



Shooting Fish Theatre Company

Safeguarding Policy

Last Reviewed April 2023



Safeguarding Children and Young People

Shooting Fish is committed to safeguarding all children and young people that come into contact with our work. We believe that the welfare of children and young people is paramount:

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

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a 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, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare. All children and young people have an equal right to protection from abuse and to be kept safe from harm, regardless of their age, race, religion, nationality, ability, gender, language, or sexual orientation/identity.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All activities involving children and young people should be managed in an exemplary manner, with consideration given to risk assessments and risk management as a routine aspect of our work.
- Staff, contractors and volunteers should be clear about their responsibilities and know how to respond appropriately.
- Shooting Fish is committed to sound recruitment procedures and good practice for all individuals working with the organisation whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Shooting Fish will ensure that individuals will receive support through education and training, to be aware of and understand best practice and how to manage any welfare issues which may come to light.
- Shooting Fish recognises the needs of minority ethnic groups, disabled children and other hard to reach children. We recognise that they may face barriers in terms of communication and access that we need to overcome in order to ensure their safety.

- Shooting Fish recognises that it is not the responsibility of staff, contractors or volunteers to determine if abuse has taken place, but it is their responsibility to act upon and report any concerns.
- Shooting Fish is committed to embedding and promoting safeguarding throughout the organisation at every level of operation from frontline delivery to cross organisational policy and procedure.

The purpose of Shooting Fish's safeguarding policy is first and foremost to protect children from abuse. The policy aims to promote good practice, raise awareness and to allow all staff, contractors and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific protection and safeguarding issues. It will also give important information about how to recognise signs of abuse and clear procedures for action in the case of suspected abuse. The policy also gives clear lines of communication and support for members of staff encountering these issues.

We expect everyone who represents Shooting Fish (staff, trustees, partners, volunteers and contractors) to have read, understood and adhere to this policy and related procedures.

Shooting Fish comes into contact with young people in a variety of ways;

Direct contact includes young volunteers, apprentices, interns and direct delivery on various projects for children and young people including the use of digital and social media.

Indirect contact includes, but is not exclusive to, sourcing external practitioners to work directly with children and young people, organising and facilitating events where external contractors engage with children and young people and working with partner organisations to engage with children and young people.

Your Responsibility

- 1) Make sure you have read this policy
- 2) Make sure you are aware of the signs of possible abuse
- 3) Make sure you know what to do if a child discloses abuse to you
- 4) Make sure you know who to contact if you suspect abuse and who your child protection officers are.

If in doubt contact our child protection officer:

Leanne Taylor 07770 878466

When this Policy applies and to whom

Shooting Fish will take every reasonable step to ensure that children and young people are protected where:

- Our own staff are directly involved in a project or programme, including the involvement of young people in the governance of our organisation; those in direct communication with the Agency through our services and project activities; those attending on work placement or experience;
- We broker the relationship between a school/young people's setting and a creative practitioner/organisation;
- We contract an individual/organisation to work with a school/young people's setting;
- We work in partnership with another organisation or agency.

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

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a nominated child protection/safeguarding lead, a deputy child protection/safeguarding lead and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- developing child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures which reflect best practice
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures sharing information about child protection and safeguarding best practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- implementing a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- 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
- recording and storing information professionally and securely

Shooting Fish workers must maintain a balance of protecting children and young people from serious harm whilst not restricting their artistic potential through over protection. Any activity which has the potential to cause harm should be risk assessed and where risk is present a risk benefit analysis carried out.

With the best will in the world accidents and injuries will still occasionally happen.

- If a child or young person is injured – while at a Shooting Fish event or participating in a Shooting Fish project the Shooting Fish worker must make a record of the injury in Shooting Fish's or the school's/ hosting venue's/organisation's accident book. This record should be counter-signed by a teacher if in a school.
- If a child or young person arrives for a Shooting Fish activity with an obvious physical injury, a record must be made in Shooting Fish's or the school's/hosting venue's/ organisation's accident book. This record should be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for the individual. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later. It will also be a record that the individual did not sustain the injury whilst working with Shooting Fish.

We are committed to reviewing this policy and procedures annually or when changes in legislation require, updating our action plan as appropriate. The proposed annual review date is April.

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:

1. Disclosure strategy
2. Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
3. Safer recruitment policy and procedures Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
4. Accident procedure
5. Anti-bullying policy and procedures
6. Online safety
7. Photography and image sharing guidance

Who to report to and key contact information

Shooting Fish Designated Officers with responsibility for Child Protection:

Leanne Taylor, trustee

Address: 27 Kingsway, Nettleham, Lincoln LN2 2A

Telephone no: 01522 822989

Mobile: 07770 878466

When a Shooting Fish representative is working in a school and has a concern or is disclosed to, they should report to the school's designated officer in full and make a brief account to the Shooting Fish Designated Officer.

Everyone has a part to play in children's welfare and keeping them safe from abuse or neglect. If you have concerns that a child may be being neglected or abused - don't keep it to yourself, no-one will criticise you for reporting genuine concerns. Speak to one of the duty teams at the following numbers or you can contact:

NSPCC 24 Hour Help line Tel 0800 800 5000

Child Abuse Investigation Unit on: 03000 111222

101 - Police non emergency

999 - Police emergency

List of Local Safeguarding contacts in the East Midlands and South West;

Lincolnshire:

Children's Services

During office hours - 8.45am-5.15pm (4.45pm Fri)

Tel: 01522 782111

Email: CSC_SSD@lincolnshire.gov.uk

In an emergency, outside office hours 01529 413366

Derbyshire:

If you are worried about the safety or well-being of a child

Children's Social Care 08456 058 058

Derbyshire Police 0845 123 33 33

Leicestershire & Rutland:

Children and Young People's Service:

Telephone: 0116 305 6631 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

email: childrensservices@leics.gov.uk

Emergencies: 0116 255 1606 (outside normal office hours, at weekends, etc)

Nottinghamshire:

Social Care Customer Services team tel: 08449 80 80 80
Emergency Duty Team out of hours tel: 0300 456 4546.

Northamptonshire:

If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child, young person or an unborn child then you can: Contact us on telephone **01604 236236**

North Lincolnshire:

Children's Services Duty Team on:
01724 296500 (9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm Friday)
08081 689 667 (free phone)
01724 296555 (answerphone - out of office hours and at weekends)

North East Lincolnshire:

Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Service (CASS) on 01472 325555.

Bristol City Council:

To First Response straight away on 0117 903 6444 if your concern relates to a disclosure of abuse requiring a same day response

Or using the online form for all other reports: <https://digital.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/first-response-referral>

Bath and North East Somerset:

If you think a child or young person is at risk of significant harm, and it's out of hours, please call our Emergency Duty Team on 01454 61 51 65

Or using the online form; <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child>

North Somerset:

If you are concerned about a child who might be at risk of being ill-treated or neglected in North Somerset contact our child protection team on 01275 888 808 or visit the [Avon and Somerset Police](#) website to report your concerns.

South Gloucestershire:

Safeguarding team; Monday - Thursday 9am - 5pm 01454 866000, Friday 9am - 4.30pm 01454 866000.

Child Abuse indicators - Signs and Symptoms

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- Refusal to undress for an activity that requires this
- Bald patches
- Chronic running away
- Fear of medical help or examination
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- Admitting that they are punished, but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- Fear of suspected abuser being contacted

Emotional Abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development lags
- Sudden speech disorders
- Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc')
- Overreaction to mistakes
- Extreme fear of any new situation
- Inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression or cruelty to others
- Depression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep disorders
- Running away, stealing and lying

Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or child minder
- Starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- Become worried about clothing being removed
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism
- Distinctive odour

Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Untreated medical problems
- No social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging
- Destructive tendencies

Online Abuse

- spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Criminal Exploitation

- Frequently absent from and doing badly in school.
- Going missing from home, staying out late and travelling for unexplained reasons.
- In a relationship or hanging out with someone older than them.
- Being angry, aggressive or violent.
- Being isolated or withdrawn.
- Having unexplained money and buying new things.
- Wearing clothes or accessories in gang colours or getting tattoos.
- Using new slang words.
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online.
- Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone or phones.
- [Self-harming](#) and feeling emotionally unwell.
- [Taking drugs](#) and abusing alcohol.
- Committing petty crimes like shop lifting or vandalism.
- Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help.
- Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog.

Note: A child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse.

It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone

Disclosure strategy

If someone discloses to a Shooting Fish Representative

It is possible that a child or young person who is suffering, or has suffered, abuse will disclose to a Shooting Fish representative or member of staff. This is something that everyone should be prepared for and must handle carefully. The following action should be taken:

- Remain calm and in control but don't delay acting.
- Listen carefully to what is said. Allow the person to tell the story at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to 'keep it a secret'. The first opportunity should be taken to say that this information will have to be shared with others. It should be made clear that only people who need to know will be told and they should be able to help.
- The child should be reassured that they 'did the right thing' in telling someone.
- The child should be told what is going to happen next.
- Notify the Shooting Fish Child Protection Officer. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with relevant authorities, usually social services. If in a school you should also notify the School Child Protection Officer (often the Head teacher).
- As soon as possible a note should be made of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned and who the information was given to. Sign and date the record.
- In confidence, you should notify your line manager immediately that you have been disclosed to – not the details of the disclosure, so that you can be offered support.

Remember not all disclosures are obvious. Some children will be too frightened to directly disclose abuse but will make hints and even jokes to try and make an appropriate adult aware of the issue.

Where you are working unsociable hours you may need to contact Social Services or the Police direct, depending on the level of perceived risk. They will then decide on the action that will be required.

You should follow up any referral with a copy of the notes that you have made during your conversation with the young person. These can then be passed on to the appropriate organisations.

Incidents when disclosed may have a disturbing effect on you and you should ensure that where appropriate you seek support from colleagues and your line manager. Professional supervision will be sought if requested.

When a freelancer is working in a school and has a concern or is disclosed to, they should report to the school's designated officer in full and make an account to the Shooting Fish Child Protection Officer.

Shooting Fish workers should be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and should make sure they can recognise these signs and symptoms in the children they come into contact with.

- Any suspicion of abuse must be reported to the Shooting Fish Child Protection Officer.
- If anyone sees or suspects abuse of a child or young person, they should make the person with legal responsibility for the child or young person (e.g. teacher) aware of the problem.
- If they suspect that the person with legal responsibility (e.g. the teacher) is actually the source of the problem, they should make their concerns known to another member of staff employed at the school or setting.
- The individual should make a note for their own records of what they have witnessed as well as their response, and must always make their line manager (or project manager) aware of the situation, in case there is a follow-up.

Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Shooting Fish will advertise vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible. The advert will include Shooting Fish's expectations regarding the safeguarding of children and young people. The job description and person specification will include specific reference to suitability and experience in working with children and young people.

There will be a face-to-face interview wherever possible, and the same panel will see all the shortlisted applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps which have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria.

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Certificate, references, copies of qualifications and proof of identity. DBS checks must be less than 3 years old, where an employee does not hold a current DBS check, one will be carried out by Shooting Fish before employment commences. All Volunteers will be risk assessed and will be subject to the same checks as members of staff. DBS checks must be renewed every 3 years.

Two professional references must be provided. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Employment is subject to these references being satisfactory.

As part of induction all new employees and volunteers are required to read our Safeguarding Policy and to undertake an introduction to safeguarding course through the NSPCC, this training will be refreshed every 2 years.

Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

Shooting Fish has appointed a designated child protection officer who is a permanent member of Shooting Fish.

Board of trustees: Leanne Taylor

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for Shooting Fish, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Shooting Fish assures all representatives that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

If a member of staff or volunteer was worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, they can contact social services or the police direct or phone the NSPCC Helpline.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation.
- A child protection investigation.
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

Complaints against a representative will always and without exception be investigated. The police and other agencies will be informed at the discretion of the partner organisation / Shooting Fish, and the designated officer will be informed in all cases. The results of the police and child protection investigation may influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Rights and confidentiality

If a complaint or allegation is made against a member of Shooting Fish staff, they should be made aware of their rights under both employment law and internal disciplinary procedures. This is the responsibility of the Board of Directors of Shooting Fish. Both the alleged abuser and the person who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. In criminal law the Crown or other prosecuting authority has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Internal enquiries and suspension

In the event of an accusation of abuse being made against any Shooting Fish representative, the individual accused will be automatically suspended pending further investigations. The temporary suspension of a Shooting Fish representative in no way implies guilt or innocence. It is a measure intended to protect and reassure both staff and children.

A Shooting Fish Disciplinary Committee (composed of Board Members) will assess all cases based upon available information.

The Shooting Fish representative against whom an accusation of abuse has been made will be summoned to an interview with the Disciplinary Committee as early as possible. They are entitled to be accompanied to this interview. Minutes will be taken of the interview. The task of the Disciplinary Committee is to decide whether or not the accused representative should be allowed to continue to work with children on behalf of Shooting Fish. At all times the welfare of children should be of paramount importance.

In all cases where the accusation of abuse is found to be true, the Disciplinary Committee will normally terminate the employment, contract or agreement with the individual. Lesser measures may be taken at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

NSPCC Helpline : The NSPCC helpline is available to give advice 0808 800 5000.

Action if bullying is suspected

The same procedure should be followed as set out above in 'Responding to allegations or suspicions'.

Photography and image sharing guidance

Permissions/ consents

Activity

Written permission from a parent or school must be given for a child to do the following;

- use ICT/Internet equipment (if under 16)
- be photographed or filmed if under 12, recommended if under 16
- take part in a project/activity (if under 18)

Use of photographs and video

- Parents/guardians of children will be asked to give their permission for photographs to be taken.
- Parents/guardians of children must give prior written permission for the use of any photographs or video
- Children's names will not accompany photographs unless they are, for example, prize winners and where we have the permission of either their parent or school. Then only first names will be used by us.

Social Networking

Shooting Fish has a Twitter, Facebook and Instagram site

- Only organisational rather than personal email addresses are made available on or through these profiles.
- Representatives are never allowed to accept as a "Friend" children they are or have worked with through their personal social networks.
- If you have any concerns regarding the users linked to the Shooting Fish social networks please report to the designated officer.
- Online concerns can also be reported immediately to Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) <http://www.ceop.gov.uk/reportabuse/index.asp>

Shooting Fish Website

- Children are advised that they should protect their own privacy online, the Shooting Fish website includes a Privacy Statement.
- Administrators, moderators and IT contractors are required to be DBS checked in line with the Shooting Fish recruitment policy.
- If you have any concerns regarding the users linked to Shooting Fish website please report to the designated officer.
- Online concerns can also be reported immediately to Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) <http://www.ceop.gov.uk/reportabuse/index.asp>