



Safeguarding Policy

The Barons Court Theatre welcomes individuals of all ages and backgrounds to visit our space and take part in activities, as audience members, workshop and event participants, and creative team members and performers.

We are committed to creating and maintaining the same protection, and safest possible environment, for people of all ages, genders, sexual orientation or identity, racial heritage, religious beliefs and cultures, health conditions, those with or without disabilities, and from any model of family life.

Our safeguarding policy and guidelines recognises our duty to actively safeguard the welfare of all children and adults at risk. This is a responsibility of everyone at Barons Court Theatre, including freelancers and volunteers.

We acknowledge that abuse exists and can present itself in many different forms including physical, emotional, neglect and sexual. It also acknowledges that abuse can be perpetrated by anyone.

For the safety of all, we have an designated safeguarding officer (DSO) who leads upon policy development and reporting, including:

- Reviewing and updating the our safeguarding policy on an annual basis or when necessary
- Leading upon contact with Local Authority Social Services in the event that a child/young person is at risk of harm

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Sharon Willems
Email: info@baronscourtheatre.com

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- Managing complaints about poor practice and allegations against staff/volunteers
- Collecting monitoring data on all safeguarding activities
- Training and guiding new staff on safeguarding
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedure and promoting safeguarding with freelancers and volunteers

Recruitment and training of Staff

The safety and well-being of children and young people is borne in mind at all times throughout the recruitment and selection process.

The DSO will ensure:

- Appropriate checks are carried out on new staff/volunteers
- The safety of children and young people is explicitly stated in job descriptions and person specifications where appropriate
- Interviewers question and interrogate up on gaps in employment history through to the interview
- The Barons Court Theatre will carry out enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for relevant roles
- We will have an open door policy when rehearsing or during a development process, this means at any time Barons Court Theatre staff may enter space to observe the session. This offers transparency and an opportunity to feedback and reflect on good practice.

At times Barons Court Theatre staff may have to respond to concerns about the welfare of children and young people. This could relate to the actual or alleged harm of a child/young person. Alternatively a child/young person we are working with may disclose abuse directly to you. This section provides information and guidelines on our procedures in these situations.

IDENTIFYING TYPES & INDICATORS OF ABUSE

In order to effectively protect children and young people against harm all staff should be familiar with the various types and key signs of abuse. The Government's *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2010) details four key types of abuse:

- Physical;
- Sexual;

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- Emotional;
- Neglect.

All staff are required to acquaint themselves with indicators of abuse and will be trained to do so when inducted at Barons Court Theatre.

RADICALISATION

Radicalisation is the process by which individuals come to support terrorism or violent extremism. There is no typical profile for a person likely to become involved in extremism, or for a person who moves to adopt violence in support of their particular ideology.

Although a number of possible behavioural indicators are listed below, staff should use their professional judgement and discuss with other colleagues if they have any concerns:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Possession of violent extremist literature including electronic material accessed via the internet and communication such as e-mail and text messages
- Behavioural changes
- The expression of extremist views
- Advocating violent actions and means
- Association with known extremists
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology

If staff have any significant concerns about a child/young person beginning to support terrorism and/or violent extremism, they should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to female genital mutilation (FGM) or to take a child abroad or aid or abet someone to take a child out of the country to undergo the procedure – Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. Despite the harm it causes, FGM practising communities consider it acceptable to protect their cultural identity. The age at which girls are subject to FGM varies greatly from shortly after birth to any time up to adulthood. The average age is thought to be 6 - 12 years but it is also thought that the age at which girls are mutilated is dropping.

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Although the age of the children and young people with whom Barons Court Theatre engages is such that they are not necessarily in the 'high risk' category for FGM, a child/young person may disclose that she is at risk of FGM, has suffered FGM or that she has a sister or family member who is at risk of mutilation.

Staff should be alert to the following indicators:

- The family comes from a community that is known to practise FGM
- A child/young person may talk about a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent
- A child/young person may confide that they or a sister or family member is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion
- A child/young person may request help from a teacher or another adult
- Any girl/young person born to a woman who has suffered FGM or has a sister or relative who has been subjected to FGM must be considered to be at potential risk

Any information or concern about a child/young person or member of their family being at risk of FGM must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Designated Safeguarding Ambassador as matter of urgency. This may be treated as an immediate child protection referral to the child/young person's home borough.

HEARING A DISCLOSURE

If a child/young person says or indicates that they are being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a child/young person is being abused, you should follow the below guidance:

RECEIVE:

- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said and react calmly so as not to frighten the child/young person. ▪ Make a note of what has been said as soon as possible.

REASSURE:

- Reassure the child/young person that they have done the right thing by telling you. ▪ Tell the child/young person they are not to blame and that it was right to tell; I am glad you came to me.

▪ **It is important that you do not promise to keep it a secret as your professional responsibilities may require you to report the matter. If you make this promise to a child/young person and then break it, you confirm to the child/young person yet again that adults are not to be trusted.**

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REACT:

- Take what the child/young person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child/young person who has a speech disability and/or differences in language;
- Do not ask 'leading' questions, for example 'what did they do next?' (This assumes they did!), or 'did they touch your private parts?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and that of the child/young person) in any later prosecution in court.
- Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.

RECORD:

- Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand.
 - Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.
- Record the date, time, place, persons present and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
- Be specific when noting the words used by the child/young person.

REMEMBER:

- To share your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will take the matter forward.

REPORTING ALLEGATIONS, SUSPICIONS OR CONCERNS

It is not the responsibility of anyone working at Barons Court Theatre to decide whether or not a child/young person is being abused or might be abused. However, there is a responsibility to act on concerns to protect children and young people in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child/person.

If you become aware of any issue or complaint relating to the welfare or wellbeing of children and young people then you should raise these with the Designated Safeguarding Officer. All concerns will be considered and a decision reached as to whether the concern should be referred to Social Services.

MAKING A REFERRAL TO SOCIAL SERVICES

If a decision is made to raise a concern with Social Services it will be the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to formally report this concern. If, for any reason, the

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Designated Safeguarding Officer is unable to lead on this process then the Executive Director will make the referral.

Barons Court Theatre will make all referrals within 24 hours of a serious concern or disclosure coming to light. When a referral is made, Barons Court Theatre will record the name and role of the children and young people's services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call/referral.

If a concern is allayed and a decision is made not to make a referral then Barons Court Theatre will still be required to record details of the concern and details as to why a referral was not made. This information may become relevant later on if further concerns emerge.

ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT OR ABUSE BY STAFF

In the event of allegations being made against an employee (staff or voluntary), Barons Court Theatre has a dual responsibility in respect of both the child/young person and employee. The same person must not have responsibility for dealing with the welfare issues about children and young people and the staff employment issues.

Two separate procedures must be followed:

- I. In respect of the child/young person the Executive Director will lead the process related to the child/young person;
- II. In respect of the staff member against whom the allegation is made the Designated Safeguarding Officer will lead the process related to the staff member.

With regards to the child/young person, the aforementioned process will be followed. With regards to the staff member against whom the allegation is made, the below process will be followed:

1. Barons Court Theatre will make formal contact with Hammersmith and Fulham Council who is responsible for providing instruction in the event of an allegation of abuse or suspicious behaviour made against a staff member.
2. Barons Court Theatre is legally required to alert the LADO (local authority designated officer) to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children and young people has:

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- a.) Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child/children and/or a young person/young people;
- b.) Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child/children and/or a young person/young people;
- c.) Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they are unsuitable for such work.

3. The LADO will instruct Barons Court Theatre on procedure and what information may be shared with the person who is the subject of an allegation. Barons Court Theatre and LADO will decide, in consultation with the Police and/or any other relevant agencies, what may be shared in situations that may possibly lead to a criminal investigation.
4. Subject to advice from the LADO, and to any consequent restrictions on the information that can be shared, Barons Court Theatre will, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome.

In all instances Barons Court Theatre will seek to ensure that any staff member is treated fairly and honestly and that they are supported to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved. They will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process.

COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

COMMUNICATION VIA TELEPHONE

Staff should in no circumstances make or receive calls or texts to or from children and young people using their personal mobile phone numbers. All Assistant Directors who have pastoral responsibility for any child or young person will be given a phone to use during the time of employment.

COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL

Staff might, on occasion, be required to email children and young people using their personal email address. In all cases staff should use formal language to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the recipient and should be carbon copied to one of the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Staff members who have concerns regarding content of an email that they send or receive from a child/young person should consult the Designated Safeguarding Officer for guidance.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Barons Court Theatre recognises that social media can be a legitimate and effective way to communicate with children and young people. Contact with children and young people through such forums should only take place through organisational accounts. Current organisational accounts are as follows:

<i>Application</i>	<i>Account Domain</i>	<i>Account Moderators</i>
Twitter	@BaronsCourt_W14	Sharon Willems, Artistic Director & Leo Bacica, Executive Director
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/BaronsCourtTheatre	Sharon Willems, Artistic Director & Leo Bacica, Executive Director
Instagram	@BaronCourtW14	Sharon Willems, Artistic Director & Leo Bacica, Executive Director

TikTok	baronscourtheatre	Sharon Willems, Artistic Director & Leo Bacica, Executive Director
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Barons Court Theatre does not expect its staff to protect their personal Twitter/ social media accounts (thereby making sure their tweets/ content is only be visible to followers approved by the account holder) however it is does ask all staff to respect their association with the organisation when tweeting.

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PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO & ONLINE SAFETY

Parental/guardian consent for photography or video recording of any child is obtained through consent forms. Photographs and videos of children and young people will be stored in a designated folder that is only accessible by designated Barons Court Theatre staff.

Any camera owned by the Barons Court Theatre and used by staff for the purpose of photographing children and young people engaged in Barons Court Theatre activity must have its memory wiped as soon as content has been transferred to the designated Barons Court Theatre folder. Barons Court Theatre will ensure that any professional photographers or video-makers contracted by Barons Court Theatre to make photos/videos of children under the age of 16 and vulnerable adults have an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which is dated within the last 3 years, inclusive of their period of engagement.

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