

SAFEGUARDING POLICY v2.0

POLICY STATEMENT

All references to “Stagetime” shall include Stagetime International Ltd and its Regional Franchise Offices

STAGETIME recognizes its duty of care under the Children Act 2004 and the guidelines of the department of education’s guidance document: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

STAGETIME recognizes that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. STAGETIME is committed to practice which protects children and young adults from harm. All members of STAGETIME accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause harm.

STAGETIME believes that:

- The welfare of the child or young adult is paramount;
- All children or young adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All members and employees of STAGETIME should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

STAGETIME will ensure that;

- All children or young adults will be treated equally and with respect and dignity;
- The duty of care to children and young adults will always be put first;
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children and young adults to share in the decision-making process;
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism;
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned;
- All members of STAGETIME provide a positive role model for dealing with other people;
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour;
- It will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation;
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children;
- It will hold a register of every child and young adult involved with STAGETIME and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

STAGETIME has a dedicated Child and Young Adult Safeguarding Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the child and young adults safeguarding policy and procedures are adhered to, and who know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case of need to report a concern outside of STAGETIME.

That person's name is:

Mrs Alex Hinton BA (Hons) PGCE

Email: alex.hinton@stagetime.org.uk

CHILD SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

The responsibilities of STAGETIME are:

At the outset of any class for children or young adults STAGETIME will:

- Engage in effective recruitment of individuals. This will include appropriate vetting to ensure that all individuals have undertaken the appropriate training and will adhere to the required practices for safeguarding children as outlined in all current educational best practice.
- Undertake a risk assessment of the venue and monitor risk throughout the classes process;
- STAGETIME believes it is in everyone's best interests to obtain a DBS for its Instructors and Chaperones or other personnel and will inform all applicants of the necessary procedures.
- STAGETIME will have a written code of practice for the handling of disclosure information.
- STAGETIME will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

The responsibilities of the STAGETIME Instructors:

- Take positive action to enable all children to have the best outcomes and to recognise that everyone participating in classes (regardless of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability or disability) have a right to enjoy their involvement in STAGETIME in a safe environment and be protected from harm.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times;
- Keep record of any accidents or incidents;
- Ensuring that children and young adults are involved in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;

Physical Contact:

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Accidents:

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.

- If a child is injured while in the care of STAGETIME, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in STAGETIME's accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection.
- If a child joins a lesson with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for the child. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later, and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in STAGETIME lessons.

Unsupervised Contact:

- STAGETIME will attempt to ensure that no non STAGETIME adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimize risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she may be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure.

Parents:

- STAGETIME believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and STAGETIME. Parents are encouraged to keep up to date with their child's activities.
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after lessons. It is NOT the responsibility of STAGETIME to take children home.

Managing sensitive information:

- STAGETIME has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children.
- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.
- STAGETIME's web-based materials and activities will be monitored for inappropriate use.
- STAGETIME will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its Instructors, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as those contained in the DBS.

If there is suspicion of abuse:

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of STAGETIME, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child protection. If you suspect that the person with responsibility for child protection is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to a senior member of STAGETIME
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of STAGETIME, chaperone, that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded.

Disclosure of abuse to an Instructor:

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Do not ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Recording:

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken e.g. suspension from classes of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights & Confidentiality:

- If a complaint is made against a member of STAGETIME he or she will be made aware of his rights under STAGETIME's disciplinary procedures.
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.
- In criminal law the Crown or other prosecuting authority has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Chaperones:

- Chaperones will be appointed by STAGETIME to assist in the care of children during classes.
- All chaperones employed by Stagetime will be DBS Checked.
- Chaperones will be made aware of STAGETIME's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using the toilet facilities.

- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by STAGETIME.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay until collected.

Teacher/Student Ratio:

- Stagetime operates group lessons of no more than 20 students per teacher. Where required Stagetime will provide a chaperone for the lesson to help manage the children.
- A class cannot consist of 1 teacher and 1 student for safeguarding reasons**
- **Siblings count as just one child in this case.