

The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy – Child Protection Policy



The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy (CDA) has developed this pack to help all teachers, volunteers, Principals, and anyone working with young people to:

- Understand the issues of Child Protection and Good Practice
- Receive guidance in implementing the policy in their work in order to demonstrate and adopt good practice in relation to Child Protection

The pack contains the following:

- The CDA Child Protection Policy Statement – Page 2
- The Code of Conduct for those working with children – Pages 3 & 4
- A sample self-declaration form – Pages 5 & 6
- What is Child Abuse? – Pages 7 & 8
- Information on the recruitment and selection of staff – Page 9
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- Responding to a child making allegations of abuse – Pages 10 & 11
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CDA Child Protection Policy Statement

Good Practice at CDA

- The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy aims to create an enjoyable environment for all children who wish to take part in classes and other social activities.
- The Company (CDA) emphasises that young people have the right to be safe, secure, and free from threat.
- The Company (CDA) acknowledges that young people have the right to be treated with respect and for their concerns to be listened to and acted upon.
- The Company (CDA) has procedures in place to help any young person who requests help and support on a confidential basis, in issues relating to Child Protection.
- The Company (CDA) will ensure that the Principal and other staff have signed the company self-declaration form in relation to Child Protection.
- The Company (CDA) will ensure that any artists, teachers, and volunteers working with young people are aware of and apply the Code of Conduct and have signed the club self-declaration form in relation to Child Protection.
- The Company (CDA) has an adult, the Principal, who is specifically responsible for young people.

This person's name is Katey Cheshire

And the contact telephone number is 07781 400002

The Code of Conduct for all those working with Children

Whilst it is important for adults to understand their responsibilities with children, The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy is concerned that specific advice is given concerning the behaviour of all staff. In addition, artists, teachers, and volunteers should know what standard of behaviour is acceptable.

Those working with children in the Academy (CDA) should:

1. Be professional and always maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour.
2. Be aware of situations which can be misconstrued and manipulated by others. For example, if the teacher is alone with a child in the hall, changing rooms or similar place, they are open to the possibility of allegations about their behaviour.
3. Be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted. For example, adolescents can have strong emotional feelings towards teachers/volunteers. Whilst these should not be dismissed and the youngster hurt as a result, neither should they be encouraged in any way.
4. Not appear to favour or show interest in one child more than another.
5. Be aware that physically handling a child can be misconstrued by an observer or even by the child.
6. Never swear or use or respond to sexual innuendo.
7. Use the recommended methods and programmes which are wholly appropriate to the individual child.
8. Ensure that, as far as possible, they are not alone when working with young children on an individual basis. If this is unavoidable then the parents should be made aware of the situation for the sake of the teacher. This also means that children should not be alone in cars or homes with a teacher on a regular basis. The presence of others is an insurance against false accusations.
9. Conduct all dealings with children in a public environment in full view of others, in order that all behaviour can be observed.

The Code of Conduct for all those working with Children

10. On trips away from home, ensure that another adult is always present when working with children. For example, another adult should always be present if a child's room is visited at any time and the door should always be left open.
11. Report any concerns within the area of Child Protection (physical, emotional, sexual or neglect), in confidence and without delay, to the Principal who can give advice and recommend any necessary action.
12. Not, at any time, discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person, other than the police, before either the above person or a responsible person has been contacted.
13. When reporting an allegation or suspicion, record information, including relevant details. (This includes the nature of the allegation, background information of the parties involved, the period of time to which the allegation relates and the degree to which the information is known to be fact rather than opinion or hearsay).
14. At no time make comment to the media. The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy office should be made aware of any media interest in relation to child protection.

In the event of an allegation or improper behaviour being made, the personal conduct and professional behaviour of the adult will be important evidence.

For child abuse to take place, particularly sexual abuse, the child, and the adult(s) will generally be alone and away from public view. Thus, the best defense is to avoid all situations in which behavior cannot be observed.

If you have any queries regarding information in these Guidelines, please contact:
Katey Cheshire, Principal, Tel No: 07781 400002.

Self-Declaration Form

Personal disclosure for all staff and volunteers working or in contact with young people and children within the Academy (CDA)

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution or bound over order?

YES NO

If 'Yes', please state the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

Have you ever been subject to any disciplinary action or sanctions relating to children?

YES NO

If 'Yes', please give details:

You are required to self-certify that you are not known to ANY Social Services Department as being an actual or potential risk to children; that you have not been disqualified or prohibited from fostering children or had any rights or powers in respect of any child vested in or assumed by a local authority; or had a child ordered to be removed from your care.

I understand that under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Amendment) 1986, I must declare all convictions (including 'spent' convictions). I will advise the Academy (CDA) of any convictions incurred by me after completion of this form.

I understand that the Academy (CDA) reserves the right to refer to the Local Authority Social Services Department and Police Records to verify the information given by this form. This form will be held securely by the Principal.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Name: _____

Any Surnames previously known by _____

Address: _____

What is Child Abuse?

The Children Act 1989 defines children as those under the age of 18 and is concerned with the protection of children from any form of abuse. Abuse is illegal. In our culture it is unacceptable, and many adults find their reactions to knowledge of it very strong.

Many probably only think of sexual abuse as abuse, but in fact there are four recognised forms of child abuse – physical, emotional, neglect and sexual.

Physical abuse has occurred when the child suffers some form of physical injury which is not the result of an accident. An example of this could be recurrent bruising and on parts of the body where accidental injury would be unlikely. The injury could be bone breaks, burns, or scalds. It would be difficult for the child to explain and may not have been treated. Some signs of physical abuse may be visible, but injuries may be covered by clothing. They may only be noticed, for example, if the child removes clothing during exercise. Conversely, concern may arise from the reluctance of a youngster to remove clothing when warm. In sport, activities which lead to physical injury (possibly during Physical Conditioning programmes) could constitute abuse.

Emotional abuse is the result of a child receiving little affection but could also arise when the child is continually made to feel inadequate by remarks made by parents or other adults. It may be difficult to recognise unless the child is known over a period of time. Emotional abuse may be characterised by a change in behaviour which may be abrupt or gradual and eventually by an inability to grow and thrive. Speech may be affected, and the child may develop nervous behaviour. In drama the indicators are that the child loses interest or avoids situations such as plays because they fear the verbal abuse which may follow.

Neglect can be indicated by a child failing to attain the development expected for the age. Neglect is long term and so it is important to notice both physical and behavioural signs. If a child is badly cared for, they may lack friends because of their appearance and they may arrive late for classes, with no sign of parental or adult support.

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is involved in sexual behaviour against their will and with adults who are using their relationship with the child for their own sexual preferences. These preferences may be physical interference of a sexual nature – it is important to realise that any sexual interference which involves contact with the child is abuse, if unwanted. However, sexual abuse may take the form of involving the young person in pornographic material such as magazines or videos.

They often feel responsible and ashamed and may find it difficult to reveal what has happened to them, because they are embarrassed or worried about the outcome. As a result, in many instances the information is not given until months or years later. The indicators of sexual abuse may be physical in terms of pain and discomfort and/or behavioural. The child may seem very sexually aware for the age or be afraid of a particular adult.

In drama classes, rehearsals, and other teaching settings many of the patterns for abuse, particularly sexual abuse, are different from those which occur within the family or the institution. There is increasing evidence that the abuser is often a trusted and influential person in an organisation who abuses that position of trust to work alone with children. It is also known that abusers gravitate to situations where little checking takes place. Many abusers are never brought to justice for a great variety of reasons. Finally, abusers are frequently repeat offenders.

The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy is continually developing Codes of Conduct for those who work with children in our Company so that everyone is aware of good practice. This will alert others when they notice that things are not as they should be.

The Recruitment and Selection of Qualified/Experienced Teachers

The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy have teachers, artists, volunteers, and paid officials who assist with the overall running of the Academy.

The recruitment and selection of teachers, artists, and volunteers.

Abusers of children tend to gravitate to situations where little vetting or checking takes place. It is impossible to know who could abuse children. Therefore, it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

It is also important that standard procedures are used, whether people are paid or unpaid, part-time, or full-time. The appointment of **qualified teachers, for example, ensures that they already have the Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau.**

For all teachers, artists and volunteers working within our company who have regular contact with young people the following action **demonstrates good practice:**

Checks

These could include the following: -

- All teachers, artists and volunteers working with children should complete a self-declaration form. This is a legal document and the completion of it would be a safeguard.
- The possible provision of a CRB Enhanced Disclosure Certificate. This will state any convictions and concerns. The Certificate might be available through a “work based” source (e.g., for a teacher) or for others who work very closely with young children.
- The provision of the names and addresses of at least two people (not relatives) who have known the applicant for at least 3 years and who are able to comment confidentially on the person’s previous work with children and any former involvement in teaching.
- The provision of past career or involvement in teaching (including any gaps)

A sample self-declaration form is provided in this pack.

Recruitment Policy and Procedure

- The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy has a Policy of Good Practice, (which can be seen by all parents, hall managers, sponsors etc.), that states that children have a right to be in a safe environment and that CDA endeavors to provide that security.
- The policy should include the name of an appointed adult who has specific responsibility for the safety of children. This person will need awareness training. The Cheshire Dramatic Arts Academy will obtain CRB Enhanced Disclosure Certificates for these people who work on their own with children.
- All parents and children should be able to contact this person if they are concerned about child protection and be sure that confidentiality and support are available, and that appropriate action will be taken.
- All teachers, artists and volunteers should have specific roles/job descriptions which are clearly defined.

Responding to a Child Making Allegations of Abuse

Checklist – responding to a child making allegations of abuse

- Stay calm
- Be non-judgmental
- Listen carefully to what is said without interrupting
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets
- Make it clear that you take them seriously
- Allow the child to continue at his / her own pace
- Record only what the child has said (see Appendix 4 for an Incident Report Form). Many cases fall down where it is possible to infer those leading questions were asked even at these early stages
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Reassure them that you are going to do everything you can to help. Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as often as possible in a clear and factual manner
- Information that should be recorded includes date and time of incident and / or disclosure, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given, what was

said or done by whom, any action taken by the organisation, where relevant: reasons why no referral to a statutory agency was made - and ensure that the record is signed and dated

- Record every incident of suspected, alleged, or disclosed abuse you encounter
- The information will be received by the Project Leader/Designated Person and stored in accordance with the requirements detailed in the UK GDPR. It will then only be shared by those who need to know, i.e., senior management of the company, the chairman, and social services staff as necessary.

Things to avoid:

- Do not quiz for more information
- Do not speculate or make assumptions
- Do not voice negative judgements about the situation or the abuser
- Do not make promises you cannot keep
- Do not promise that 'everything will be alright'
- Do not offer to keep it confidential

Remember:

It is important that everyone in the organisation is aware that the first person who encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is the task of a professional child protection agency, following a referral to them of concern about a child.

Incident Record Form

- STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL -
CDA Academy (Guernsey)

Your name:
Project Name and Your Position:
Child's Name:
Child's Address:
Parents/Carers Name and Address:
Child's Date of Birth:
Date and Time of Incident:
Your Observations:
Exactly What Child Said and What You Said: (Remember not to lead the child, record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)
Action Taken So Far:
External Agencies Contacted (Date & Time)

<p>POLICE</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of Advice Received:</p>
<p>SOCIAL SERVICES</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of Advice Received:</p>
<p>LOCAL AUTHORITY</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of Advice Received:</p>
<p>Other (e.g. NSPCC) Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of Advice Received:</p>
<p>Signature:</p>	
<p>Print Name:</p>	
<p>Date:</p>	

Contact Details

Designated Person:	Principal, Katey Cheshire 07781 400 002 (mobile)
Deputy Designated Person:	Principal, Tom Cheshire 07781 402 985 (mobile)
Emergency Number:	999
Police Station:	01481 222 222 (Guernsey) Call 999 if you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger
Social Services:	01481 223 182 (Guernsey)
CDA Office:	07781 400 002
NSPCC Helpline:	0808 800 5000 (24hrs)

Reviewed May 2022 - T Cheshire (CDA Principal)

