

## Safeguarding Young People & Adults at Risk Policy

### About this policy

The New Wolsey Theatre (NWT) recognises its legal and moral obligation to safeguard from harm all children and adults at risk involved in activities that we run or promote. To ensure the safety and protection of all children and adults at risk involved in any NWT activity, all staff, artists and volunteers must understand and adhere to the Safeguarding guidelines set out in this policy, which aims to create safe working practices and a stimulating and creative environment for everyone.

This policy applies to all employees of NWT, consultants, freelance staff, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

Breach of this policy may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.

The procedures and best practice guidelines contained within this policy are framed by the legal requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; subsequent revisions contained in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, and the best practice outlined in the non-statutory guidelines Keeping Children Safe (during Community Activities, After School Clubs and Tuition) 2025.

The NWT Safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually.

**Please refer to pages 5-6 of this policy for the contact details of the NWT Safeguarding Leads and for guidance on how to deal with a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.**

### Definitions

- 1) What we mean by 'Safeguarding'.

Safeguarding sometimes referred to as 'Child Protection', means recognising, understanding, and carrying out our responsibility to protect the children and adults at risk with whom we come into contact from physical, sexual and emotional abuse; extremism, and from accidents, by ensuring that:

- The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount.
- All children and adults at risk, whatever their age, sex, culture, disability, gender identity, language, ethnicity, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity are protected from abuse and exploitation.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and exploitation are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All NWT staff, volunteers, freelancers and artists working with us, or on our behalf, understand their responsibilities and act accordingly.

In addition, the NWT has a duty of care to all its staff, volunteers and artists to minimise the situations in which it might be possible for an accusation of abuse to be made against them.

## 2) What we mean by 'Children and Adults at Risk.'

The Children Act, 1989, defines a child as a person under the age of 18. Extensions can exist for children who are disabled and for those in local authority care settings. 'Young Person' has no legal status but it is used to acknowledge that people aged 16 or 17 may not think of themselves as 'children'. For the purpose of this policy people aged under 18 are referred to as 'children'.

An adult at risk (previously referred to as 'vulnerable adult') is generally defined (e.g., under the UK Care Act 2014) as a person aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves against that risk due to those needs. This applies regardless of whether the local authority is meeting those care needs.

For the purpose of this policy 'participant' refers to any child or adult at risk who is taking part in an NWT activity.

## 3) What we mean by 'Abuse'

Abuse is a situation in which a person has either suffered, or is believed to be at risk of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, emotional abuse (including bullying), neglect, or physical injury. The perpetrator may be an adult or a child, and the abuse may have occurred either as the result of direct action by an abuser, or through the failure of organisations or individuals responsible for that person's safety and well-being.

## 4) What we mean by 'Sexual Abuse'

Sexual abuse is the involvement of individuals in sexual activities to which they did not give or are unable to give informed or legal consent.

It is illegal for anyone to engage in sexual activity with a person under the age of 16. However, Home Office guidance is clear that there is no intention to prosecute teenagers under the age of 16 where both mutually agree to a sexual relationship, and where they are of a similar age.

It is illegal for a person aged 18 or over to engage in any sexual activity with a person under the age of 18 if the older person holds a position of trust in regard to that younger person (for example their teacher or workshop leader).

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 states that a child aged 12 or under cannot legally give their consent to any form of sexual activity.

## 5) What we mean by 'Sexual Exploitation'

Sexual exploitation of children and adults at risk involves exploitative situations and relationships where a person receives or is promised 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) in return for engaging in inappropriate or illegal sexual activity.

Sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology (e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet) or through activities that prepare the person to engage in inappropriate or illegal sexual activity (sometimes referred to as 'grooming').

Violence, coercion and intimidation are common within exploitative relationships, which are often characterised by the child or adult at risk's limited ability to make appropriate choices because of their social, economic and/or emotional circumstances.

#### 6) What we mean by 'Emotional Abuse'

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or adult at risk that results in severe, adverse effects on the emotional or physical wellbeing of that person. Emotional abuse in recreational or social activities might also include situations where parents, staff, artists or volunteers subject those in their care to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to their high expectations.

Issues around mental health can affect anyone at any time and are not necessarily caused by, or an indication of, abuse; although incidents of poor mental health may make someone more vulnerable than they might otherwise be. If you have any concerns around a participant's mental health please speak to a Safeguarding Lead.

#### 7) What we mean by 'Neglect'

The failure to protect a child or adult at risk from exposure to any kind of undue risk or danger, or a persistent failure to carry out important aspects of their care.

#### 8) What we mean by 'Physical Abuse'

The deliberate physical injury of a child or adult at risk, or the wilful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child or adult at risk.

#### 9) What we mean by 'Extremism'

The vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, and individual liberty. An intolerance and lack of mutual respect for different faiths and beliefs. 'Radicalisation' refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

#### 10) What we mean by a 'disclosure'

In safeguarding, a disclosure is when a child or an adult at risk tells someone that they are experiencing, have experienced, or fear they will experience abuse or neglect. This can happen verbally, in writing, through behaviour, or unspoken e.g. by non-verbal communication such as drawings or gestures.

The disclosure may be:

- Direct - the person explicitly describes the abuse.
- Indirect - hints, behavioural changes, or partial details indicating something is wrong.

The NSPCC notes that disclosure is often a process, not a single moment, where children gradually begin sharing their experiences of abuse.

## **Good Practice when working with Children & Adults at Risk**

Good practice means:

- Treating all children and adults at risk equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Putting the welfare of each participant before the setting and achieving of goals.
- Building reciprocal relationships based on mutual trust and, where appropriate, empowering children and adults at risk to lead and/or share in the decision-making process.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Making the arts safe and enjoyable.
- Being an excellent role model.
- Recognising that children or adults with disabilities may be more vulnerable than other people.
- Only touching participants during activities when necessary and seeking the consent of participants prior to any physical contact.
- Always trying to work in an open environment (e.g. if you are alone in an office with a participant make sure that the door is open).
- Always trying to avoid being alone with participants for a substantial amount of time.
- Otherwise maintaining an appropriate working relationship with participants.

Inappropriate behaviour includes:

- Engaging in unnecessarily rough, physical or provocative games or behaviour.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allowing a participant to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Using inappropriate language when speaking to or communicating with a participant.
- Reducing a participant to tears as a form of control.
- Ignoring or disregarding an allegation made by a participant.
- Doing things of a personal nature for a participant that they can do for themselves.
- Inviting or allowing a participant to stay with you or visit you at your home unsupervised.
- The giving of arbitrary gifts or services.

Questions around what constitutes 'appropriate language and/or behaviour' are often dependant on the nature of the activity being undertaken and the age range/experience of the participants: you would obviously not treat an early year's group in the same way as you would a group of young, adult actors working on a piece of new writing. The NWT believes that theatre practices can create a safe space for artists and participants to discuss difficult and/or controversial issues and recognises that what is 'appropriate' is sometimes a matter of context.

The NWT recognises that some activities, such as giving a participant a lift in your car unsupervised, while potentially inappropriate, are sometimes unavoidable. For example: if a participant is stranded after an NWT activity and has no other way to get home. In this instance, every effort should be made to make alternative arrangements but if this is not possible then you should inform your Line Manager or a Safeguarding Lead, as soon as possible.

If you are unclear of what constitutes Safeguarding best practice in any given situation or feel that you are being asked to do something by the NWT that places you or a participant at risk, it is your responsibility to seek advice from your Line Manager or one of the NWT's Safeguarding Leads.

## **NWT Safeguarding Leads**

A Safeguarding Lead (sometimes known as a 'Child Protection Officer' or 'Designated Person') is responsible for ensuring that all NWT activities adhere to the theatre's Safeguarding Policy, and is the person to whom any disclosures, suspicions or allegations of abuse should be reported.

The NWT's Chief Executive/ Artistic Director, Douglas Rintoul, is responsible for all matters of Safeguarding and has nominated the following staff to be the theatre's Safeguarding Leads:

- **Tony Casement, Head of Creative Communities**  
[tcasement@wolseytheatre.co.uk](mailto:tcasement@wolseytheatre.co.uk) 01473 295 931 or 07855 018076
- **Lucy Parker, Head of People**  
[lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk](mailto:lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk) 01473 295 940 or 07708 125344

## **Safeguarding Board Member**

A Safeguarding concern can also be reported to Laura Herbert who is an NWT Board Member (trustee) if, for any reason, you are concerned that the matter will not be appropriately dealt with by the NWT's Safeguarding Leads.

- **Laura Herbert** [Laura.sian.herbert@gmail.com](mailto:Laura.sian.herbert@gmail.com)

## **What to do if you suspect or are told about an incident of abuse?**

A disclosure (when a participant tells someone that they are being abused) or a suspicion that a participant is being abused, can arouse strong emotions in all of us. It is important to acknowledge these feelings whilst at the same time not allowing them to interfere with our judgement about the appropriate action to take.

**Most of us are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to determine in most circumstances whether abuse has occurred.**

It is the responsibility of staff, volunteers and artists to report any concerns to their Line Manager or a Safeguarding Lead.

**It is not the responsibility of staff, volunteers and artists to deal with suspected abuse themselves.**

## **Possible signs of Abuse, Neglect or Radicalisation.**

These are signs which could alert NWT staff, volunteers or artists to the possibility that abuse, neglect or radicalisation may be happening:

- Unexplained bruising or injuries.
- Sexually explicit language and actions.
- Sudden changes in behaviour.
- Something a participant has said.

- A participant suddenly having access to large amounts of money or expensive personal items (e.g. certain types of trainers or a new mobile phone) that they cannot reasonably explain.
- Change observed over time e.g. weight loss or becoming dirty or unkempt.
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use.
- Isolation from family and friends.
- Unwillingness or inability to discuss their views.

None of the above are proof of anything but they may give rise to justifiable concerns.

### **Responding to a participant making an allegation of abuse etc. (disclosure)**

- **Stay calm** and listen carefully to what is being said.
- **Accept** what you are being told.
- **Explain** that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- **Allow** the participant to continue at their own pace.
- **Ask questions** for clarification only and to ensure a participant's immediate safety. NEVER ask leading questions that suggest an answer – formal interviews should be carried out by a qualified professional, as they may constitute evidence in a subsequent legal action.
- **Reassure** the participant that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- **Tell them** what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- **Immediately report** what has happened to a Safeguarding Lead.
- **Record in writing** what was said **using the participant's own words** – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that you sign and date your record of the conversation. Where possible use a clean piece of paper or notebook and avoid using a personal notebook. This document should then be given to the relevant Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

Once a Safeguarding Lead has been made aware of the concern/allegation/disclosure they with either:

- Decide that no further action is necessary.
- Consult with another Safeguarding Lead or the theatre's Chief Executive/ Artistic Director, Douglas Rintoul (responsible for Safeguarding) on the appropriate course of action.
- Report the concern/allegation/disclosure.

### **Reporting a concern, allegation or disclosure**

Instructions on how to make a safeguarding referral and report a concern about a child, young person or adult at risk of harm, abuse or neglect are below.

A report/ referral must be made within 24 hours/ one working day of a disclosure or of a report of suspected abuse being made to a Safeguarding Lead.

If there is a concern that there is immediate danger the **Police** should be called on: 999.

If you are concerned about an immediate risk to the safety of a child please call **Customer First** on 0808 800 4005.

To report a concern or discuss whether or not a referral is required, please call the Professional Consultation Line on 03456 061 499 to speak with a **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** social worker.

This service can also be contacted directly if a Safeguarding Lead is unavailable.

If the concern/allegation/disclosure involves an adult working with children and is considered actionable, the Safeguarding Lead must contact one of the **Local Authority Designated Officers** at [lado@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:lado@suffolk.gov.uk) or on: **0300 123 2044**, for advice and consultation.

If the concern/allegation/disclosure involves a professional working with a adult at risk in a position of trust then the Safeguarding Lead must contact: [positionoftrust@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:positionoftrust@suffolk.gov.uk)

The **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** should also be contacted by NWT Safeguarding Leads with any concerns about participants and extremist ideologies and/or radicalisation.

For more information on Safeguarding in Suffolk, including routes to advice and reporting for individuals, go to [Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership](#)

There is also information about reporting on the Suffolk County Council Website: [Reporting a child at risk of harm, abuse or neglect \(safeguarding\)](#)

### Rights and Confidentiality

If a complaint or allegation is made against a member of staff, volunteer or artist and a decision is made that it should be taken forward, the individual concerned will be made aware of their rights under both employment law and the NWT's internal disciplinary policy.

An alleged abuser and a person thought to have been abused both have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Any possible criminal investigation could be compromised if information is inappropriately shared, and it could also have a potentially devastating effect on the lives of all those concerned.

### Incidents that must be reported and recorded

If any of the following incidents occur, staff, volunteers and artists must report them to their Line Manager or the relevant NWT Safeguarding Lead.

- Something has occurred which a member of staff, volunteer or artist feels concerned about or is uncomfortable with.
- Something has occurred which a participant feels concerned about or is uncomfortable with.

A written record should be made as soon as possible if:

- A participant is hurt during an activity (if an Accident Report is required a separate, narrative account of the incident should also be created).
- A participant appears to be sexually aroused by the actions of a member of staff, volunteer or artist.
- A participant misunderstands or misinterprets something a member of staff, volunteer or artist has done or said that may be construed within the context of abuse, exploitation or inappropriate behaviour.

- A participant makes an accusation of inappropriate behaviour against a member of staff, a volunteer or an artist.
- A participant makes a disclosure.
- A participant tells you that inappropriate contact has been made through digital, mobile and/or social media that potentially indicates attempts by an adult to groom and/or exploit them.
- A member of staff, volunteer or artist has made accidental physical contact with a participant in a way that could be open to misinterpretation.
- A member of staff, volunteer or artist has entered a participants changing-room, dressing-room or toilet by mistake, even if there was no reaction at the time from the participant.
- A participant is voicing opinions that suggest they are supportive of extremist ideologies.

The written report should then be given to a Safeguarding Lead.

### **Low Level concerns**

A low-level concern is any worry about an adult working with or on behalf of the theatre, that they may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, even if the behaviour does not meet the threshold of harm or require referral to external authorities.

Examples include overly familiar behaviour, having favourites, one-to-one interactions in secluded areas, or other conduct that may be inappropriate or unprofessional.

All low-level concerns relating to children or adults at risk must be taken seriously, recorded promptly, and reported to one of the Safeguarding Leads.

Low-level concerns relate specifically to the behaviour of an adult working for, or on behalf of the theatre e.g. staff, workshop leaders, practitioners, volunteers, or other freelancers.

Staff are encouraged to self-report if they believe their own behaviour may be perceived as a low-level concern, helping maintain transparency and safeguard professional boundaries. All records of low-level concerns will be handled confidentially and reviewed to identify patterns that may require escalation in line with safeguarding procedures.

This approach supports a culture of openness and early intervention, allowing the organisation to identify and address emerging issues before they escalate into more serious safeguarding risks.

Concerns about a child or adult at risk relate to safeguarding disclosures, welfare concerns, or risk indicators, not low-level concerns. These must be reported following the procedure as described in this policy.

### **Issues of consent and capacity**

Mental capacity means being able to make your own decisions. The Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 (MCA) is used by statutory bodies to determine the appropriate course of action when there is a suspicion that an individual is incapable of making an informed decision, or of acting in their own best interests because of a lack of mental capacity. The MCA aims to ensure that individuals over the age of 16 participate as fully as possible in all decisions relating to them and is designed to ensure that the agency of the individual, where possible, is protected and is paramount.

In the context of an NWT activity no artist, volunteer or member of staff should be making decisions about the mental capacity of a participant. It is the responsibility of staff, volunteers and artists to report any concerns to their Line Manager or a Safeguarding Lead. **It is not the responsibility of staff, volunteers and artists to deal with suspected issues of consent and capacity themselves.**

### **Recruitment procedures**

NWT operates under the principles of Safer Recruitment which is a set of practices to ensure that only suitable people are engaged to work with children, young people or adults at risk.

NWT has designed recruitment processes, so they deter unsuitable applicants.

The NWT's Safer recruitment procedures include the following:

- Clear safeguarding statements in job adverts and recruitment materials
- A structured application process that does not rely on CV's alone
- Identifying posts that require a DBS check when creating Job Descriptions
- Seeking a full employment history for applicants, identifying any gaps or inconsistencies and seeking an explanation
- Confirming identity through official documents
- Rigorous interview process, including appropriately trained staff on recruitment panels
- Interviews that explore skills and motivation for working with vulnerable groups
- Thorough pre-employment checks including DBS checks, identity verification, qualification checks, reference checks
- Ongoing staff training and monitoring
- Maintaining accurate records of all checks and decisions
- Making all appointments (including internal transfers) subject to a probationary period.

Under the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is an offence for any organisation to offer employment that involves regular contact with children or adults at risk, to anyone who has been convicted of certain specified offences or included on either of the two DBS Barred Lists. It is also an offence for people convicted of such offences to apply for work with children and/or adults at risk.

### **Disclosure Checks (DBS Check)**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was established in 2013 to enable employers, contractors and community groups to make thorough recruitment checks, particularly for positions that involve working with children and adults at risk. The NWT reserves the right to carry out DBS checks, when necessary, with the co-operation of the individual concerned.

A Disclosure Check or DBS Check is an application for information held on an individual by the Police and various Government Departments (e.g. a history of any criminal convictions). It is obtained from the DBS and helps organisations make safer recruitment decisions. DBS checks at the NWT are managed by the Head of People and the Creative Communities Team.

Staff and volunteer recruitment procedures will include an Enhanced or Standard DBS check when appropriate, depending on the amount of time spent with children and adults at risk (further detail below under Time Spent with Participants). Any employment offer to such staff/volunteers will always be made conditional to the successful passing of a DBS check.

Original DBS Certificates belong to the individual but the number and date will be recorded (subject to the employee's permission) and stored on the NWT DBS database. The results of DBS checks are confidential.

DBS checks that contain minor offences do not necessarily affect an individual's suitability to work with participants (e.g. a charge of petty theft). Individuals with minor offences can still work with participants' subject to final approval from a Safeguarding Lead.

Staff/volunteers with DBS Certificates that are more than 3 years old will be asked to complete a new application. The NWT accepts current DBS certificates validated by other organisations if the job role is comparable to their new position at the theatre.

Staff/volunteers who are registered with the DBS update service must provide relevant information and permission for us to check their DBS status through the update service.

### DBS update service

This service lets applicants keep their DBS certificates up to date online and allows employers to check a certificate electronically. Applicants can register online with a newly-issued DBS certificate. When you join, you will get an online account that lets you:

- Take your certificate from one job to the next (if the jobs have similar duties/responsibilities).
- Give employers permission to check your certificate online, and see who else has checked it.
- Add or remove a certificate.

The NWT usually covers the cost of a new DBS check for relevant staff, volunteers and artists, and encourages them to sign up to the update service.

### Barred Lists

The two DBS Barred Lists hold the names of individuals who are unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk. It's against the law for employers to employ someone or allow them to volunteer for this kind of work, if they know they are on one of the Barred Lists. The NWT must refer someone to the DBS if they are:

- Dismissed because they harmed a child or adult at risk.
- Dismissed or removed from work because the NWT had a reasonable suspicion that they might harm a child or adult.
- About to be dismissed for either of these reasons, but resign first.

If you have any questions regarding DBS Checks, please contact the Head of People, Lucy Parker at [lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk](mailto:lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk)

### Time Spent with Participants

The type of contact NWT Staff are likely to have with participants falls broadly into three categories:

- Substantial Time
- Regular Time
- Occasional Time

### Substantial Time

Being in regular contact with and/or being responsible for participants, sometimes in situations where there is no other adult present. All staff spending Substantial Time with participants must have a valid Enhanced DBS Check

Staff who spend Substantial time with participants include:

- Core NWT Creative Communities staff.
- The majority of freelance/casual staff and artists employed or contracted by the NWT Creative Communities Department.
- Chaperones supervising children during rehearsals and performances of professional productions.
- Heads of Department responsible for supervising long term Work Placements.
- Any appropriate member of staff or freelancer nominated by a Line Manager or Safeguarding Lead.

### Regular Time

Being in regular contact with children, but not being ultimately responsible for them. All staff spending Regular Time with children must have a Standard Disclosure.

Staff in this category could include:

- Duty Managers
- Staff in Departments hosting Work Placements of more than a week
- Creative Communities Assistants
- Production staff e.g. Technicians
- Staff working alongside members of casual staff who are under 18

### Occasional Time

Intermittent contact but never being responsible or normally alone with a young person. Staff in this category are required to be familiar with the contents of this policy (e.g. Volunteer Ushers).

It is the explicit policy of the NWT that all staff, volunteers and artists who spend Substantial or Regular time with participants should have the appropriate, valid DBS Certificate. However, in exceptional circumstances, artists, practitioners and freelancers may work with participants without a Certificate if they are supervised at all times by a teacher or a youth worker, or by a member of NWT staff who holds a current DBS Certificate. Under these circumstances the DBS holder must be made aware that this person must not be left unsupervised with participants.

Project managers, when providing workshops or arranging events in schools, must make it clear to bookers whether or not the artists delivering the work have a valid DBS Certificate.

When a single member of staff or artist is delivering activities in other settings, or for partner organisations, the NWT would expect that setting's/organisation's staff to be present throughout the activity. If this is not possible then the NWT must confirm that the setting/organisation is happy with this arrangement and it must be included in the contract for the delivery of the activity.

If groups of participants are taken away from home on trips, they must always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff, and adults must not enter participant's rooms or invite participants into their rooms.

Where staff, volunteers or artists are expected to act in the absence of the person(s) with parental responsibility, written consent should be sought in advance of administering emergency first aid to the participant.

When Youth Theatre groups are being supervised in dressing-rooms staff, artists or volunteers should always work in pairs.

### **Use of E-mail, Internet, Social Media, and Mobile Phone Technology**

For many, internet, e-mail, mobile phone and social networking are the preferred means of communication. In order to protect both participants and members of staff communicating in this way it is recommended that:

#### **E-mail**

- Email communication with a participant should only be sent and received from a registered NWT account.
- Email communication with participants should ideally be in a group context or with a cc.
- Language should always be clear and unambiguous.

#### **Social Media**

It is not appropriate to use a personal social media account to communicate with participants on behalf of the NWT. The sharing of information through social media should be done through official NWT platforms in the public domain.

Permission should be obtained for any images or videos posted on social media sites. Only images and videos relevant to NWT projects should be used.

NWT staff, volunteers and artists should not connect with any participants on their personal social media platforms unless the participant is 18 or older.

If an NWT social media group is created for an activity, it should be closed and not open to the general public without the permission of all group members. A designated staff member should retain administrative rights and moderate the group, only sharing those rights with other members of staff.

Where appropriate, any induction process or information pack for participants should introduce the notion that it is inappropriate to invite members of NWT staff to follow them on social media sites. Furthermore, it should be clear that staff are not permitted to accept such invitations from under 18's.

Any communication or content that raises concern during any digital interaction with a participant should be saved or printed, and discussed with your Line Manager.

### Use of the Internet

When participants are asked to use the Internet on behalf of the NWT (e.g. during Work Experience placements) its use should be appropriate and relevant to the task they are being asked to perform and should be intermittently monitored.

### Mobile Phones

Staff should not ordinarily give out their personal mobile phone number and should not make one-to-one calls to a participant except in exceptional situations. If this occurs, details should be logged with your Line Manager.

### Projects, Activities and Productions

Children and adults at risk can be involved with the NWT in a number of ways:

- As actors and/or participants in NWT productions across all settings.
- As audience members.
- Visiting the NWT Website.
- Attendees at NWT events.
- Attending a Work Experience placement.
- Corresponding with NWT by letter, email or phone.
- Being involved in an NWT Creative Communities Project.

### Defining the nature of the relationship between Staff and Participants

It is anticipated that in all but the most exceptional circumstances NWT staff, volunteers and artists will be in the presence of those responsible for the welfare and supervision of participants, e.g. New Wolsey Creative Communities Staff, Chaperones, Teachers, Parents/Guardians, or staff members nominated by their Line Manager.

If you feel that the NWT is asking you to undertake duties, in relation to children or adults at risk, which are inappropriate or for which you do not have adequate experience or training, you should speak to your Line Manager or a Safeguarding Lead.

### Projects and Activities

Project managers should carry out risk assessments as part of all planning processes and continue to monitor the risks throughout the life of the project/activity. As part of the risk-assessment it might be appropriate to establish:

- What staffing levels and resources do we need to safely deliver the project/activity?
- Who will lead or be involved in the activity, and therefore have contact with participants?
- Must that person(s) have a valid DBS Certificate?
- Does that person(s) fully understand the NWT's Safeguarding policy?
- Do we have all the relevant participant information, permissions and emergency contact details?
- Have we given all the participants the information that they need to safely and successfully engage with the activity?
- Where is the activity to take place?
- What is the procedure for signing participants in and out of the space?

- Does the working environment present any risks in itself, either to the health and safety of the group, or specific Safeguarding risks?
- Does the activity present any risks in itself, either to the health and safety of the group, or specific Safeguarding risks?
- Who is in charge of the building where the activity is to take place, and how do we contact them in an emergency?
- What are the evacuation procedures and who is responsible for evacuating participants?
- Who is the 'appointed person' for the activity (the person deemed to be in charge)?
- How many participants, and of what age-range, are involved?
- What happens if we are asked to work with a larger group of participants than we think is safe for the activity?
- What happens if some or all of the participants are incapable of engaging meaningfully with the activity?
- What happens if a participant behaves inappropriately during the session?
- What happens if a participant leaves or tries to leave the session or activity?
- What happens if there is an accident or injury during the session?
- If a participant had to be taken to hospital, whom should we inform? Who should accompany them?
- What happens if a participant makes a disclosure during the activity?
- Are there any other factors that we need to address to ensure that the project/activity is safe, creative and inclusive?

Once these questions have been answered and risks identified, procedures, plans, actions and resources should be put in place to mitigate against them.

### **Productions**

Safeguarding issues linked to professional performances will be identified through Production Risk Assessments and updated regularly in Production Meetings. Members of acting companies that include children or adults at risk will be given specific briefings on the commencement of rehearsals and chaperones used when necessary. All necessary Licensing arrangements are organised and managed by the Creative Communities Team [creativecommunities@wolseytheatre.co.uk](mailto:creativecommunities@wolseytheatre.co.uk)

During the run of a show featuring participants the NWT will:

- Ensure gender appropriate Chaperones accompany children working on professional productions at all times.
- Ensure that adults change only in dressing-rooms or other facilities not used by participants, and only use the appropriate toilets.
- Where possible provide dedicated toilets for participants.

### **Visiting Productions/Hires**

It is the expectation of the NWT that all visiting companies and the hirers of any spaces and/or services provided by the theatre are responsible for ensuring that all necessary Safeguarding measures are in place for their activity.

### **Digital Performances and Activities**

Digital performances and any activities that are delivered in a virtual space should be subject to the same Safeguarding protocols as any other performance or activity.

### Schools Touring

For NWT productions touring to schools, the school will be made aware that the NWT has a Safeguarding Policy and that:

- NWT staff who attend will conduct themselves in accordance with the NWT's Safeguarding policy.
- NWT staff must not be placed in a caring or supervisory position without the agreement of all parties, to be made in advance of the visit.

### Work Experience

The NWT offers a wide range of work placements in various areas of the organisation's work.

Children and young people on placement receive an induction which includes: an Information Pack, a tour of the building, relevant health and safety information, an introduction to the theatre's working practices.

Work experience placements are likely to include unsupervised contact due to the design of the building and the low staffing ratios in most departments. Only staff, volunteers and artists who have a valid, Enhanced DBS Certificate can work on a one-to-one basis in an enclosed environment.

### Parental Responsibility

All forms and policy documents should carry the wording 'person with parental responsibility', rather than 'parent' or 'guardian'.

If the parents of a child are married to each other or if they have jointly adopted a child, then they both have parental responsibility. This is not automatically the case for unmarried parents. According to current, English law, a birth mother always has parental responsibility for her child. A father, however, has this responsibility only if he is married to the mother at the time of birth or has acquired legal responsibility for his child through one of three routes:

- By jointly registering the birth of the child with the mother (after 1<sup>st</sup> December 2003).
- By a parental responsibility agreement with the mother.
- By a parental responsibility order, made by a court.

Living with the mother does not give a father parental responsibility and if the parents are not married, parental responsibility does not always pass to the natural father if the mother dies.

Same-sex partners both have parental responsibility if they were married or civil partners at the time of their treatment, e.g. donor insemination or fertility treatment. For same-sex partners who aren't married or civil partners, the 2<sup>nd</sup> parent can obtain parental responsibility by either:

- Applying for parental responsibility, if a parental agreement was made.
- Marrying or becoming a civil partner of the other parent and making a parental responsibility agreement or jointly registering the birth.

If the wording on all NWT documents is 'person with parental responsibility', it places the responsibility onto the parents/carers/guardians to ensure the appropriate adult interacts with the NWT.

### **Participant and Parental Awareness**

Participants and those with parental responsibility should be aware of who the Safeguarding Leads are and how to contact them if they have any worries or concerns.

These details should be included in Youth Theatre and Work Experience packs and rehearsal schedules for children in professional performances.

### **Photographs, Videos and Data**

Those with parental responsibility for children and adults at risk involved in NWT activities must be contacted in advance of any photographs or videos being taken, and explicitly asked whether their children can be included, and whether such photographs or videos can be displayed (programmes/brochures/press/website etc.).

Direct consent may be asked of a school or partner organisation if they already hold permission from those with parental responsibility.

The NWT should never publish information that could identify a child. Under normal circumstances it is acceptable to print a child's first name and the name of the large town or area they come from but not a small village (unless specific consent has been given by those with parental responsibility).

All records, data, consent forms and any other information that the NWT requests from, or holds on, participants must be collected, used, stored and destroyed in line with GDPR regulations.

### **In summary**

This policy is not a definitive guide to Safeguarding and situations may arise that it does not explicitly cover. If you are ever in any doubt about any issues relating to Safeguarding children and/or adults at risk or of your personal responsibilities towards the participants that engage with the New Wolsey Theatre you must speak to your Line Manager or the relevant Safeguarding Lead.

An abridged version of this policy - **Conduct guidelines for working alongside children, young people and adults at risk**– is available as an appendix to this policy.

This Conduct Guidelines document does not replace or supersede this policy but may be useful as a reminder of the practices and behaviour that the NWT expects from staff, artists and volunteers who come into contact with children and/or adults at risk.

## Appendix 1.

### Conduct guidelines for working alongside children, young people and adults at risk.

Working with children, young people and adults at risk can be rewarding but also for some people, daunting. These guidelines are designed as a reminder for all staff and volunteers of their responsibilities and obligations, while working on behalf of the New Wolsey Theatre.

These guidelines don't replace or supersede our Safeguarding Policy and are intended as a simple framing device to allow you to understand and demonstrate the appropriate behaviours when working with a child, young person or an adult at risk.

For clarity:

*A child is legally defined as someone under the age of 18.*

*'Young Person' has no legal status but is often used to acknowledge that 16 and 17 year olds might not think of themselves as children.*

*Adults at risk are people who are or who may be in need of community care services because of a cognitive disability or other disability, age or illness, and who are, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.*

There will be situations where you will be working alongside someone who is over 18 but is at the Theatre as part of a project that has either been organised by the Theatre (for example a Youth Theatre production), or by an education provider (a college or University). In these circumstances you should treat that young adult in the same way that you would treat a child or young person. They are not your peer, despite legally being an adult.

#### **Things to remember**

***Always prioritise the safety of the child, young person or adult at risk at all times.***

***Always act within professional boundaries - ensure all contact with children, young people and adults at risk is part of the project you are working on.***

***Always use NWT social media and email accounts to interact with children, young people and adults at risk as the use of personal accounts is not permitted.***

***Never give out personal details; do not friend or follow children, young people and adults at risk you are working with on social media.***

***You are in a privileged position and will be seen as a role model. Behave appropriately and use suitable language at all times.***

***Do not touch or hug a child, young person or adult at risk, even if they ask you to. Politely say you are not allowed to hug or touch. If you need to touch them as part of your job, ask permission and respect their answer. You may need to find a different way to achieve your objectives.***

***Never agree to keep a secret – and report anything concerning to your line manager or a Safeguarding lead.***

***Only take on practical caring responsibilities in an emergency. If a child, young person or adult at risk needs care, alert your Line Manager.***

***Listen to and respect children, young people and adults at risk at all times; don't patronise them and avoid favouritism.***

***Treat children, young people and adults at risk fairly, and without prejudice or discrimination.***

***If you observe children, young people or adults at risk engaging in bullying behaviour, or other behaviours that may put them or others at risk, you must report it immediately to your Line Manager or the Safeguarding Lead.***

***If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk or think someone is behaving inappropriately around them you have a duty to report your concerns. It is not OK to do nothing.***

This document isn't definitive, and all staff and volunteers are encouraged to periodically re-read the full Safeguarding Policy. If you have any questions about anything concerning a child, young person or potentially vulnerable adult, please speak to your Line Manager or a Safeguarding lead.

### **Safeguarding Leads:**

Tony Casement – Head of Creative Communities [tcasement@wolseytheatre.co.uk](mailto:tcasement@wolseytheatre.co.uk)  
07855 018076

Lucy Parker – Head of People [lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk](mailto:lparker@wolseytheatre.co.uk)  
01473 295940 or 07708 125344

A Safeguarding concern can also be reported to **NWT Board Member Laura Herbert** if, for any reason, you are concerned that the matter will not be appropriately dealt with by the NWT's Safeguarding Leads. [Laura.sian.herbert@gmail.com](mailto:Laura.sian.herbert@gmail.com)