

**Open Stage Performing Arts Company Ltd**  
**Child Protection Policy**

**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect children and young people who access Open Stage's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services; and
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

**2. Company Statement**

Open Stage believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. Child abuse is a very complex and dangerous set of problems that includes neglect and physical, emotional and sexual abuse. We have a responsibility to promote welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

**3. Legal Framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014

This policy should be read in conjunction with our policies and procedures on:

- Anti-Bribery and Extortion Policy
- Code of Practice for Volunteers
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Freelancer Guide
- Health and Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Theatre Company Code of Conduct

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989;
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues;
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and guardians is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to them and respecting them;
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people;
- adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through policies, procedures and codes of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and training;
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters and one-to-one discussions;
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise;
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place;
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

### **3. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**

Rachael Jeffery, Director of the Organisation, is the DSO for Open Stage, so is responsible in relation to any child protection issues and will endeavour to assist any member of staff who believes a child is at risk, as well as to address any concerns relating to child protection caused by a member of staff. If a member of staff has concerns about a child or young person's safety or welfare, or concerns about the actions of a staff member, it should be reported to Rachael Jeffery. Any concerns and relevant information will be shared with the appropriate agencies.

### **4. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually and kept up to date, as legislation and company circumstances change over time. Meetings will be held regularly as appropriate to discuss any issues that arise in the interim in relation to this policy.

In case of any queries or questions in relation to this policy please contact Rachael Jeffery, Director of the Organisation.

Last Updated 31 January 2018