



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Step in Time School of Performing Arts, partners, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, and students.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT IS:

- to protect children and young people who take classes at Step in Time from harm. This includes the children of adults who take our classes.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from nspcc.org.uk/learning.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents.

- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Recording concerns and information sharing
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Behaviour codes for children and young people
- Photography and sharing images guidance
- Anti-bully
- Health and safety
- Induction, training, supervision and support
- Adult to child supervision ratios

WE BELIEVE THAT:

- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them
- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind

WE RECOGNISE THAT:

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to 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 other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

WE WILL SEEK TO KEEP CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE BY:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people – Roberta Knox
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording, storing, and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk/fororganisations]
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- Making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately

- 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
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns (Open door policy)

ENHANCED CRB/DBS DISCLOSURE

All staff including teachers, freelance teachers, contractors, volunteers, administration and ancillary staff should undertake an Enhanced DBS disclosure where this is deemed to be appropriate and relevant. It is strongly recommended that this is kept up-to-date. It is the Principal's responsibility to view the contents of the Enhanced DBS disclosure and make a decision about whether that staff member should be excluded from working with young people within their organisation.

THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

The Principal Safeguarding Officer is Roberta Knox and she can be contacted by email at stepintimepa@gmail.com

The Principal Safeguarding Officer will ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments. The Principal Safeguarding Officer is the link between the members of the public, and staff. The Principal Safeguarding Officer will have the following functions. Namely to:

- Be an advisor to all organisation and freelance staff on best practice in regard to the child protection policy
- Agree incident reporting procedures
- Keep records of incidents and reports, together with any other relevant information
- Report incidents to the Statutory Authorities and ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover;
- Ensure that individual case records are maintained of any complaint, injury or action taken by the organisation

WHAT IS ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING DISCLOSURES

A child may decide to disclose information that may indicate they are suffering from abuse or neglect. A child chooses to speak to an adult because they feel that they will listen and that they can trust them. The adult needs to listen to what the child has to say, and be very careful not to 'lead' the child or influence in any way what they say.

It is important that the adult remembers to:

1. Stay calm
2. Listen and be supportive
3. Not ask any leading questions, interrogate the child, or put ideas in the child's head, or jump to conclusions
4. Not stop or interrupt a child who is recalling significant events

5. Never promise the child confidentiality – it must be explained that information will need be to be passed on to help keep them safe
6. Avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator
7. Tell the child what must be done next (the safeguarding process must be followed)
8. Record what was said immediately as close to what was said as possible. Also record what was happening immediately before the child disclosed. Be sure to sign and date the record in ink.
9. Contact the designated person immediately
10. Seek support

If you are concerned about a child, you must share your concerns.

Initially, you should talk to our designated person responsible for child protection within Step In Time. At Step In Time this is Roberta Knox. If this person is implicated in the concerns, you should discuss your concerns directly with Children’s Services, MASH – 03450 507 666

You should consult externally with Children’s Services in the following circumstances:

- When you remain unsure after internal consultation as to whether child protection concerns exist
- When there is a disagreement as to whether child protection concerns exist
- When you are unable to consult promptly (or at all) with your designated internal contact for child protection
- When the concerns relate to any member of the organising committee
- If your concern is regarding a member of staff please contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) directly 01392 384964

For further information please visit - [Home - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](https://www.oscb.org.uk)
- [NSPCC | The UK children's charity | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

CONTACT DETAILS

Designated Safeguarding Lead : Roberta Knox – stepintimepa@gmail.com

MASH (The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub): 03450 507 666

MASH (The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Out of Hours Emergency Team: 0800 833 408

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) : 01392 384964

NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children): 0808 800 5000

Childline : 0800 1111

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed 30th July 2024 by Roberta Knox (Partner)