



RAZZAMATAZ
THEATRE SCHOOLS

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy Review

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This policy will be reviewed in full by Razzamataz Theatre Schools on an annual basis.

Policy reviewed and agreed by Razzamataz Theatre Schools in August 2026

Due for review in August 2027.

1. Introduction

1.1 Razzamataz believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind and regards the health, safety and welfare of all children and young people engaged in its activities, as one of its highest priorities. We recognise and fully accept our moral and statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and are committed to a practice that protects them.

1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Razzamataz Policies;

- Safer Recruitment
- Health and Safety
- Recording and Information Sharing
- Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- Online Safety
- Anti-Bullying
- Complaints
- Training, Supervision and Support
- Quality Assurance

1.3 Razzamataz Theatre Schools is committed to creating a strong safeguarding culture in which the welfare of children and young people is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers and representatives are expected to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here", remain professionally curious and act immediately where they have any safeguarding concern, however small.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, principals, paid staff, sessional workers, consultancy staff, volunteers, chaperones and anyone working on behalf of Razzamataz Theatre Schools.

2.2 This policy applies to all Razzamataz Theatre Schools activities, whether they take place on Razzamataz premises, in schools, community venues or other hired facilities, and during performances, rehearsals, productions, competitions, examinations, workshops, holiday activities, trips, events and any other activity organised or delivered by, or on behalf of, Razzamataz Theatre Schools.

2.3 The safeguarding responsibilities and standards set out in this policy apply at all times when staff, volunteers or representatives are working with or have responsibility for children and young people.

3. Underpinning Legislation and Guidance

3.1 This policy has been drawn up with regard to the following safeguarding legislation and guidance.

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Safeguarding Guidance for Providers of After-school Clubs, Community Activities and Tuition (DfE, 2023)
- Children Act (1989/2004)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)
- Child Performance and Activities (England) Regulations (2014)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

4. Definitions

Safeguarding – means protecting children and young people from maltreatment, preventing impairment of their physical and mental health or development and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to ensure the best possible experience.

Child Protection – any activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm

Child/Young Person – anyone under the age of 18

Significant Harm – The Children's Act introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of the children.

Some children **may be in need of help because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.**

Staff – describes all staff and volunteers working for Razzamataz regardless of their position, role or responsibility

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

5. Principles of Safeguarding

5.1 Razzamataz will take all reasonable measures to ensure that any risk of harm to students' health and wellbeing is minimised and will take all possible action to address concerns about the health and wellbeing of any student in full partnership with other local agencies.

5.2 We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children's Act 1989/2004
- Children with SEND, children who are LGBTQ+, children from minority ethnic communities, children who are young carers, children in care and children who have experienced adversity may face additional barriers to recognising abuse or seeking help. Staff should remain alert to these additional vulnerabilities. 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, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children and young people.

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

- Valuing them, listening to them and respecting them
- Informing each child who the appropriate person or people are to speak to if they have any questions, problems or concerns
- 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.
- Recognising the individual needs of the child e.g. recognising when a child may be tired and need a break.
- Raising awareness of 'risks' when appropriate, for example, sending images online.
- 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 occurs.

- Appointing a Strategic Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Operational Designated Safeguarding Officer for children and young people.
- Adopting robust safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring staff recognise the signs of abuse or that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm.
- Providing a framework for reporting and dealing with concerns and disclosures.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies that need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.
- Ensuring that all staff and crew who don't necessarily have close contact with children but who are assisting in the production are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities to children.
- Using our procedures to manage allegations against staff or volunteers appropriately.
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.

6. Types of Abuse and Other Concerns

6.1 The following are recognised as types of abuse, although any act which harms a child, young person or vulnerable adult should also be considered. Razzamataz understands that certain groups of children and young people may be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect, for example, those with disabilities and differences, children and young people in care, those missing from education, parental substance misuse, parental mental health conditions.

Physical Abuse - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent an injury occurring.

Neglect - the persistent or severe failure to meet a child's, young person's or vulnerable adult's physical and/or psychological needs, which may result in serious impairment of their health or development.

Sexual Abuse involves a child, young person or vulnerable adult being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity of any kind. Any apparent consent or awareness is irrelevant.

Emotional Abuse – persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection; includes abusive or offensive electronic communications. This causes severe and adverse effects on behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self-esteem. Some degree of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

Financial Abuse - in intimate or parental relationships is a way of controlling a person's ability to acquire, use, and maintain their own money and financial resources.

Organisational Abuse –Organisational abuse refers to poor practice or neglect within an organisation or service, including educational, leisure or care settings, resulting in harm or increased risk of harm.

Extremism and Radicalisation – Extremism is defined as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.” Radicalisation is defined as “the way in which a person comes to support terrorism and encourages other people to believe in views that support terrorism”

Child Sexual Exploitation - Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Child Criminal Exploitation - Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Serious Violence – Staff should be aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved in serious violence, including unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, association with gangs, carrying weapons or unexplained gifts or money.

Child-on-Child Abuse - Children can abuse other children. This is generally referred to as child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. This can include (but is not limited to) bullying (including cyberbullying); sexual violence and sexual harassment; physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

Sexual Harassment and Violence - sexual harassment and violence and can occur between two learners of any age and sex and can occur in person or on-line. Razzamataz understands its responsibility to take all reports and concerns seriously, challenge inappropriate behaviour and support both the victim and the perpetrator.

Domestic Abuse - Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This also includes 'coercive control' which is an act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse which is intended to harm, punish or frighten the victim. **A child who is living with domestic abuse is at high risk of suffering emotionally and as such is being emotionally abused.**

Hate Crime - A criminal offence motivated by hostility or prejudice towards a person's race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, transgender identity or other protected characteristic.

Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief – Abuse may occur where a child is accused of witchcraft or spirit possession, or where faith or belief is used to justify physical, emotional or psychological abuse. Such abuse may result in significant harm and should always be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Honour-Based Abuse (HBA) – An incident or crime committed to protect or defend the perceived honour of a family or community. It can include forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), assault, imprisonment, coercive control and other forms of abuse.

Online Abuse – staff should recognise that many types of abuse take place online and should therefore ensure that students understand the risks and how to spot the signs that they may be at risk of harm. Examples include; grooming, livestreaming, image sharing, sextortion, cyberbullying, coercive control, AI-generated imagery.

AI-enabled Abuse – Artificial intelligence may be used to create or manipulate sexual images, impersonate individuals, facilitate grooming or produce harmful or abusive content. Staff should understand the safeguarding risks associated with emerging technologies.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking – Children and vulnerable adults may be trafficked or exploited for criminal, sexual or labour purposes. Staff should be alert to indicators that a child or vulnerable adult is being controlled or exploited.

Mental Health - all staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or

exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education.

6.2 The following situations are recognised as serious concerns and must be treated in the same way that a safeguarding concern would be.

Missing Child – Children who become separated from staff or parents during performances, competitions, rehearsals, trips or events may be at increased risk of harm. Staff must follow the Missing Child Procedure immediately where a child cannot be located.

Children who have not been collected – Arrangements to collect children at the end of a class or an event must always be agreed with Razzamataz staff. This includes the requirement for parents/carers to let staff know who will be collecting and when there are changes to this arrangement. Wherever possible, Razzamataz will record the contact details of two family members/friends to take responsibility for the child. If a child is not collected after 30 minutes from the end of the class and there has been no contact from the parents/carers, Razzamataz reserve the right to contact the police or children's services.

Online safety – this is a safeguarding issue and Razzamataz recognise that many forms of abuse now occur wholly or partly online. Where Razzamataz provides internet-enabled devices or access to online platforms, reasonable filtering and monitoring arrangements will be in place to reduce the risk of children accessing harmful content.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all staff involved in the teaching and support of students have a role to play. Staff must maintain an attitude of "it could happen here"

7.2 All staff employed by Razzamataz will undergo safeguarding training at induction, advanced training (as appropriate) and will take part in the annual CPD programme where safeguarding updates/refreshers will be scheduled.

7.3 Role and Responsibility of the Operational Designated Safeguarding Officers. (DSO)

- First point of contact for all staff and volunteers to go to for advice if they are concerned about a child or young person.

- To ensure that they comply with safe recruitment procedures for new staff members and their induction
- Ensures that the safeguarding policy is adhered to
- Identify and challenge poor practice
- Sharing appropriate information with relevant people
- Consulting strategic DSO and local safeguarding partners' procedures for additional information and guidance if needed
- Ensuring that all staff having contact with children and young people have received appropriate safeguarding and child protection training

The Operational Designated Safeguarding Officer is: The Principal of the School

7.4 Role and Responsibility of the Strategic Designated Safeguarding Officer

- Provide advice and support for Operational DSO's
- Drawing up, updating and enforcing the company's safeguarding policy
- Ensure operational DSO's are following safeguarding policy and procedure within their individual schools
- Ensure concerns are logged and stored securely
- Leading the way for promoting a safe environment for children and young people

The Strategic Designated Safeguarding Officer is: Gill Sommers MSc. Cert Ed.

Email: info@thesafeguardingconsultant.co.uk **Tel:** 07879 844769

8. Children who are Questioning their Gender

8.1 Razzamataz Theatre Schools is committed to treating every child with dignity, respect and compassion. We recognise that some children and young people may be questioning their gender and may require sensitive, individualised support. Any requests relating to names, pronouns, uniforms, participation or the use of changing facilities will be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the child's welfare, safeguarding needs, age, maturity, the rights and privacy of all children, and the views of parents or carers wherever it is safe and appropriate to involve them. Decisions will always be guided by current safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

8.2 In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) and relevant equality legislation, Razzamataz will maintain separate changing facilities based on biological sex where these are provided. Children will not ordinarily be permitted to use changing facilities designated for the opposite biological sex. Where a child is uncomfortable using the facilities designated for

their biological sex, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or nominated safeguarding lead) will work with the child and, where appropriate, their parents or carers to identify a suitable alternative, such as access to a private changing area or changing at an alternative time. The school will ensure that all children are protected from bullying, harassment or discrimination and that any concerns relating to a child's wellbeing are managed promptly through safeguarding procedures.

9. Safe Recruitment of Staff

9.1 Razzamataz operates safer recruitment and employment practices and has a separate policy to manage this.

9.2 The following checks form part of that process to ensure that safe and suitable staff are employed;

- Identity and right-to-work checks will be undertaken before employment commences.
- Staff working with children and young people will be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service at the level required for their role
- Two employment/education references including the most recent employment.
- References will include the referee's opinion on the applicant's suitability to work with children and young people.
- References will be sought directly from the referee, and the referee will be contacted to verify the reference.
- Staff will be required to declare any new or undisclosed convictions, cautions, reprimands or investigations to their line manager.

10. Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff

10.1 Razzamataz expect all staff to behave in a professional and appropriate manner. The Staff Code of Conduct Policy provides staff with clear guidelines on how to behave and how to avoid unfounded allegations. Breaches of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary proceedings.

10.2 The primary concern in the event of an allegation is to ensure the safety of the child or young person. In all cases, action will be taken quickly, confidentially and professionally, with all parties clear that suspension is not an indicator of guilt, but a required part of a process.

10.3 Following an allegation against a member of staff, the relevant Operational Designated Officer (usually the Principal) will conduct an investigation and will follow the Razzamataz Disciplinary Policy and Procedures as appropriate. Guidance will be provided by Head Office

throughout the process. Where an allegation is made against the Principal, the matter will be investigated by the Strategic Safeguarding Officer at Head Office.

10.4 Where an allegation indicates that an adult may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child;
- committed a criminal offence against a child;
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk;

advice will be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) before commencing any internal investigation where appropriate.

10.5 Razzamataz encourages all staff to report low-level concerns about the behaviour of adults working with children, even where the behaviour does not meet the threshold for managing allegations. Reporting enables concerns to be identified early and promotes a culture of openness and accountability.

10.6 In the event that a member of staff suspects any other member of staff of abusing a student, it is their responsibility to report these concerns to their Operational Safeguarding Officer except when they are the person against whom the allegation is being made. In this instance the report should go to the Strategic Safeguarding Officer. Staff will be made aware of the company's Whistleblowing Policy' and encouraged to follow this procedure if they feel it is in their best interests to do so.

11. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

11.1 All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to act immediately if they have concerns about the welfare of a child or young person. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and staff should always maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding concerns are identified.

11.2 A safeguarding concern may arise through:

- a direct disclosure from a child or young person;
- observations of a child's appearance, behaviour or demeanour;
- information provided by another child, parent, carer or member of staff;
- concerns arising from a child's attendance, wellbeing or online activity; or
- any other information that indicates a child may be suffering, or be at risk of suffering, abuse, neglect or exploitation.

11.3 If a child or young person makes a disclosure, staff should:

- remain calm and listen carefully without interrupting;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone;
- not promise to keep the information secret, but explain that it will only be shared with those who need to know in order to help keep them safe;
- avoid asking leading questions or attempting to investigate the concern;
- make an accurate written record of what has been seen, heard or disclosed using the child's own words wherever possible; and
- report the concern immediately to the Operational Designated Safeguarding Officer.

11.4 Staff must never investigate safeguarding concerns themselves or attempt to interview witnesses or alleged perpetrators. The responsibility of staff is to recognise concerns, respond appropriately, record the information accurately and report it without delay.

11.5 All safeguarding concerns, however small they may appear, must be recorded promptly, factually and objectively. Records should include the date, time, names of those involved, the nature of the concern and any action taken. Records will be stored securely and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.

11.6 The Operational Designated Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and determine the most appropriate course of action. This may include:

- monitoring the situation;
- offering Early Help or additional support;
- seeking advice from the Local Authority Children's Services or safeguarding partners;
- making a referral to Children's Social Care;
- consulting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where concerns relate to an adult working with children; or
- contacting the police where a criminal offence may have been committed or where a child is at immediate risk of harm.

11.7 If a child or young person is considered to be at immediate risk of significant harm, staff must not delay action while seeking advice. Emergency services should be contacted immediately by dialling 999, and the Operational Designated Safeguarding Officer should be informed as soon as possible.

11.8 Razzamataz recognises that early intervention is often the most effective way of improving outcomes for children and young people. Where staff identify emerging concerns about a child's welfare, behaviour or wellbeing, these should be discussed with the

Operational Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will consider whether Early Help or support from other agencies is appropriate before concerns escalate.

11.9 All staff must cooperate fully with safeguarding enquiries and share information with relevant agencies where it is lawful and necessary to protect a child. Concerns should never be withheld because of uncertainty or fear of getting it wrong.

11.10 If any member of staff believes that appropriate action has not been taken to safeguard a child, they have a professional responsibility to escalate their concerns through the appropriate management channels or by following the Razzamataz Whistleblowing Policy. The welfare of the child must always remain the paramount consideration.

12. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

12.1 Information relating to safeguarding concerns will be shared on a need-to-know basis and only with those who require the information to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child or young person.

12.2 Staff should never promise confidentiality to a child or young person making a disclosure. They should explain that the information may need to be shared with appropriate professionals in order to keep them safe.

12.3 Razzamataz recognises that the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information where there is a lawful basis to do so in order to protect children from harm.

12.4 Information will be shared in accordance with statutory guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children and Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners.

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, following any significant safeguarding incident, or sooner where there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or organisational practice. Feedback from children, parents, staff and safeguarding partners will be used to inform future revisions.