

Thunk-It Theatre CIC
Safeguarding Children Policy.

Approved by the Thunk-It Theatre Members.

Reviewed: 01/04/2023

Thunk-It's Safeguarding Officer is **Juliette Risingham** (email: hello@thunkittheatre.co.uk, phone: **07936649925**)

Introduction

Thunk-It has a duty of care to promote the wellbeing of and to safeguard from harm all children who are involved in its activities. All children have a right to protection.

This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Thunk-It in working with other professionals and agencies to ensure the safety and protection of all children who are involved in our activities; workshops, events, performances, and projects.

All members of Thunk-It and those who work on behalf of Thunk-It are expected to understand their responsibilities to safeguard children and follow this policy and procedures.

Definitions

What is safeguarding children? The NSPCC define safeguarding as:

"The action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care

taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes."

Sourced from: Safeguarding children and child protection, 2021.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>

A child is a child before their birth (i.e. during pregnancy) and until their 18th Birthday.

Safeguarding children refers to the protection of children and young people from abuse or neglect. Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children 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. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Definition sourced from (Working together to Safeguard Children 2018).

There is a duty placed on public agencies under the Human Rights Act 1998 to intervene to protect the rights of citizens. Also, the Children Act 1989 makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and everyone involved in the care of children has the responsibility to protect those children from harm.

Legislation sets out 4 categories of child abuse:

- 1) Physical Abuse**
- 2) Neglect**
- 3) Sexual Abuse**
- 4) Emotional Abuse**

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Where this policy or the associated procedures refer to 'members' this includes anyone delivering the work of Thunk-It either, on a freelance basis or as a volunteer, including committee members. It refers to anyone engaged in the planning and delivery of activities linked to children on behalf of Thunk-It.

When Thunk-It delivers work within organisations, the procedure of the organisation will be followed. If the work is being delivered in a venue, not in partnership with an organisation, the usual procedures of Thunk-It will be followed.

We will enable all our members and those who work with us to make informed and confident decisions regarding safeguarding issues and take all suspicions and allegations of abuse seriously. We expect everyone at Thunk-It to have read, understood and adhere to our safeguarding procedures.

We will endeavour to safeguard children at risk by;

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting this policy and adhering to our associated procedures and code of conduct for members.
- Ensuring we have a safer recruitment process for every person recruited by Thunk-It Theatre and ensuring all the applicable checks are made.
- Providing effective management of staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- Ensuring organisations we contract or partners have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- Sharing information about safeguarding good practice with freelance staff, volunteers, and other relevant parties.
- Reviewing this policy and procedures and updating as appropriate.

Consent, Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for making decisions about sharing information with external agencies including the police and local authority.

In the circumstance that information needs to be shared with external agencies or parties, those concerned will be made aware prior to sharing, unless it is unsafe to do so.

Thunk-It is committed to keeping accurate and factual records of all safeguarding concerns that are reported. All safeguarding records will be kept securely and confidentially. Records must be factual, accurate and legible and include a date, time and signature.

Record Keeping

Thunk-It is committed to keeping accurate and factual records of all safeguarding concerns that are reported. All safeguarding records will be kept securely and confidentially. Records must be factual, accurate and legible and include a date, time and signature.

Thunk-It will keep confidential records of any safeguarding reports for up to 25 years, at which point they will be destroyed (as per GDPR).

Safer Recruitment

Thunk-It aims to do everything possible to minimise the risk of involving unsuitable people in our work with children.

All staff and volunteers will have clear role descriptions which will be assessed for regulated activity.

DBS checks will be undertaken for individuals who are involved in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults as part of their role with Thunk-It, or copies of current DBS

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checks will be obtained for records. DBS certificates will be updated every 2 years unless on the update service – which we recommend. In the case of someone not being DBS checked but is in the role of working with children or vulnerable adults, Thunk-It will carry out the correct procedures to obtain a DBS check.

We will carry out safer recruitment practices for all members including adverts which explicitly state the importance of child safeguarding to the organisation, an application form which also clearly states the importance, obtaining good quality references, undertaking interviews and probationary periods for any relevant positions.

This Safer Recruitment policy extends to anyone working with Thunk-It, including volunteers.

Training

All regular associate artists and freelancers will undertake a Safeguarding Children e-learning course within 3 years, and will be provided access to this training in their introductory pack, along with their contract. Training must be complete before working with children and vulnerable adults.

The Safeguarding Officer will undertake further Safeguarding training and then the refresher course every three years.

Reporting a Concern

If someone in Thunk-It believes a child to be in imminent danger they must ring 999 immediately and ask for the Police. Any other safeguarding concern should be reported within one day.

The safeguarding report form can be found in the shared google drive, and must be sent to the **Safeguarding Officer; Juliette Risingham (Email: hello@thunkittheatre.co.uk, phone: 07936649925)** as soon as possible and within 24 hours from the practitioner being made aware of the concern. Once this is sent please delete the form from your records. You may be asked for more information regarding the form, however this will be case by case dependent.

Any concerns that do not require immediate action from local authorities should be shared and recorded. Thunk-It encourages all those who work with them to raise any concerns or possible concerns as soon as possible.

All members should feel able to raise concerns about poor safeguarding practice within Thunk-It Theatre and concerns will be taken seriously by all.

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a member of staff or a volunteer must be reported to the Safeguarding Lead who will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the child and any other child who may be at risk. The safeguarding procedures will be followed which involve referring the allegation to Children's Social Care and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who may involve the police.

Whistleblowing

If the Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the allegation or Thunk-It's safeguarding practices, then the concern must be made directly to our Chair, **Lauren Waugh**, at thunkittheatrechair@gmail.com with the subject line of: *Whistleblowing*.

If the Chair feels it is appropriate, they will report the concern to Children's Social Care and the LADO whose responsibility it is to:

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- Provide advice and guidance
- Liaise with the police and other agencies
- Provide assistance regarding suspension and referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

This may then result in a criminal investigation, safeguarding investigation and/or disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

Prevent

Exploitation by Radicalisers who Promote Violence The Government's counter terrorism strategy is defined in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015 known as CONTEST. Prevent is an element of this strategy. Prevent focuses on working with vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of being exploited by radicalisers and subsequently drawn into terrorist-related activity. Violent extremists may target vulnerable people and use charisma and persuasive rationale to attract people to their cause.

The Prevent strategy:

- Responds to ideological challenge faced from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat faced from those who promote these views;
- Provides practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support;
- Works with a wide range of sectors (including education, criminal justice, faith, charities, online and health) where there are risks of radicalisation that need to be addressed.

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Channel refers to panels operating in England and Wales.

The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by:

- identifying individuals at risk
- assessing the nature and extent of that risk
- developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned

Channel is a key element of the Prevent strategy. It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners (such as the education and health sectors, social services, children's and youth services and offender management services, the Police) and the local community to identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism;

- to assess the nature and extent of that risk; and to develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel is about safeguarding children and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs. Incidents of exploitation by radicalisers who promote extreme ideas that could lead to violence should be reported to the Police. If the person has needs for care and support, and is unable to protect themselves as a result, a safeguarding concern should also be raised.

If there is a concern regarding *Prevent*, the same procedure should be followed as with any other safeguarding concern.

Early Support

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Safeguarding is also about prevention and recognising when a family may benefit from Early Support, providing interventions to build resilience amongst children, young people and their families – particularly those that may be vulnerable. Where appropriate we will signpost families to external support from the participants' local authority.

Promoting the Wellbeing of Children

Within the practice of Thunk-It the wellbeing of all children is put at the forefront of the activities. Thunk-It aims to create safe and supportive environments where young people feel comfortable to explore their creativity and express themselves. We make it clear to the young people engaged in our activities that support is available and provide signposting when necessary.

E-Safety

When children spend time online they may be exposed to a range of abuse and harm including:

- Online abuse
- Cyberbullying
- Sexual exploitation
- Sexting
- Grooming
- Radicalisation (Religious, Gendered, Political etc.)

Thunk-It will:

- ensure that the safety of children and young people is paramount when we use the internet, social media or mobile devices within projects. (If participants partake in social media activity outside of a project session, it is not the responsibility of Thunk-It).
- ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.
- support children and young people involved in our programmes to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
- support parents and carers involved in our programmes, to do what they can to keep their children safe online
- work in partnership with other agencies in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.
- providing clear and specific directions to members on how to behave online through our Code of Conduct.
- respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour in line with our safeguarding procedures.
- Keep personal information about those involved in our organisation securely and only share as appropriate (in line with our data protection policy)
- Ensure that images / videos of children and young people are used for Thunk-It's website, social media, with funding bodies, in reports and any other appropriate marketing only after theirs or their parent/ care-giver's written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given (in line with our data protection policy).
- Provide support and training for Thunk-It staff and volunteers about online safety where appropriate to their role.
- When introducing any new technology, follow official age ratings and where appropriate, NSPCC good practice guidelines at <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>
- Where appropriate, we will agree an online code of conduct with young people
Example agreement here: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1599/online-safety-agreement-example.pdf>

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Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by Thunk-It members and amended when necessary. It may also be reviewed should any new, relevant legislation require this.

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APPENDIX 1

Thunk-It Theatre - Safeguarding Children Procedures

It is the responsibility of Thunk-It's Safeguarding Officer **Juliette Risingham** to ensure that the safeguarding procedures are adhered to and to support members in upholding their professional conduct.

Safeguarding Procedures

Safeguarding Officer: Juliette Risingham: Email: hello@thunkittheatre.co.uk (Subject line *URGENT* Safeguarding) Phone: 07936649925

- If a child or young person is in immediate danger then you must ring the Police (and/or ambulance service) on 999. This is the only time you should take action without needing to speak to the lead officer in your organisation first.
- The Safeguarding Officer is Juliette Risingham and all concerns must be referred to this person. (This includes if you have had to telephone the Police because a child or young person was in immediate danger and you were unable to speak to the lead officer at the time).
- The Safeguarding Report Form (Appendix 3) should be used by members to report safeguarding concerns relating to children. All the information provided must be treated as confidential and reported to the Safeguarding Officer within one working day. This will be available in the shared folder on the google drive.
- If members are unable to contact the Safeguarding Officer then use the contact numbers below.
- The form should be completed at the time or immediately following the concern coming to your attention or a disclosure being made to you, but after all necessary emergency actions have been taken.
- Remember members must make clear to the child/ young person that they cannot guarantee confidentiality.

You must:

- ✓ **Call the police and/ or an ambulance if the child / young person is in immediate danger.**
- ✓ **Listen carefully to what you are being told and reassure the child that you are taking what they say seriously**
- ✓ **Tell your manager/safeguarding lead what has happened**

You must not:

- **Touch or clear away evidence**
- **Interrupt the child/young person or ask "leading questions"**
- **Make assumptions.**
- **Promise absolute confidentiality. Or agree to keep it a secret**
- **Attempt to investigate the allegation yourself.**
- **Contact the alleged abuser**
- **Discuss the allegation with other staff/volunteers**

Please note:

It is your duty to report concerns or disclosures of abuse.

It is not for you to decide whether or not a suspicion or allegation is true. All suspicions or allegations must be taken seriously and dealt with according to this procedure.

Thunk-It Theatre is not a statutory agency and has no right to undertake investigations into concerns regarding Child Protection. Referrals should be directed to the appropriate local Children Social Care Contact Centres.

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Review of Procedure

This procedure will be reviewed annually and amended when necessary. It may also be reviewed should any new, relevant legislation require this.

Details of safeguarding contacts in City of York

In an event where the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable and you have a concern that a child in York is being abused or mistreated or you have concerns about a child's well-being you should call and speak to someone on one of the following numbers:

Significant immediate concerns, contact the police on 999

Concern that a child is vulnerable or at risk of significant harm, contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in York on 01904 551900 and select option 3 or email

MASH@york.gov.uk.

Outside office hours, at weekends and on public holidays contact the emergency duty team on 01609 780780.

To make an early help referral or access advice for a family, you contact the MASH Early Help Team on 01904 551900 and select option 2 or email them at earlyhelp@york.gov.uk

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Details of safeguarding contacts in East Riding of Yorkshire.

For Adult Safeguarding Concerns:

Report by phone. The safeguarding adults team can be contacted by phone 9am - 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am - 4.30pm Friday. Tel: (01482) 396940

Report online - Reports via the online form are preferred and can be made 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. Available at: <http://www.ersab.org.uk/#report>

For Child Safeguarding concerns:

Children's Safeguarding Hub. During office hours (Monday to Thursday 08.30am and 5pm, Friday 8.30 am-4.30pm), you can contact SAPH by telephone on: Tel: (01482) 395500

Outside of office hours, please contact the emergency duty team on: (01482) 393939

This contact information will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is up to date and relevant and will be easily accessible in the 'Delivering Work' folder in the google drive.

Details of safeguarding contacts in North Yorkshire .

If you believe the situation is urgent but does not require the police, please call 0300 131 2 131 to make a telephone contact.

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Should your call be outside of business hours (Monday – Friday / 9am-5pm) please still call 0300 131 2 131 to speak to the Emergency Duty Team.

A written referral using the universal referral form must be completed and submitted within 24 hours of your telephone call.

Link to form: <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/worried-about-a-child/>

Website and referral form: www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk

Secure email: children&families@northyorks.gov.uk

MAST (Multi Agency Safeguarding Team) contact: 01609 780780

Out of hours emergency duty team contact: 01609 780780

APPENDIX 2

DEFINITIONS (Taken from '[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)'))

Children

Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- a. protecting children from maltreatment
- b. preventing impairment of children's health or development
- c. ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- d. taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Child Protection

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children 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. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children

Physical Abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

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The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Radicalisation/ Extremism/ Prevent

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the

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mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.

The City of York Prevent Strategy tackles all forms of extremism and the Prevent Lead within City of York Council is: Jane Mowat, Head of Community Safety 01904 555742, 07984496352 or email jane.mowat@york.gov.uk and is the main point of contact for concerns across York.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

County level and unitary local authorities should ensure that allegations against people who work with children are not dealt with in isolation. Any action necessary to address corresponding welfare concerns in relation to the child or children involved should be taken without delay and in a coordinated manner. Local authorities should, in addition, have designated a particular officer, or team of officers (either as part of multi-agency arrangements or otherwise), to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children. Any such officer, or team of officers, should be sufficiently qualified and experienced to be able to fulfil this role effectively, for example qualified social workers. Arrangements should be put in place to ensure that any allegations about those who work with children are passed to the designated officer, or team of officers, without delay.

County Lines

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Child Crime Exploitation

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the collective term for all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is a form of child abuse and is illegal in the UK.

Signs of Abuse

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts, or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries, or the explanation of the cause of the injury is ill-fitting.
- A disclosure of abuse, or description of what appears to be an abusive act by a child or adult at risk.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained change in behaviour, such as withdrawal or sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of a particular individual, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends
- Eating disorders, depression, self-harm or suicide attempts.

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- Deterioration in health or appearance including loss of weight.
- Unexplained loss of money or material goods (financial abuse)
- Unexplained possession of money or goods such as mobile phones (child sexual exploitation)
- Fear or anxiety

This is not an exhaustive list of possible indicators of abuse.

Further resources, training and guidance can be found at :

<https://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk/>

<https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/>

Free e-learning training courses are available via the City of York Council. Training should be updated every three years if you continue to work or volunteer with vulnerable people.

<https://york.learningpool.com/login/index.php>

NCVO – national guidance tools and tips for the third sector on safeguarding:

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/>

Government guidance on handling a safeguarding allegation within a charity:

<https://safeguarding.culture.gov.uk/>

Disclosure and Barring Service (including eligibility tool):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

NACRO advice on recruiting people with a criminal record and how to deal with disclosures:

<https://www.nacro.org.uk/resettlement-advice-service/support-for-employers/>