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## Townsend Theatre Productions Safeguarding Policy

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Audience	Directors, Employees, public & funders
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Lead for Directors	Lianne Bruce 07973838875
Designated safeguarding lead	Louise Townsend 07949635910

### STATEMENT

Townsend Theatre Productions (TTP) is committed to a practice which protects vulnerable people from harm. This Policy details organisational behaviour and best practice which is applicable to all TTP's 'Employees' - those who work with TTP on a freelance basis and/or voluntary basis, to include TTP's committee.

Safeguarding is a matter of attitudes as much as policies, and TTP is committed to an attitude that allows for client friendly practice as much as client safe practice. We will do all we can to limit risk, whilst maximising the engagement of our Employees with our client group.

Our safeguarding responsibilities apply to vulnerable persons, specifically children, young people and vulnerable adults.

For the purposes of this Policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

According to the Department of Health, a Vulnerable Person can be anyone:

- We also include, in our definition, anyone:
- Who is detained by Her Majesty's Government or in contact with probation services.

We will safeguard vulnerable people by:

- Adopting child and vulnerable person protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for Employees.
- Sharing information about child and vulnerable person protection with Employees and related persons, e.g. carers, parents, guardians, etc.

- Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies who need to know, and involving related persons and vulnerable persons appropriately and doing so in a swift and appropriate manner.
- Following carefully the procedures for safer recruitment and selection of all company employees.
- Providing effective management for Employees through supervision, support and training.
- This Policy will be made readily available to all Employees, and accessible on the TTP website.
- Reviewing this Policy annually and reflecting on any reports made, reviewing the effectiveness of the reporting process every quarter.
- The Policy has been agreed with the Board and is fully supported by the Artistic Director and all members of TTP Employees.

It is imperative that each TTP's Employee is aware of their responsibilities under current safeguarding legislation and has a working knowledge of TTP procedures. Each Employee will receive this Policy as part of the Company

Who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

## **ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSON PROTECTION**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Providing the 'first port of call' and offering advice and support to all Employees regarding safeguarding issues.
- Making referrals as necessary.
- Keeping up to date with changes and developments in safeguarding, via the Board Lead.
- Disseminating policy and good practice to all Employees, in particular:
  1. Ensuring that Employees understand their responsibilities for being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
  2. Ensuring that all Employees have read, and are aware of the specific TTP Policies and Procedures
- Ensuring that new Employees receive induction about safeguarding procedures and existing Employees receive training as required
- Organising information relating to safeguarding so that this is accessible to all Employees.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Board Safeguarding Lead will assume responsibility for this role.

Designated Safeguarding Lead should attend Level 2 Safeguarding Training.

## **CODES OF BEHAVIOUR - STATEMENT OF INTENT**

It is the policy of TTP to safeguard the welfare of all vulnerable people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm.

This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which vulnerable persons can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of TTP's projects. Employees should, at all times, show respect and understanding individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of TTP.

## **ATTITUDES**

Guidelines for all TTP Employees:

- Employees should be committed to treating vulnerable persons with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a participant is saying
- Valuing each participant
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
- Encouraging and praising each participant

## **EMPLOYEE CONDUCT**

Employees should:

- Endeavour to provide an example which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with vulnerable persons and challenge any inappropriate language used by vulnerable person or any individual working with vulnerable persons.
- Respect a vulnerable person's right to privacy
- Always dress professionally and appropriately at all times
- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never allow themselves to enter or become embroiled in inappropriate situations, including tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a vulnerable person.

## **CONTACT WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS**

Employees should:

- actively avoid spending any time alone with vulnerable person, away from others
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable person this meeting must be as open as possible, and other TTP Employees and /or responsible persons will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. If no responsible person is available to join the meeting, the vulnerable person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

Physical Contact:

- Employees should never engage in any type of physical contact with any vulnerable persons without first asking permission.
- Employees should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind.
- TTP will always require a responsible person to accompany any vulnerable person or groups of vulnerable persons.
- If a vulnerable person is reliant upon a responsible person for any aspect of personal care, e.g. toileting or assistance of movement, TTP will engage a responsible person other than an Employee.

Online Contact:

- TTP will only contact a vulnerable person directly via email, telephone or designated, private Facebook pages (where relevant) in reference to workshops, performances or related TTP work.
- Where possible, all contact with vulnerable persons will be conducted via schools, care centres or relevant and responsible persons.
- TTP will not contact a vulnerable person directly in regards to non-professional or personal matters.

- TTP Employees will never issue or accept “friend requests” or equivalent from social networking sites from a vulnerable person.
- If a vulnerable person makes contact with an Employee via social media, the Employee should report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure it is followed up and the appropriate action taken. On no account should the Employee respond of their own volition.
- 4 • TTP Employees will not take or share photos or video footage of vulnerable person without confirmation from the Designated Safeguarding Lead that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.
- The Employees related to any given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms to schools or other organisations as appropriate and for discussing how best to document projects, and will circulate this information
- Confidential data that is collected on vulnerable persons, including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between responsible persons only on a need-to-know basis.
- All vulnerable persons have a right to know and have sight of any information TTP holds on them.

### **PROVIDING EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES & VOLUNTEERING THROUGH SUPERVISION, SUPPORT & TRAINING GUIDELINES ON RECRUITMENT**

- All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with vulnerable persons.
- The same recruitment procedure will be adopted whether the company members are paid or unpaid, full, part-time or freelance.

#### **Recruitment procedure:**

- This process will be adhered to for any role at TTP that directly relates to working with vulnerable persons.
- Advertisements for roles that involve work with vulnerable persons will state that applicants will be expected to have a current DBS check. In most
- 6. Circumstances, company members will have obtained their own check, which should have been undertaken within the last 3 years. In particular circumstances TTP may arrange this. They may not work with vulnerable persons until a clean check is received.
- All applicants must submit a CV or application form detailing their experience relevant to the role.
- Successful applicants, including volunteers, will be interviewed to assess suitability for the role.
- Substantial gaps in employment will be queried.
- Two references should be taken up before appointing paid company members.
- For posts in which there will be direct contact with vulnerable persons, one reference should be regarding previous work with vulnerable persons. On appointment
- An enhanced DBS check must be held by TTP Employees who will be working directly with vulnerable persons.
- The DBS check must be cleared before work commences. If this is not possible, the individual must always be accompanied by a DBS checked responsible person in carrying out their duties in working with vulnerable persons.
- Individuals who have a valid DBS check in place on appointment should have had their DBS check issued within the last 3 years and must present a copy of their DBS to the Designated Safeguarding Lead for verification.
- Please refer to TTP Privacy Policy for information on the storage and access to data held by the Company

## **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

In any case where an Employee at TTP has concerns or an allegation is made, a record will be made using a standardised format. Details must include:

- Name of vulnerable beneficiary
- Date of Birth of vulnerable persons (if available)
- Approximate Age vulnerable persons if Date of Birth is not available
- Name of Employee completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action taken
- Were the responsible person(s) informed? The record must then be signed by the completing person and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **RESPONDING TO CONCERNS MADE BY A CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSON OF SUSPECTED ABUSE**

Get verbal account of incident from vulnerable person

Record Concern on Incident Report Form

Report concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead

Contact responsible person for the vulnerable person if not already present and if appropriate

Report concerns to Social Services/Police.

## **RECORD RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF AN EMPLOYEE OF VAMOS THEATRE COMPANY**

Report concern on incident report form

Report to Designated Safeguarding Lead

Consider Precautionary suspension where appropriate

Initial Assessment to establish the basic facts

Inappropriate behaviour?

Serious poor practice/ Misconduct?

Possible Abuse\*?

The relevant Line Manager will take appropriate action

Situation will be managed through the Company's Disciplinary Procedures

Safeguarding Officer will report concerns to Police/ Social Services

Possible Outcomes:

- Police Investigation
- Criminal Proceedings
- Civil Proceedings
- Disciplinary hearing

Possible Outcomes:

- No case to answer
- Informal discussion
- Formal discussion
- Further training & support agreed

## **REFERRAL PROCEDURE**

The TTP referral procedure for identified suspicion or concern will be followed at all times. This is outlined below:

TTP Employees identify a safeguarding concern:

- All safeguarding concerns should first be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Leads. No Employee should act alone.
- Do Not Delay, the concern should be discussed between the referring Employee and the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, other TTP Employees consulted as appropriate, and a decision made.
- If the concern is deemed of a serious nature, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the Social Services and Police if appropriate.
- Wherever possible an identified concern will be discussed with the social worker or person responsible for the vulnerable person (if possible) before any further action is taken. Advice from the social work department will be taken and any concerns discussed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will lead on this but the person who identified the concern will assist.
- The person who identified the concern will be asked to complete a referral form.
- Information sharing needs to be proportional to the level of concern. Relevant TTP Employees and other agencies involved with the vulnerable person will only be given information on a need to know basis.
- If a child who is already subject to a Child Protection Plan is involved with TTP, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be notified and provided with any relevant information on a need to know basis. This information will be shared with other TTP Employees on a need-to-know basis.

## **DISCLOSURE**

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as the protection of vulnerable persons will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Ensure you never use closed questioning or leading questions
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises and take what is said seriously.
- Allow the vulnerable persons to speak without interruption, accept what is said
  - it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, use the vulnerable person's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the vulnerable persons was trying to say.
- Contact the TTP Designated Safeguarding Leads for advice/guidance.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead may then discuss the concern/suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.