

LEADA - Child Protection Policy

All organisations that make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- Any allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All adults working with children and young people will hold a current DBS certificate (CRB) and chaperone licence and have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

Child Protection Policy Statement

LEADA is committed to safeguard all children involved in any activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

LEADA will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in their workshops and activities through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Policy aims

The aim of LEADA Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

Good practice guidelines:

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person, the group and the group leader first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children and young people
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering children to share in decision making.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving constructive feedback sensitively and with consideration, rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people whatever their ability.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid. Parents are to be contacted should a child need emergency medical treatment or need to be taken to hospital
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if any leaders are required to transport young people in their cars. Drivers must have appropriate insurance.
- Parental consent must be given before photographs or video recordings are used for publicity or marketing.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident in the book designated for logging concerns. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child or young person.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a young person or child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Use of photographic/filming equipment at events

Parental consent will be gained in all cases before any photographs or video are taken of any children or young people. Photographs and video footage will be used for promotional purposes and to highlight the work done.

Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers

Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (Criminal Records Bureau.)
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity should be provided (eg passport or driving licence with photo).

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely and effectively with children.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

Should an allegation be made, the nominated staff member should record the following details:

- Name of the child
- Parent's/carer's details
- Child's address
- Relevant phone numbers
- What is said to have happened or what was seen
- When it occurred
- Who else, if anyone, was there?
- What was said by those involved
- What evidence of abuse can be recorded
- Who has been told about it
- Who was involved in the incident, and if possible record in what way concerned?
- Was the child able to say what happened, if so how did they describe it?
- Whether the parent(s) have been advised.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Any complaints of suspected or actual child abuse or of young people being put at risk must be taken seriously and acted upon immediately. Concerns should be logged in the designated book

LEADA aims to create a safe and secure environment for young people to learn and enjoy theatre and performing arts.

All adults working with members will, under no circumstance, tolerate bullying, racism, or sexism.

Any suspicions of child abuse will be reported to **Lorraine Moore (CPO)**

All adults working with members will be checked by the DBS and hold a chaperone licence

All adults working with members will be aware that they are in a relationship of trust with the young people at LEADA. Under no circumstance should this trust be abused.

LEADA will ensure that young people and adults can voice ANY concerns about abusive or unethical conduct.

LEADA will follow the NSPCC's core values, which are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. They are:

- Children must be protected from all forms of violence and exploitation
- Everyone has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children
- We listen to children and young people, respect their views and respond to them directly
- Children should be encouraged and enabled to fulfil their potential
- We challenge inequalities for children and young people
- Every child must have someone to turn to

It is not the responsibility of anyone working with LEADA to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

LEADA will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Action

1. Concerns about poor practice:

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to LEADA manager who will seek advice from LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) and decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about suspected abuse within the class environment:

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department which may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.

The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department and LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. Information sharing will be made in consultation with CP officer and LEADA manager unless they are the cause for concern.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (eg that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Bullying

Action if bullying is suspected:

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in workshops or sessions:

Take all signs of bullying very seriously.

Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.

Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.

Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.

Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).

Report any concerns to the Child Protection Officer or the drama tutor.

Action towards the bully(ies):

Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).

Inform the bully(ies)'s parents.

Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.

Provide support for the victim's tutor.

Impose sanctions as necessary.

Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.

Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

Inform all organisation members of action taken.

Keep a written record of action taken.

3. Concerns outside the immediate Drama class venue (eg a parent or carer):

Report your concerns to **Lorraine Moore** Child Protection Officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible.

If the Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately.

Social services and the Child Protection Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers.

The Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to the manager.

Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only.

4. Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse:

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.

- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred. (Care must be taken to avoid leading questions)
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000**, or **Childline on 0800 1111**.