

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure (Children and young adults and vulnerable adults) (‘Safeguardees’)

1 The scope of this policy statement

Guide Bridge Theatre Ltd (GBT) is a company limited by guarantee (Companies Act 2006) and a not for profit organisation. Any surpluses are reinvested into the company. Instead of shareholders a company limited by guarantee has guarantors/members. It was incorporated on 30th December 2009.

Vision:

Our vision is to be an organisation that inspires, nurtures, educates and empowers its Members and the wider community to flourish. This will be achieved by the delivery of inclusive and collaborative performance arts, opportunities for community participation and the promotion of social interaction and inclusion through community events.

Mission:

Our mission is three-fold:

1. to bring together people of all ages and from all backgrounds to produce outstanding performance arts that entertains, inspires, challenges and informs both audiences and participants alike;
2. to maximise the utilisation of our valuable asset to provide a multi-purpose facility to provide, procure, and facilitate inclusive community use;
3. to expand our existing partnerships, and facilitate community cohesion and inclusion.

Theatre Users

As a user of the theatre, we all have a responsibility both individually and collectively to ensure our behaviour is appropriate at all times and that we observe the Theatres rules. The Directors, Committee Members and Volunteers respect the position of trust they hold and in every respect the relationships they form with Safeguards at GBT.

Chaperones must hold current and appropriate DBS certificates.

2 The purpose of this policy statement is:-

- to protect children, young people¹ and vulnerable adults (Safeguardees) who participate in the scope of activities at GBT, from harm;
- to provide all those who come into contact with GBT, as well as Safeguardees and their families and vulnerable adults, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to both child protection and wider safeguarding.

This policy applies to those coming into contact with GBT including service users, patrons, members, friends and the board of Directors, and volunteers, who will be made aware of their individual responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause Safeguardees harm.

3 Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect Safeguardees in England. A summary of the key legislation in relation to child protection is available from nspcc.org.uk/learning²

4 Supporting Documents

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

- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer (GBT Volunteering Handbook)
- Data Privacy Policy
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about Safeguardees
- Managing allegations against GBT users
- Recording concerns and information sharing
- Child protection records retention and storage

¹ A child is defined as anyone up to the age of 18 years. However, in relation to the regulations relating to children in theatrical performances a child is anyone up to 16 years.

A vulnerable adult is a person "who for any reason is unable to take care of themselves" or "protect themselves from exploitation". (NHS definition)

² The Children and Young Person Act 1963, The Child Performance (Regulations) 1968, The Protection of Children Acts, The Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000, The Children (Performance and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014.

- Code of conduct for users
- Behaviour codes for children and young people
- Photography and sharing images guidance
- Anti-bullying
- Managing complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Health and Safety Policy Induction, training, supervision and support
- Licensed activity
- Chaperones
- Adult to child supervision ratios

5 We recognise that:-

- Safeguarding refers to the protection of Safeguardees from abuse and neglect.
- Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a Safeguardee.
- Somebody may abuse a Safeguardee by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Safeguardees may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely by others.
- Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Safeguardees may be abused by an adult or adults or another Safeguardee(s)
- Some Safeguardees are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with Safeguardees, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.
- Abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

6 We believe that:-

- All Safeguardees, have a right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs and their welfare is paramount.
- Safeguardees should never experience abuse of any kind.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all Safeguardees to keep them safe and to operate in a way that protects them.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All GBT users should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

7 We will seek to keep Safeguardees safe by:-

- Putting the duty of care to Safeguardees first
- Not accepting or condoning bullying
- Taking action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- Keeping up to date with changes in legislation and policies for the protection of Safeguardees
- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Treating everyone equally and with dignity and respect
- Appointing a nominated Safeguarding/child protection lead for Safeguardees and a lead Board Member for safeguarding
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for all GBT users
- Providing effective management for volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- Recruiting and selecting and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Undertaking relevant training for volunteers
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk/fororganisations]
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with GBT users, via leaflets, posters, our website and our social media sites
- Making sure that Safeguardees and their families/carers know where to go for help if they have a concern
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving Safeguardees, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against GBT users appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for Safeguardees and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where volunteers, Safeguardees and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

8 Bullying

GBT has a zero-tolerance policy to bullying and any reports of verbal or physical abuse amongst the users of the theatre must be reported to the person with responsibility for safeguarding or the Duty Manager. No information should ever be withheld or filtered.

Wherever possible issues between theatre users that can be resolved in situ should be dealt with immediately and it will be down to the discretion of the person with responsibility for safeguarding or the Duty manager to judge the situation and take appropriate action. No incident however seemingly small will be ignored or not addressed. The emotional well-being of Safeguardees and

other users of GBT is of the utmost importance. However, if the bullying is of a more serious nature then the procedure set out in this document should be followed.

9 Coverage

Theatre users are reminded that while phones and tablets are useful for communication and for line learning (e.g. scripts brought in on a tablet) and entertainment, the taking of photographs or videos by Theatre users should only be carried out with the knowledge and verbal consent of those who have been photographed or video.

We understand the desire for memories and support this but we are also committed to protecting all Safegardees and other users of the theatre from bullying and harassment and abuse. Any unauthorised or inappropriate photographs or videos of theatre users, including but not restricted to, those being used on social media to bully or embarrass theatre users must be reported to the person with responsibility for safeguarding, who if appropriate will seek advice from the local authority.

Any coverage instigated by GBT will be carried out in accordance with data privacy laws.

10 Recruitment of Volunteers who are of Ex-Offenders and where applicable Theatre Users for regulated activities.

GBT is committed to Equal Opportunities and this policy aims to ensure that ex-offenders receive fair treatment throughout their experience as a volunteer or a user of the facilities within our organisation. GBT recognises that unless the volunteering role has safeguarding duties, we cannot require a volunteer to disclose past offending behaviour. However, when it comes to light GBT will undertake specialist risk assessment processes.

Procedures

1 Suspicion of abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a Safeguardee. Someone may abuse or neglect a Safeguardee by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

If a Safeguardee is in immediate danger then you must ring the police and/or Ambulance Service on 999. This is the only action you should take without needing to speak to the person with responsibility for safeguarding.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse, no matter how insignificant they might seem or when they occur, must be referred to the person with responsibility for safeguarding. If you see or suspect abuse of a Safeguardee while at GBT please make this known to the person with responsibility for Safeguarding. If you suspect that the person with responsibility for safeguarding is the source of the problem or they are unavailable, you should make your concerns known to the Duty Manager. Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved. The person with responsibility for safeguarding or the Duty Manager will complete an incident report form.

If a serious allegation is made against a GBT user then that person must leave the premises immediately after a discussion with them and the person with responsibility for safeguarding or the Duty Manager.

If appropriate the person with responsibility for safeguarding will see advice from the local authority.

2 Disclosure of abuse

If a Safeguardee confides in you that abuse has taken place:-

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the Safeguardee to tell you at their own pace, in their own words and ask questions for clarification. Do not ask questions that suggest a particular answer. (Leading questions)
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for safeguarding or as required the Duty Manager. Make it clear to the Safeguardee that you will need to share information with others but that you will only tell people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the Safeguardee that they 'did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the Safeguardee what you are going to do next.
- Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for safeguarding. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation make a note of what was said using the Safeguardee's own words. Note the date, time and any names that were involved or mentioned and who gave you the information. Make sure you sign and date your record.
- If a Safeguardee can understand the implications of making a referral to the relevant local authority then you should ask them for their view, but always be clear that it is our responsibility to take whatever action is necessary to ensure their safety.
- Confidentiality must be maintained and information only shared on a need to know basis.

- Where an advanced disclosure reveals a person is barred from regulated activity with Safeguardees, the Police must be informed.

3 Recording

In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a Statutory agency.

An accurate note shall be made of:-

- the date and time of the incident or disclosure,
- the parties involved
- what was said or done and by whom
- any action taken to investigate the matter any further action taken e.g. suspension of an individual where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a Statutory agency and
- the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.

The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

4	Rights and Confidentiality
<p>If a complaint is made against a user of GBT they have the right to be informed of the allegation as soon as possible.</p> <p>No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the Safeguardee who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under Data Protection Law. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.</p> <p>In Criminal law, the Crown or other prosecuting authority has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.</p>	
5	Licensed Activity
<p>Child performance legislation sets out when a licence is required for a production. If a production Director remains unclear as to whether a child needs a license the person with responsibility for safeguarding will advise and may need to ask the child's home local authority.</p>	
6	Chaperones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chaperones must be provided where children are taking part in a production and are required for other Safeguardees. ● The maximum number of people in the Chaperone's care shall not exceed 12. ● For children under the age of 10 this is reduced to a maximum of 10 children in a Chaperone's care. ● At least two Chaperones will be present in each dressing room when children are present. Chaperones must be present at any safety briefing given by the theatre stage manager at the start of a performance. ● Under the Dangerous performances act no child of compulsory school age (year 11 last Friday in June) is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb, this could include working on stairs or heavy lifting. ● Chaperones must not, under any circumstances, vacate their responsibility towards a Safeguardee whilst in the theatre. (This includes dressing rooms and backstage.) ● During performances Chaperones will be responsible for the children and should be the point of contact should a user of GBT need to discuss an issue with a child's actions or behaviour. Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the theatre and will ensure that a child in their care does not place themselves and others in danger. 	
7	Time Restrictions

<p>There are several legal restrictions as to how much time a child can perform or be at the place of performance and the intervals between performances.</p> <p>Performances must be limited to 3.5 hours, with the child performing for not more than 2.5 hours.</p>	
Performances (per day)	Either 2 performances or 1 performance & 1 rehearsal
Performances per week	Either 2 performances or 1 performance & 1 rehearsal for a maximum of 6 days per 7 day week
Time gap between performance days	14 hours must elapse between the end of one day's performance and the beginning of the next day's performance
Intervals	1.5 hours minimum between 2 performances or between rehearsal and performance
Exception to Intervals in any week	On not more than 2 days a minimum of 45 minutes interval between performances and/or rehearsals. Maximum 6 hours at place of performance
School Days	ONLY 1 performance OR 1 rehearsal if attending more than the morning session at school
Earliest Arrival	10.00am
Latest Departure Age 12 & Under	The earlier of 10.00pm or 30 min. after completing rehearsal or performance
Latest Departure Age 13 & Over	The earlier of 10.30pm or 30 min. after completing rehearsal or performance

Exception to Latest Departure	If essential for the performance, not later than 11.00pm on not more than 3 evenings per week, for up to 8 evenings in a period of 4 consecutive weeks.
-------------------------------	---

8	Contact details
<p>Nominated safeguarding lead</p> <p>Name: Barbara Mullis Phone: 0161 330 8078 Email: secretary@gbtheatre.co.uk</p>	
<p>Board lead for safeguarding and child protection</p> <p>Name: Simon J Hague Phone: 07887 632783 Email: secretary@gbtheatre.co.uk</p>	
<p>NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000</p>	
<p><u>Tameside Adult Services</u></p> <p>Tel: 0161 342 2400 (office hours) - 0161 342 2222 (out of hours)</p>	
<p><u>Tameside Children's Services</u></p> <p>Tel: 0161 342 4101 (office hours) 0161 342 2222 (out of hours)</p>	

9 Version Control and Review	
Version 3 2023 10 15 Policy 0.2	
Policy Number	0.2
Policy date	2023 10 15
Version	3.0
Next review date	2023 10
Adopted by Board date	2023 10 15
Published on website date	2023 11 14