking place on site
- The activities to be undertaken – hazardous activity may carry specific ratios – check the current guidance.
- The contractual arrangement between the activity provider and The Headgate Theatre
- The responsibilities that each individual supervisor and adults are expected to bear and how these are communicated
- The person organising the activity will use his/her professional judgement or experience in deciding the level of supervision taking into account the guidance as stated above.
- Where a party consists of children of both sexes, both male and female supervision should be provided unless otherwise agreed.

- The NSPCC recommended ratios are:-

0-2 years	1 member of staff to 3 children
2-3 years	1 member of staff to 4 children
4-8 years	1 member of staff to 6 children
9-12 years	1 member of staff to 8 children
13-18 years	1 member of staff to 10 children

There should be one additional staff member for every 10 extra children and/or young people or part thereof.

- The ratio of staff and volunteers to children with disabilities is dependent on the needs of the individual child.
- It is recommended that no journey/visit outside of The Headgate Theatre should be undertaken without a minimum of two adults in attendance. Bus drivers should not be considered as supervisors. Arrangements for all off site activity should be approved by the Trustees.

APPENDIX 5a – GUIDANCE SPECIFIC TO HEADGATE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS (HTP)

Within this document, any reference to child refers to a young person of either sex under 16, and the use of the singular should be adjusted if there is more than one child involved in a production. Whilst legislation only covers the requirements of a formal production, best practice would suggest that arrangements for rehearsals mirror these where practical.

1. Responsibilities of The Headgate Theatre for Headgate Theatre productions.

a) At the outset of any production

Where a production involves children, the nominated person of HTP for child protection and the

production “champion” will undertake a risk assessment in conjunction with the Director to ensure that the needs of the child are understood in terms of:

- The ages of the children to be involved
- The proposed rehearsal schedule involving the children
- Arrangements for parents transporting children to and from the rehearsal venue
- The requirements of the part, and any particular issue which may require consideration
- Supervision of children during the rehearsal process
- Whether the age of the child means that they should only perform on a limited number of nights
- Changing room and safety requirements at the proposed venue
- Use of photographic material containing images of the child
- The requirement for a licence/Body Of Persons application
- The arrangements for securing sufficient chaperones /parent supervisors for the production week
- HTP insurance cover

The nominated person will ensure that responsibility for communication, and the method of that communication as the rehearsal process progresses is agreed between HTP, the Director and the child and parent(s).

The nominated person will discuss with all cast members the expected conduct and behaviours during the rehearsal period, and again prior to the performance period in the auditorium.

The planned regular rehearsal arrangements, and arrangements in the event of emergency and what should happen if the child becomes ill during rehearsal, should be documented on the Registration Form (Appendix 5c) and agreed by the child and parent/guardian with the Director and the nominated person. The Registration Form will be held by the Director or nominated person during the rehearsal period, and transferred to the nominated person at the commencement of production week. They will be destroyed 3 months after the production has closed.

The Director and a committee member (usually the “champion” or nominated person) will undertake a formal briefing of all adult cast members to remind them of their

responsibilities under this HTP policy.

b) For production week:

The nominated person will ensure that licensed chaperones are identified for production week, unless the parents of the child have agreed to undertake chaperone duty.

The nominated person will apply for the relevant licence (usually a Body of Persons licence) from ECC at least 4 weeks before the production commences.

The nominated person will liaise with the Director to ensure that changing and toileting arrangements meet requirements of the child/children whilst in the theatre, and that they respect declared gender.

The nominated person will undertake a risk assessment of the theatre environment with the production Stage Manager at the technical rehearsal, if not before, in the context of the needs of the child, and ensure that any practical safety measures are adopted.

The nominated person will ensure that all documentation is at the theatre for production week, and available for inspection by ECC if required. It should be stored in the Headgate Office or kept by a named person and brought to the theatre each evening. This will include:

1. Body of Persons or other appropriate licence (to be displayed)
2. Risk assessment completed at technical or dress rehearsal (Appendix 5b)
3. Letter to parents/child (template available)
4. Registration Forms for each child
5. Use of photographic material consent for each child
6. A signing in/out form

2 Responsibilities of Parents

HTP believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and HTP. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of HTP and to share responsibility for the care of children.

- a) The parents of any child applying to audition will be supplied with summary details of the play and the requirements for the production prior to audition;
- b) All parents of children selected to perform will attend a meeting with the Director to be briefed on the organisation and scheduling of rehearsals and performances;
- c) All parents will be given access to HTP's Child Safeguarding Policy and procedures via the website, and be invited to sign a Use of Photographic Material consent form;
- d) All parents have the responsibility to deliver and promptly collect (or arrange delivery/collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances and to ensure that there is an up to date contact number. It is NOT the responsibility of HTP to transport children to and from venues;

- e) Parents will be advised who and how to contact the Director in the event of sickness or unavoidable absence.

3. Unsupervised contact

HTP will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children. If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children. If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she may be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure. If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimize risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area, or in a nominated room with a door open.

4. Physical Contact

- a) All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- b) Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity in the context of the production or where it is reasonable in order to prevent harm to the child.
- c) Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

5. Photographic material and Social Media

HTP has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children. Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.

In setting up any social media group for communication/teaching purposes where contact details are revealed, a separate group for people under 16 will be established through parental contacts.

6. Suspicion of abuse during the production process

Any employee, volunteer or participant involved in a Headgate Theatre Production should be made aware of their individual responsibility to safeguard children by the Director or Nominated Person.

Any suspicion of abuse should be reported in accordance with Appendix 1.

These people will advise whether activities of that individual should be suspended immediately and they will be responsible for contacting the Children and Families Hub for further advice.

The Hub can be contacted by calling 0345 603 7627 and asking for the "Consultation Line". If the child is thought to be at immediate risk of significant harm, then ask for the "Priority Line".

The individual concerned may be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms etc.. This suspension does not indicate that the person is guilty of any offence, but is an interim measure designed to reduce risk whilst the suspicion is being investigated.

7. Disclosure of abuse

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- a) Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- b) Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- c) Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- d) Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- e) Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- f) Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually Children's Social Care or the police.
- g) As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record. Refer to Appendix 3 for the type of information needed.

8. Accidents

- a) To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children and their parents/guardians will be advised of the clothing, footwear and behaviour appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.
- b) If a child is injured while in the care of HTP, reasonable steps will be taken to administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in HTP's or (in the event that rehearsal or promotional activity is taking place outside the premises), the venue's accident book. The child's parent/guardian will be notified on collection. This record will be countersigned by a second person. Where necessary the parent/guardian will be contacted to collect the child, or in more severe cases, the Ambulance Service will be called.

If a child joins a rehearsal or a production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made. This record will be countersigned by the person with responsibility for child protection. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

9. Chaperones

- a) Licensed Chaperones will be appointed by HTP for the care of children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should

exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child.

- b) The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12. For younger children, the ratios need to reflect the individual needs of the children.
- c) Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the Director and/or a member of the Theatre Arts Action Management Committee. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily, the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- d) Chaperones will be made aware of The Headgate Theatre's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in addition to the requirements set out by ECC. Key ECC requirements are set out below:
 - If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the production Director and not allow the child to continue.
 - Under the Dangerous Performances Act, no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on electrical wires and lighting or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer/director to cease using children in this way and should contact the local authority.
 - During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the theatre and signing them into the building.
 - Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
 - Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents or a person whom the parent has nominated and told the theatre about such nomination in writing, or unless the parent/guardian has given written permission for a specific time (ie between matinee and evening performance,)
 - Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
 - Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms unless under the supervision of a chaperone.
 - Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
 - Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by The Headgate Theatre.
 - Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances if they are not collected by a parent/guardian. During the production run children should be signed out when leaving the theatre.
 - If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child and seek to contact the parents/guardian from information supplied on the registration form. In the event of no contact being possible, then the police should be notified. HTP will seek to recover any costs incurred.

APPENDIX 5b - PRODUCTION RISK MANAGEMENT TEMPLATE

Event Name:

Project Leader/Director:

Date Produced:

Participants:

List each risk and identify actions to reduce probability and/or impact

	Risks	Probability High/Medium /Low	Impact H/M/L	Actions to reduce probability and/or impact	Date that the actions need to be completed by	Owner
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

APPENDIX 5c – REGISTRATION FORM FOR CHILD PARTICIPATION IN HTP ACTIVITY

(To be completed by all production participants 16 or under at date of first rehearsal. This information will be kept on file and destroyed 12 weeks after the end of the production)

PRODUCTION..... **DIRECTOR**

YOUNG PERSON INFORMATION	
Name of young person	
Street Address	
Town	
Postcode	
Home Telephone No	
Mobile No	
Email Address of child	
Date of Birth	
Name and year of any productions in which you have performed (excluding school productions) and number of performances	
PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION	
Name of parent or guardian	
Address of parent/guardian if different from above	
Emergency Contact number for parent/guardian 1	
Day	
Evening	
Mobile	

CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY - 2023

Email address	
Emergency Contact number for parent/guardian 2	
Day	
Evening	
Mobile	
Email address	
Emergency Contact number for parent/guardian 3	<i>Please note that you must give us written permission to allow the child to be released from a rehearsal/performance to the care of anyone other than a parent.</i>
Day	
Evening	
Mobile	
Email address	
HEALTH INFORMATION	To be completed by parent/guardian for younger children. Please only answer yes or no to these questions. We may ask you to complete a supplementary form if necessary.
Are you taking any regular prescribed medication for a long term condition (for example asthma/diabetes /fits or faints)?	
Do you have any other current health problems which might affect your ability to perform? (For example migraine/extreme period pain)	
Do you have any allergies which we need to be aware of in an emergency?	
Do you have any disability which we may need to make special provision for?	

DECLARATIONS – please delete statements in paragraph 3, 4 & 5 as appropriate

I understand that the information above associated with name/address/telephone number will be included in a database to be held by the Headgate Theatre and only used to circulate information related to this production.

I authorise any trained first aider to administer first aid to the named young person in the event of any accident. I also give permission for a doctor or paramedic to undertake whatever treatment is necessary in the event of an emergency.

I DO/ DO NOT give permission for a photograph of the named young person to be used in promotional material associated with this production (programmes/front of house/newspapers).

I DO/ DO NOT give permission for my child to be filmed in a video to be used solely for the purpose of learning dance routines, and which will be circulated to parent/guardians for them to assist the young person at home.

I DO/ DO NOT give my permission for any photograph which includes me, or the named young person that is taken by the official production photographer to be included on the production CD, which will be made available to all cast members.

SIGNED (young person where able)

.....

DATE

PARENT GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

.....

DATE

APPENDIX 5d- HTP PRE PERFORMANCE CHECKLIST FOR PRODUCTIONS INVOLVING CHILDREN

QUESTIONS FOR PRODUCTION COMPANY	COMMENT
Has a licence been obtained from ECC, and is a copy displayed in the foyer?	
Have chaperones been established for each performance relative to the number of children involved? (Minimum of 1 chaperone : 12 children – (AGE SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT)	
Is there a “reserve” arrangement for chaperones in case of last minute problems?	
<p>Is there a folder with the details of the child(ren) and any assessment of health issues available with the production company at the theatre?</p> <p>Do both the chaperones and Headgate Representative know where this information is held, and is it easily accessible?</p>	
Is there a back up emergency contact number in the event that the parents cannot be contacted?	
Have separate changing areas been established for children that respect their gender? If not, will the child(ren) be arriving and leaving in costume?	
Has a separate seating area been established for children and chaperones?	
Has access to toilet facilities been explained – pre performance and during the performance?	
Has the chaperone understood that they must keep the child in sight at all times and not be engaged in any other role within the production?	
Has the Headgate Rep been advised that a child is participating in the production, and are they aware of the action to take in the event of an ECC inspection?	
Have the Headgate Rep, chaperone and child been made aware of the requirement to sign in and out each evening?	

Has the chaperone/child been made aware of the fire evacuation procedures and general health and safety issues in the back stage area?	
Have arrangements been made for the child to be called to the wings at the appropriate point?	
If the child has to move through dressing room space used by adults, has the issue of language and changing been discussed with cast?	
Are all obstacles in the back stage area that may present a risk clearly secured or marked? [Note any agreed actions below]	
Have all potential obstacles or potential hazards on stage been identified and addressed? [Note any agreed actions below]	

State below any actions agreed with Stage Manager or Director in order to reduce potential hazards.

Signed (1):

Date:

Signed (2)

Date:

Further action to be taken by Headgate Theatre:

APPENDIX 9 - THE HEADGATE THEATRE POLICY ON USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIAL

(FOR PUBLICITY OR ELECTRONIC DISPLAY and OTHER RECORDED MEDIA – Headgate Theatre Productions)

The Headgate Theatre reserves the right to store and publish photos and other recorded media of individuals participating in Headgate Theatre Productions (HTP). Only photographs /recordings taken during rehearsals or for publicity purposes will be used and stored by The Headgate Theatre.

All members participating in a production will be asked to sign a general consent for use of photographic material form at the commencement of the rehearsal schedule.

This material will only be used by HTP to promote the aims of the production or HTP. This may include

- use in advertising forms such as programmes and posters
- photographs or information reproduced in newspaper articles
- photographs used on Headgate Theatre website or Facebook page

The Headgate Theatre will nominate a production photographer as part of the production risk assessment.

The production Director will be responsible for selecting photographic material for foyer display. Where the production photographer is a third party business, the copyright of the photographs will remain with that business. Where production photographs are taken by a staff member or volunteer, the copyright will remain with the Headgate Theatre.

Where children are involved in a production:

- Permission from a parent/guardian will be sought, and if it is obtained, the parent/guardian will be asked to countersign the relevant declaration on the HTP Production Registration Form.
- The production photographer will be asked to ensure that no image is released which could negatively reflect on any individual within the picture, or the Headgate Theatre.
- The Headgate Theatre will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that no children under 16 are identified by name in photographs without the express consent of the child and their parent/guardian.

APPENDIX 9a - CONSENT FORM FOR VIDEO RECORDING AS PART OF AN AUTHORISED ACTIVITY
AT THE HEADGATE THEATRE

(To be completed by all production or workshop participants 16 or under. This information and any images or recorded material will be kept on file and destroyed within 12 weeks following the end of the activity/production).

The Headgate Theatre will store photographs and videos securely. We will keep hard copies in a locked drawer and electronic images in a protected folder with restricted access.

NAME OF ACTIVITY/PRODUCTION/ WORKSHOP.....

DATE.....

NAME OF YOUNG PERSON

I DO/ DO NOT give permission for my child to be filmed in a video to be used solely for the purpose of the final presentation of the above named activity.

I DO/ DO NOT give my permission for any photograph or other recorded material which includes me, or the named young person, that is taken by the official production/activity photographer to be included in the final presentation.

SIGNED (young person where able)

.....

DATE

PARENT GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

.....

DATE

APPENDIX 9b – GUIDANCE FOR PHOTOGRAPHING AND FILMING

It's important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have photographs and films of their special moments. Family and friends also want to be able to share the successes of their children when they have been part of a special event or activity.

The Headgate Theatre will:

- always ask for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- always explain what images will be used for and how they will be stored
- make sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how the Headgate Theatre will control access to the images).

The Headgate Theatre will store photographs and videos of children securely. We will keep hard copies of images in a locked drawer and electronic images in a protected folder with restricted access.