

THE HUNT ACADEMY FOR YOUNG ACTORS
CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY PROCEDURES & CODES OF PRACTICE

The Hunt Academy for Young Actors endeavours to provide a safe and secure environment for all young people whilst in care of The Hunt Academy For Young Actors.

The Hunt Academy For Young Actors believes that it is always unacceptable for children or young people to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by a commitment to practice which protects them.

We aim to provide safe participatory and creative opportunities for all children and young people who are part of our company.

In order to do this, we recognise that:

- The welfare of the young person is vital.
- All children have the right to be treated equally and protected from harm or abuse, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity.
- Working with parents, carers, guardians and other partnerships is essential in promoting the welfare of young people.

• **The purpose of this policy is:**

- To provide protection for all young people who receive services from The Hunt Academy For Young Actors
- To provide all staff and/or volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person to be experiencing or at risk of, harm.
- This policy applies to all staff, paid staff, volunteers, agency staff, contracted staff, students or anyone working on behalf of The Hunt Academy For Young Actors.

• **We will endeavor to safeguard children and young people by:**

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting child safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers.
- Recruiting DBS checked and industry professional staff.
- Sharing information about child safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff & volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

- Signed: Sarah Hunt - Academy Director and Agent
- Date: January 2019 (Revised)

1. SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

1.1 Definition of Children and Young People Children and Young People refer to as ‘everyone under the age of 18.’

1.2 Statement of Values and Principles The Hunt Academy For Young Actors believes that:

- All organisations have a duty of care to children and young people who use their services or take part in their activities.
- All children and young people should be encouraged to fulfill their potential and inequalities should be challenged.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.

1.3 Designated Persons

- Designated persons are those members of staff of The Hunt Academy For Young Actors who have specific responsibility in ensuring effective safeguarding and protection procedures.
- The following have received basic training in child protection: Sarah Hunt (Academy Director and Agent)
- Role of designated persons in the Child Safeguarding Policy is to:
 - Receive and record information from staff, volunteers, children or parents/carers/guardians who have child protection concerns.
 - Assess the information properly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate and consulting with senior colleagues if necessary.
 - Consult initially with a statutory child protection agency to express concerns as soon as possible and, if necessary, make a formal referral without delay.

1.4 Code of Conduct

All The Hunt Academy For Young Actors Staff must:

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with young people, or at least you are within sight or hearing of others.
- Respect a young person’s right to personal privacy/encourage young people to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted.
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- Be familiar with The Hunt Academy For Young Actors anti-bullying policy.
- Operate within The Hunt Academy For Young Actors specific procedures.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicious of abuse.
- Employees should give guidance and support to inexperienced helpers, for example, volunteer assistants who may be working with them temporarily or parent volunteers

Staff must not:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Allow themselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Show favouritism or preferential treatment to any individual.
- Rely on their good name or that of the organisation to protect them.

- Believe “it could never happen to me.”
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach.

1.5 Event & Project Planning, Supervision & Risk Assessment

- The Hunt Academy For Young Actors recognises that making arrangements for proper supervision of children is one of the most effective ways of minimising opportunities for children to suffer harm whilst in our care.

1.5.1 Planning

- Planning should ensure that all children should be adequately supervised and engaged in suitable activities at all times.
- Organisers should obtain, a contract agreement in which parents/carers should provide consent to children joining the organised event/project.
- Parents/carers should be informed of the role of their child(ren) in the event or project.
- Organisers should select a safe and secure performing environment for both rehearsals and performances.

1.5.2 Supervision

- Children must be supervised at all times, by a licensed chaperone and/or a DBS checked adult.
- Chaperones should know at all times where the children are and what they are doing.
- Dangerous behaviour by children should not be allowed.

1.5.3 Risk Assessment in relation to Child Protection

The principle of the risk assessment is to consider:

- The potential hazards associated with the Event/Project
- The potential persons harmed and how we can identify measures to reduce the risk
- The solutions required to prevent such hazards

Once this is done:

- We can allocate roles to monitor and manage child protection
- Risk Assessments should be carried out for every event/project.

1.6 Photographic Procedures

- Always use a parental permission form to obtain consent for a child to be photographed/videoed.
- Where possible, obtain the child’s permission to use their image.
- Only use images for the specific purpose, which has been agreed with the parents/carers and child. Additional use without specific permission is not acceptable.
- All images of children must be stored safely and securely. Storing them in limited access files on your computer is advisable.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- Address the use of images of children on the organisation’s website and with agencies who use our photographs in publicity material. Avoid personal information about children, which could be used by an individual to learn more about a child.
- Always issue written expectations of professional photographers or the press who are invited to an event, making clear the organisation’s expectations of them in relation to child protection.
- Do not allow photographers unsupervised access to children.
- Only approve photography sessions outside the event or at a child’s home with a parent or chaperone present

1.7 Recruitment Procedures

- The Hunt Academy For Young Actors has clearly defined recruitment procedures. In order to prevent unsuitable people working with children in the organisation, we will ensure:

- That posts are clearly defined and those necessitating an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check are clearly advertised as such.
- A copy of our Child Safeguarding Policy Statement will be sent with the recruitment literature for these posts.
- All applicants for these posts will be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children and MUST declare all previous convictions which are then subject to CRB checks, as well as any cases pending against them. All such information will be treated in confidence and will not be used against applicants unfairly.
- At interview for these posts, a question pertaining to good practice in Child Protection will be asked.
- Referees should be asked specifically about the applicant's suitability to work with children. It is acceptable to tell applicants for posts involving child safeguarding that you reserve the right to approach all of their past employers.

1.9 Other The Hunt Academy For Young Actors Policies Additional recommendations for Health and Safety in arts practice include:

- An appropriate number of legally responsible adults are present.
- There must be adequate space.
- There must be access to a telephone in the building.
- Equipment must meet safety standards.
- Risk assessments must be carried out.
- There must be a First Aid box which meets current Health and Safety (First Aid) regulations and a member of staff trained in First Aid.
- Regular and appropriate breaks for food and drinks are provided.
- Special needs are catered for.
- The artists/arts facilitators should know the evacuation procedures and should tell the group.
- Children and young people should have a 'named person' to whom they may report any worries or concerns.
- Contact names and telephone numbers for 'named people' should be visibly displayed.
- Staff and children should use separate toilets wherever possible, or if this is not possible, they should not use them at the same time as one another.

2. RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- The Hunt Academy for Young Actors recognises the importance of having clear procedures to enable staff to handle situations where an appropriate response is needed to a child protection concern.
- 2.1 Responding to a child disclosing abuse
 - Stay calm
 - Listen carefully to what is said
 - Find an appropriately early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
 - Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace
 - Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
 - Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
 - Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
 - Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

- Contact your designated person **REMEMBER:** It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about a child. An accurate note should be made of:
 - Date and time of the incident or disclosure
 - Parties who were involved
 - What was said or done and by whom
 - Any action taken by the organisation to investigate the matter
 - Any further action eg suspension of a worker
 - Where relevant, reasons why there is no referral to a statutory agency
 - Names of persons reporting and to whom reported The record should be clear and factual as it may be needed by child protection agencies investigating the incident and may, in the future, be used as evidence in court. Keeping such a record may also help protect The Hunt Academy For Young Actors

2.2 Confidentiality Policy, and Retention and Storage of documentation

- As a general rule, all personal information that is acquired or held in the course of working with children and young people should be treated as confidential and stored securely.
- Particular care should be taken with sensitive information.
- Consideration should also be given to the Data Protection Act 1998 which requires that information is obtained and processed fairly and lawfully; that it is accurate, relevant and not held for longer than is necessary; and kept securely.

2.3 Handling and Safekeeping of Disclosure Information:

- As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, The Hunt Academy For Young Actors, complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information.

3 WHAT IS ABUSE?

- Government guidelines in Working Together to Safeguard Children categorises abuse as:
 - Physical abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Neglect
- What is physical abuse?
 - Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning or misuse of medications, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.
- What is emotional abuse? Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on that person's emotional development. It may involve making the individual feel or believe that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may also involve causing the person to feel often frightened or in danger. It may involve exploitation or corruption.
- What is sexual abuse? Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Sexual abuse also includes non contact activities such as involving children or young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual

activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse may be same sex or opposite sex, may be by other children, young people or adults. People from all walks of life may be sexual abusers.

- What is neglect? Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or young person's basic physical and or/psychological needs, likely to result in the severe impairment of the person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child or young person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

4 SAFEGUARDING OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

- Definition of a Vulnerable Adult
- A vulnerable adult is someone who is aged 18 years or over who 'is or may be in need of community care services by reasons of mental health or other disability, age or illness' and 'is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'.
- A vulnerable adult may be a person who:
 - Is elderly or frail
 - Has learning disabilities
 - Suffers from mental illness
 - Has a physical disability
 - Is a substance mis-user
 - Is homeless
 - Is in an abusive relationship It should be noted that disability or age alone does not signify that an adult is vulnerable.
- Abuse of Adults
- Abuse can consist of a single or repeated act of harm or exploitation. It may be perpetrated as a result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Abuse can be verbal, physical, emotional, psychological, or a result of neglect or an omission to act. Abuse can also occur when a vulnerable adult is persuaded to enter into a financial arrangement or sexual relationship to which they have not, or could not, consent to or understand eg as a result of physical or mental incapacity.
- What to do if abuse is suspected If abuse is suspected or reported, employees should act in line with local policies and procedures to:
 - Take reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger
 - Contact the police if it is believed a crime may have been committed
 - Obtain permission from the vulnerable adult before disclosing • confidential information about them
 - Where appropriate, discuss concerns with the relevant manager or person responsible for overseeing the care of the vulnerable adult.
 - If, after discussion, abuse or neglect is still considered to be a possibility, referral should be made to the Social Services Department.

5 ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

- Statement of Intent
- We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can participate in drama activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.
- Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our company.

- If bullying does occur, all participants should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- We are a TELLING organisation. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.
- What is Bullying?
- Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.
- Bullying can be:
 - Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
 - Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
 - Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
 - Sexism - because of, or focusing on, issues pertaining to gender or sex.
 - Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
 - Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
 - Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
 - Cyber - All areas of Internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.
- Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?
- Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. People who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. The Hunt Academy For Young Actors have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

5.1 Objectives of this Policy

- All staff, tutors, participants and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All staff and tutors should know what the organisation's policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All participants and parents/carers should know what the organisation's policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an organisation we take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.
- All staff, tutors, participants and parents/carers should have an appreciation of the signs and indicators of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms

- A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:
 - is unwilling to go to drama sessions
 - becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
 - starts stammering
 - feels ill before their drama sessions
 - comes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged
 - has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
 - asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
 - has unexplained cuts or bruises
 - is frightened to say what's wrong
 - gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Or, in more extreme cases, if a child:
 - Starts stammering
 - Cried themselves to sleep or has nightmares
 - Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

5.2 Procedures

- 1. Report bullying incidents to staff
- 2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
- 3. In serious cases parents/carers should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- 4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- 5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- 6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour