

THEATRE ARTS ACTION TRUST



ADULTS AT RISK of HARM AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ADULTS AT RISK OF HARM AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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

The aim of the policy is to create an environment that keeps all adults safe from harm and enable staff and volunteers to know and understand when to implement safeguarding adults reporting procedures

It is the Policy of TAAT that all adults, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious beliefs, sexual orientation are welcome in our theatre. Everybody will be treated with respect and protected from harm.

Theatre Arts Action Trust recognises that it may facilitate or directly provide a service to adults at risk of harm within The Headgate Theatre. In doing so, Theatre Arts Action Trust aims to adopt the highest possible standards and take all reasonable steps to ensure the protection, safety and welfare of its beneficiaries, staff, and volunteers.

The Trustees and staff accept their responsibility to develop and raise awareness of the issues involved with adults at risk of harm.

Safeguarding is person-centred and outcome-focused and that adults will, wherever possible, be involved in decisions about how concerns are handled.

1. Definition and Legislation and Other Related Policies

The principal legislation underpinning this policy is the Care Act 2014. Under the Care Act, the primary responsibility for coordinating adult safeguarding enquiries rests with the Local Authority.

This policy uses the term **"adult at risk of harm"** (or **"adult at risk"**) to reflect current safeguarding practice. The statutory Care Act test for when adult safeguarding duties apply is set out below.

Adult safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met);
- 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 the risk of, or experience of, abuse or neglect.

This policy should also be read alongside the provisions of the **Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA)**. The MCA provides a legal framework for making decisions on behalf of people aged 16 and over who may lack capacity to make specific decisions for themselves. Theatre Arts Action Trust will always presume that an adult has capacity unless it is established otherwise and will support adults to make their own decisions wherever possible. Where a person lacks capacity in relation to a specific decision, any action taken will be in their best interests and in accordance with the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

This policy also recognises the **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**, which defines domestic abuse and strengthens protection for people experiencing abusive, controlling, coercive, threatening or violent behaviour by a partner, former partner or family member. Domestic abuse may affect adults at risk and will be treated as a safeguarding concern where appropriate.

Examples of abuse and neglect may include physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial or material abuse, discriminatory abuse, organisational abuse, neglect and acts of omission, self-neglect, domestic abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour, and online or digital abuse.

All organisations and individuals directly involved with any adult with care and support needs have a clear responsibility to work together to reduce the risk of abuse and neglect, recognising and reporting abuse and neglect and co-operating with the Local Authority.

The Adults at Risk of Harm and Safeguarding Policy is supported by other TAAT policies which help to support an environment in which everyone can feel safe and supported. These include

- Safeguarding for Children and Young People
- Health and Safety
- Privacy and Data
- Grievance
- Recruitment and selection
- Comments, compliments and complaints
- Volunteer policy
- Anti- Bullying Policy
- Media Relations
- Social Media
- EDI Strategy

1.1 Key principles of Adult Safeguarding

To ensure the safety of adults at risk of harm, the Headgate Theatre is guided by the six key principles set out in The Care Act 2014

- Empowerment – People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and consent is informed
- Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs
- Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
- Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need
- Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

In practice, TAAT will seek the adult's views, desired outcomes, and consent wherever it is safe and lawful to do so.

2. Objectives

- To provide an environment in which adults at risk of harm feel safe, respected and valued
- To ensure that the safety and dignity of adults at risk of harm is maintained at all times
- To ensure that staff and volunteers take responsibility to protect adults at risk of harm
- To exercise a duty of care and to follow procedures to ensure that there is a consistent and effective response to any concerns, allegations, or disclosures of abuse.
- To ensure and record that all staff, trustees and volunteers are made aware of our policy and procedures.
- To regularly monitor and evaluate Headgate Theatre's own practices and procedures.
- To work in a person-centred way that respects the adult's wishes, feelings, beliefs, and desired outcomes, while taking proportionate action where there is risk of serious harm.

3. How we will safeguard adults, including volunteers, at risk of harm?

TAAT will ensure that;

- an appropriate risk assessment (see Appendix 2) will be undertaken where it is deemed necessary and any support arrangements will be at TAAT's discretion
- any adult can manage unaided at Headgate events or that they will arrange for a responsible person to accompany them
- if an adult at risk of harm makes contact with Headgate Theatre via social media, it should be reported to the Headgate Director, who will ensure it is followed up and reported to DSL or deputy.
- confidential data that is collected on adults at risk of harm, including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and shared between responsible persons only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with data protection law. TAAT may share information without consent where there is a safeguarding risk, a risk of serious harm, or another lawful basis for sharing
 - reasonable adjustments and support arrangements will be discussed with the adult and recorded where appropriate.

NB The Headgate Theatre is not responsible for providing a "responsible person".

4. Procedures

- Hirers whose activities involve children or adults at risk must provide evidence of appropriate safeguarding arrangements, including named safeguarding leads and relevant policies and insurance. 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.
- . All staff and volunteers should be aware of the Adult at Risk of Harm Safeguarding Policy during induction and of the procedure to follow for reporting possible/alleged cases of harm or abuse. All staff, trustees and volunteers will receive safeguarding awareness appropriate to their role, with safeguarding leads receiving additional training.
- A copy of this policy is made publicly on our website for all our participants to read.

5. Reporting Procedure

It is the responsibility, under a duty of care, for any member of staff or adult volunteer, to take action if they suspect the abuse of an adult at risk of harm. Abuse may be witnessed or a disclosure may have been made by the person themselves or by someone else who has been told about it or witnessed abuse. If there is an immediate risk to life or serious harm, call 999 and then notify the safeguarding lead as soon as practicable.

If you do suspect abuse, you should:

- make sure the person is safe.
- as soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the adult's own words. Be careful to record facts. If you are recording hearsay (*someone else said...*) or opinion, make this clear.
- 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 1)
- Inform the Duty Manager or Headgate Director 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 prompt contact should be made with **DSL or if they are not available Tony Sharp 07720543006 or Headgate Director 07957400953 or Lead Trustee – Alison Gaukroger 07544532340. For concerns related to Headgate Theatre Productions contact Dawn King - 0780659342 In the event that none of the above can be contacted contact should be made to 'Adult Social Care' 03456037630 or 03457585592 and for out of hours 03456061212 and advise the action taken to DSL or Deputy.**
- Preserve any evidence.
- Ensure the record of concern is given to the nominated person for safeguarding of adult at risk of harm if available, or to the Duty Manager.
- The person responsible for safeguarding adults at risk of harm will liaise with the relevant agencies and forward the record of concern for information.

It is important for staff and volunteers to avoid making assumptions and discussing concerns indiscriminately. Confidentiality and respect for the adult at risk of harm(s) involved, is of the utmost importance.

Seek the adult's consent to share information wherever possible. If the adult lacks capacity for the relevant decision, act in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Information may still be shared without consent where there is risk of serious harm, coercion, exploitation, or another lawful safeguarding basis

The adult at risk of harm has the right:

- To be made aware of this policy.
- To have alleged incidents recognized and taken seriously.
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout.
- To be involved in any process as appropriate.
- To receive information about the outcome.

6. Concerns or Allegations About Staff, Volunteers, Trustees, Contractors, or Others in Positions of Trust.

This may include anyone directly employed by The Headgate Theatre in a paid or voluntary capacity. 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. 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 adult. Everyone needs the reassurance of their organisation that they would be supported for their action if they disclosed information about a colleague. Any allegations should be reported to DSL or deputy 07720543006.

If the concern involves the Nominated Safeguarding Lead, report directly to the Deputy Lead or Lead Trustee. If it involves the Deputy Lead, report to the Nominated Lead or Lead Trustee.

TAAT may consult the local authority safeguarding team, police, DBS, Charity Commission, or other relevant bodies where appropriate.

7. 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.

Adopted by the Trustees July 2026

Next Review Date.....July 2027

Appendix 1 - 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 nominated person. 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	
Consent Sought? Y/N	
Any Capacity Concerns?	

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 that makes you believe that the adult or child is at risk of harm or is being abused or neglected. Please use overleaf if necessary.

Signed

Section 4 – Action taken

Signed

Nominated Safeguarding Lead –

Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment Template

List each risk and identify actions to reduce the likelihood and/or impact

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Adults at Risk of Harm and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures - June 2025 V1

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Adults at Risk of Harm Policy		
Effective Date: June 2025	Date Last Reviewed	Version No. 1
Administrator Responsible: Company Secretary	June 2025	Contact Information: TAAT Company Secretary
APPLIES TO:	All Trustees, Staff and Volunteers	

Version	Approved By	Revision Date	Description of Change	Author
1		June 2025	Update for change of personnel.	A. Gaukroger
2		July 2026	Update to reflect current adult safeguarding practice (MSP, positions of trust, online safeguarding, information sharing, MCA 2005 cross-	A Gaukroger

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