

Footlights Performance Academy Ltd.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Document

Reviewed: Feb 2024

Contents

1. Safeguarding

- General Safeguarding Policy
- Identifying children at a possible risk for abuse
- FLOW CHART OF HOW TO RAISE CONCERNS
- Dealing with allegations made against a footlights employee
- Dealing with allegations made against a child

2. Behaviour Policies for staff and members.

- Behaviour policy for adults working with children
- Behaviour policy for footlights children
- E-safety policy and agreement members and staff

3. Bullying

- Anti-bullying policy

4. Complaints

- Complaints procedure

1. Safeguarding Policy

Footlights aim to ensure all of our classes and events are a fun, safe and rewarding environment for all our staff and students. This policy applies to all staff, including the board of directors, staff members, volunteers, students, or those working for contractors on the behalf of Footlights Performance Academy.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who take part in Footlights classes and services. This also includes any other children who we may come into contact with through our services such as siblings of Footlights members.
- To provide our paid staff, volunteers and contractors with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Footlights Performance Academy believes that any child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them at all classes and events.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of child protection training and on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children. All Footlights active staff will have attended up to date Child Safeguarding briefing and training.

We recognize that:

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

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

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.

- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people, and a deputy safeguarding officer for safeguarding.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made

- Recording and storing information professionally and securely in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR policy).
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, carers and families appropriately.
- Using our policies and procedures to manage allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Providing & 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.

Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Tina Kelly

Telephone: 07902158519

Email: tina@footlightsperformance.com

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Name: Esther Munnion

Telephone: 07841376891

E-mail: esther@footlightsperformance.com

CEOP

www.ceop.police.uk

NSPCC Helpline (24 hours)

0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy annually.

This policy has been reviewed, read and signed by all Footlights Performance Academy staff.

Procedure for children at possible risk of abuse

Purpose and aim of this procedure:

We aim to ensure that all children who attend Footlights and any other children who may come to the attention of Footlights, receive the protection and support they need if they are at risk of abuse.

This procedure provides clear direction to staff and volunteers at Footlights if they have concerns that a child is in need of protection.

Different Types of Abuse;

PHYSICAL ABUSE

SEXUAL ABUSE

EMOTIONAL

NEGLECT

Ways that abuse might be brought to our attention:

- A child might make a direct disclosure about him or herself.
- A child might make a disclosure about another child.
- A child might offer information that is worrying but not a direct disclosure.
- A member of staff might be concerned about a child's appearance or about the behaviour of a parent or carer towards a child.
- A parent or carer might make a disclosure about abuse that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering.
- A parent might offer information about a child that is worrying but not a direct disclosure. Talking to a child who has told a staff member that he/she or another child is being abused:

Staff and volunteers will be clearly briefed on the procedures to take if a student informs them that he/she or another student is being (or they believe is being) abused. All information will be documented and stored securely and confidentially in our child protection archive.

Helping a child in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention:

- If the child is in immediate danger and is with you, remain with him/her and call the police.
- If the child is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them.
- If he/she needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and while you are waiting for it to arrive, get help from a first aider if there is one available. A first aid qualified member of staff will be present at all lessons taking place at Footlights Studios
- Contact will be made immediately with the Designated Safety Officer or Deputy DSO to fully brief them and forward on documented information.

Issues that will be taken into account are:

- The child's wishes and feelings.
- The parents right to know (unless this would place the child or someone else in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation).
- The impact of telling or not telling the parent.
- The current assessment of the risk to the child and the source of that risk.
- Any risk management plans that currently exist.

Once any immediate danger or emergency medical need has been dealt with, follow the steps set out in the flowchart at the end of this document. Staff and any volunteers will be clearly briefed and reminded regularly about the procedures of recording concerns.

**FLOW CHART OF HOW TO
VOICE CHILD PROTECTION
CONCERNS WITHIN
FOOTLIGHTS**

A member of Footlights staff or a volunteer has concerns about a child's safety or welfare



Staff members or volunteers make notes of their concerns. They then discuss this with the director Tina Kelly, the named person for Child Protection.



If the child's family does not know already of the concern then Tina discusses it with them unless:

- **A family member might be responsible for abusing the child.**
- **Someone may be put in danger by the family being informed.**
- **Informing the family might interfere with a criminal investigation.**

If any of these circumstances apply, discussions with the family should only take place after this has been agreed with the local authority children's social care department.



If there is uncertainty about the concerns DSO can discuss with the children's social care department or NSPCC helpline without disclosing the child's/family's identity



No Longer concerned- no further child protection action is needed. Staff member and supervisor/ manager decide whether to discuss the initial Concern with other services

Concerned- named person refers to local authority children's department and confirms in writing within 48 hours

Footlights: Dealing with allegations made against and employee/volunteer

In the event of an allegation being made against an adult working for or involved in Footlights.

The aims of this procedure are:

- To ensure that children who attend Footlights and any other children who may come to our attention are protected and supported following an allegation that they may have been abused by an adult from within Footlights.
- To ensure that there is a fair, consistent and robust response to any allegations made, so that the risk posed to other children by an abusive individual is managed effectively
- To facilitate an appropriate level of investigation into allegations, whether they are said to have taken place recently, at any time the person in question has been employed or volunteered with Footlights or prior to the person's involvement with Footlights.
- To ensure that Footlights continues to fulfil its responsibilities towards members of staff, volunteers or trustees who may be subject to such investigations
- To ensure that individuals are able to continue in their role if they have been at the centre of allegations that are unfounded or deemed to be malicious in origin

This procedure applies to:

- Any member of staff or volunteer to whom an allegation of abuse has been made, that involves another member of staff or volunteer.
- Anyone in Footlights who may be required to deal with such allegations such as Footlights Directors and DSO and manage investigations that result from them.

If an allegation is made or information is received

There are potentially two issues that need to be dealt with as a matter of urgency:

1. Is a child in immediate danger or does she/he need emergency medical attention?

The member of staff informed or DSO should also inform the child's family if the child is in need of emergency medical attention, and arrange to meet them at the hospital or medical centre. The parents/ carers should be informed that an incident has occurred, that the child has been injured and that immediate steps have been taken to get help.

2. Is the person at the centre of the allegation working with children now?

If this is the case, the concern needs to be discussed immediately with the directors of Footlights and the designated safeguarding officer for children. One

of these should then, in a sensitive manner, remove the staff member involved in the allegation from direct contact with children.

It should then be explained to the person, in private, that there has been a complaint made against him/her, although the details of the complaint should not be given at this stage. The person should be informed that further information will be provided as soon as possible but that, until consultation has taken place with the relevant agencies and within the organisation, they should not be working with children. It may be best, under the circumstances, for the person to return home on the understanding that the manager or designated safeguarding officer for children will telephone him/her later in the day. The information provided to him/her at this stage will need to be very limited. This is because discussions need to take place first with other agencies who may need to be involved, such as the local authority's children's social care department or the police.

If the person is a member of a trades union or professional organisation, he/she should be advised to make contact with that body. Footlights will continue to support any members of staff during the period of investigation and will not assume any outcomes.

Reporting an allegation or concern

If the allegation is made by a child or family member to a member of Footlights staff or if a member of Footlights staff observes concerning behaviour by a colleague at first hand, this should be reported immediately to the directors and the designated safeguarding officer for Footlights.

If a staff member is concerned about the actions of a director another director should be informed or the designated safeguarding officer. If the person who is the subject of the concern is the designated safeguarding officer the matter should be reported to the directors.

Issues that need to be taken into account are:

- The child's wishes and feelings
- The parent's right to know (unless this would place the child or someone else in danger or interfere with a criminal investigation).
- The impact of telling or not telling the parent.
- The current assessment of the risk to the child and the source of that risk.
- Any risk management plans that currently exist.

Once any immediate requirement of emergency medical need has been dealt with, follow the steps set out in the flowchart at the end of the document.
When will we involve the local authority designated officer?

The designated safeguarding officer will report the allegation to the directors and to the local authority designated officer within one working day of the alleged behaviour of a Footlights staff/ volunteer suggests that the person in question:

- May have behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- Has possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Has behaved towards a child in a way that suggests that he/she may be unsuitable to work with children.

If the information comes from another source the first information received by Footlights may be when the local authority makes contact in order to explain the situation. It should be asked from the outset that anything that has any relevance to the person's employment that this information is shared with Footlights and involve us in a strategy discussion.

Dealing with a criminal offence

If there is reason to suspect that a criminal offence may have been committed by a member of Footlights staff the local authority will contact the police and involve them in a similar strategy discussion which will also include Footlights' designated safeguarding officer.

Our designated safe guarding officer and directors will cooperate fully with any discussion involving the police and will expect similar cooperation from the police in terms of the sharing of information relevant to the person's employment.

www.footlightsperformanceacademy.co.uk

Keeping a record of the investigation

- All those involved with dealing with the allegation should keep clear notes of the allegations made, any follow ups, actions and decisions taken together with the reasons for these.
 - Footlights will compile these notes gradually as the situation unfolds and will be signed and dated by the person making them with their name printed alongside
 - These notes will be kept confidentially on file and will be available to the person who they involve unless the local authority states any reason not to.
- Footlights Performance Academy- Allegations against a child

Child protection or Bullying

When faced with a situation of one child or young person behaving inappropriately towards another, a decision needs to be made by Footlights about whether the problem constitutes bullying or a child protection concern. This decision will be reached by our designated safety officer in consultation with the company directors and if necessary the local authority or other advisory bodies.

If the situation is confirmed as bullying it will be dealt with in accordance with our anti bullying policy.

If the behaviour could be described as child abuse and has led to the victim possible suffering significant harm, then it must be dealt with under child protection procedures. This should include all incidents of sexual assault and all but the most minor incidents of physical assault.

All FPA staff have attended training to help them decide whether a situation can be confirmed as an incidence of bullying or whether it is a child protection allegation.

All relevant procedures will be carried out and the DSO informed appropriately in all instances. All information will be documented and stored securely and confidentially in our child protection archive.

2. Behaviour Code for Footlights Adults Working with Children

This behaviour code outlines the conduct we expect of all of our staff and volunteers. This includes students or outside contractors working with Footlights to undertake specific duties.

This behaviour code aims to help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made. It has been informed by the views of our staff and young people.

Responsibility

All FPA staff are responsible for;

- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- Providing a safe environment for children and young people
 - This includes ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose. This includes having a good awareness of issues to do with child protection and taking action when appropriate
- Following our principles, policies and procedures, including:
 - Child protection and safeguarding, whistle blowing, e-safety and other procedures outlined in this document.

Staying within the law at all times

Modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow -challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to Tina Kelly (Footlights Director and DSO).

Children's Rights

You Should;

- Treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- Understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- Respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems between yourself and others, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to Footlights
- Challenge any discrimination and prejudice
- Encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Relationships

All staff must:

- Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- Avoid favouritism
- Be patient with others
- Use special caution when discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the work that you are involved with within Footlights
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
 - o If this isn't possible, ensure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults
 - o If a child specifically asks for or needs some private time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are
- Only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible.
 - o This is unless you are working under specific circumstances where it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

Respect

All staff must;

- Listen to and respect children at all times
- Value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities whenever possible
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible
 - o in some cases it may be necessary to break confidentiality in order to follow our child protection procedures, if this is the case it is important to explain this to the child involved.

Unacceptable Behaviour

When working with children and young people, staff and volunteers must not;

- Allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- Take unnecessary risks
- Consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- Engage in behaviour that is in anyway abusive
 - o This includes having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.

- Let children and young people have your personal contact details or have contact with them via a personal social media account, accepting that contact details for our directors may be available in the public domain.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- Patronise or belittle children and young people
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.

Behaviour Code for Footlights Young Performers

This code of behaviour aims to make sure everyone in Footlights knows what is expected of them and feels safe, respected and valued.

Footlights must make sure that everyone taking part in our classes and events has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

For the benefit of our younger members we ask that parents read and understand this document and involve them in a short discussion about our expectations in a way that is easy for them to understand.

Basic Principles

- Identify acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Encourage cooperation, honesty, fairness and respect
- Create an environment where your self-esteem, self-respect and self-confidence will grow
- Encourage you to take responsibility for your own behaviour
- Encourage you to recognize and respect the rights of others
- Help resolve conflicts that may arise and make it clear what will happen if you decide not to follow the code.

Expected student behaviour;

- Cooperate with others
- Be friendly
- Listen to others
- Be helpful
- Have good manners
- Treat everyone with respect
- Take responsibility for your own behaviour
- Talk to your class teacher at Footlights about anything that worries or concerns you
- Follow this code of behaviour and other rules (including the law)

What happens if a student decides to not follow the code of behaviour?

If a student behaves inappropriately at Footlights, staff will remind them about the code of behaviour and ask them to comply with it. An opportunity will be given to decide to change their behaviour.

If unacceptable behaviour continues, they (the student) will be given a formal warning by the Footlights Directors. This will involve a discussion about why they have been behaving inappropriately and if Footlights staff can support them in making the decision to follow the behaviour policy.

If they continue to not comply with the behaviour policy following a formal warning, then Footlights Directors reserve the right to ask them to leave the class concerned and potentially all Footlights classes that the student participates in.

Child Protection Procedures

If any member of staff or volunteer becomes concerned that a student's behaviour suggests they may be at risk of significant harm or that they may present a risk of significant harm to other children, staff will follow child protection procedures. This may involve making a referral to the local authority children's social care department.

The role of parents and carers

We see parents and carers as valuable partners in promoting positive behaviour and will involve them as appropriate.

We will always inform and involve an individual's parents or carers if a student receives a formal warning for inappropriate behaviour.

Footlights E- Safety Policy

This policy and the procedures that underpin it apply to all staff, including directors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, students or contractors and anyone working on behalf of Footlights Performance Academy.

Purpose of Policy

- Although children do not use information technology as part of Footlights Classes and events we recognise that they all have access to their own personal devices and may bring these to our classes and this policy is for their protection.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to e-safety
- To ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line without values and within the terms of the law of how we use information technology and behave online

We recognise that:

- The use of information technology is an essential part of all of our lives and is a brilliant resource for Footlights performance Academy (especially given the Covid-19 pandemic and the use of online lessons). It is involved in how we as an organisation gather and store information, as well as how we communicate with each other. It is also an intrinsic part of the experience of our children and young people, and is greatly beneficial to all. However, it can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly and, if misused either by an adult or a young person can be potentially harmful.
- The welfare of the children/young people who come into contact with our services is paramount and should govern our approach to the use and management of electronic communications technologies and online behaviour
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to e-safety

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

- Appointing an e-safety coordinator (DSO)
- Developing procedures that provide clear and specific directions to staff, volunteers and students on how to behave online and the appropriate use of IT
- Use our procedures to deal firmly with any examples or inappropriate use of IT whether by an adult or child.
- Informing parents and carers of incidents or concerns as appropriate.
- Ensuring that personal information is not published on our website.
- Ensuring that the correct permission is obtained before using images of children for promotional material.
- Risk assessing in advance any social media tools used in the course of our work with children, young people and families, this assessment to be carried out by the member of staff wishing to use them.
- Examining and risk assessing any emerging new technologies before they are used within Footlights.

E-safety and Electronic device policy for Footlights Members

This agreement is part of our behaviour code for Footlights members. It also fits with our overarching e-safety policy and expectations of Footlights staff and volunteers.

Young Person: Please read this agreement and discuss it with your parent/carer. If there is anything you don't understand you can also discuss this with your class teacher/Tina.

Parents/carers: please read and discuss this agreement with your child, and then sign it on their behalf.

E-Safety

During the pandemic lock-downs we discovered the utility of using Zoom to deliver some classes. Classes may still be delivered on occasion in this way or as part of a hybrid model.

To ensure we maintain all of our child protection responsibilities, there are some strict guidelines we should all adhere to.

Online Group teaching – This will always take place with at least 2 FPA staff members present at every online class. We advise all students that they should log on to each class in an area where parental supervision can be made if parents wish to. This is highly recommended with our younger students as some parental assistance may be required for some activities.

If teaching is on a 1:1 basis (private tuition), we would request and recommend the student logs on to each class in an area with parental supervision. This protects both students and FPA teaching staff.

NB: If this is not possible, we ask if parents can make contact with Tina or another member of the FPA staff team in advance to discuss this.

During Class at Footlights Studios

Under 11s

- No mobile phones are allowed in Footlights classes.
- If you have a mobile phone it should be switched off and left in your bag for the duration of the class or left at home.
- Phones should remain off during break times

Age 11+

- Mobile phones/ Electronic Devices should be kept on silent and in bags during Footlights class time.
- If the Footlights teacher allows you to use your phone/ electronic device to support your learning at Footlights eg – searching song lyrics, recording vocal parts then you may use your phone for this.

You must not;

- Post photographs or videos of other members or staff to any social media pages without receiving prior permission.
- Photograph or video anyone without their knowledge and permission
- Use your phone to access any inappropriate websites or apps that are not beneficial for your learning at Footlights.
- During breaks mobile phones can be used for leisure time however the usage policy must still be followed.
- If this policy is not followed then the bullying and or behaviour code will be addressed.

3. Antibullying Policy

- There is no legal definition of bullying. However it's usually defined as behaviour that is:
 - o Repeated
 - o Intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
 - o Often aimed at certain groups eg, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation.
- One person or a group can bully others;
- Bullying can occur either face to face between individuals or groups or online, using information technology, such as computers or mobile phones.

Footlights anti-bullying procedure – Information and Guidance for students

What to do if you are being bullied?

Never keep it to yourself, always tell someone, this can either be someone at Footlights or another key adult. If the bullying is happening at Footlights we will sort it out if it is happening at school or if somewhere else, then we will get other people involved to help to stop it happening.

What to do if you see someone being bullied or someone tells you they are being bullied?

If you are a child don't try to deal with it yourself. Try to help the person to go and tell an adult and if they don't want to then explain to them that you will have to tell an adult yourself so they can get help.

If the bullying is taking place within Footlights the parent and child should be reassured that it will be dealt with and asked for their views on what would be helpful in this situation. Details that are necessary will be shared with other Footlights members of staff so that the situation can be managed effectively. A note of any bullying that has taken place and been brought to our attention and dealt with will be recorded and kept securely and confidentially in our files.

4. Footlights Complaints Policy

Ultimately it is a parent/carers choice to send their child to Footlights and we aim to always provide the best service we can for all of the young people involved.

Procedure for making a complaint

1. If it is not possible to discuss the issue with your class teacher as they are busy teaching then please forward any complaints to footlights@footlightsperformance.com for the attention of the directors.
2. The directors will then read and aim to respond to any complaint within 5 working days with a response.
3. If the complaint is regarding a specific member of staff/class it may be necessary to pause proceedings of the class or that staff member until the complaint has been dealt with.
4. The directors will aim to find a local solution for the complaint to ensure the happiness of staff, parents and young people involved.
5. If necessary the complaint will be escalated to any other services.