

Abbey Theatre Safeguarding Policy

The Abbey Theatre is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all individuals who work, volunteer, perform in, or visit our premises. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and aim to create an environment free from abuse, harm, and neglect. While we do not typically organise or directly manage activities involving children or vulnerable adults, we are dedicated to supporting safeguarding practices in compliance with national and local regulations. This policy outlines our responsibilities, procedures for recognising and reporting concerns, and actions to take in response to safeguarding issues. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, performers, visitors, and any other individuals involved in activities at the Abbey Theatre. It also applies to any activities organised by Nuneaton Arts or the Abbey Theatre that involve children or vulnerable adults.



Regulatory Framework

We adhere to national and local safeguarding regulations enforced by the Safeguarding and Child Protection teams at Warwickshire County Council. This includes compliance with the "Children in Entertainment" framework, which governs:

- Licensing of children (certain exemptions apply),
- Chaperoning requirements,
- Record-keeping obligations.

Further details on these requirements can be found on Warwickshire County Council's website (search "Children in Entertainment").

Definitions

Safeguarding: Measures taken to protect the health, wellbeing, and human rights of individuals, especially children, young people, and vulnerable adults, allowing them to live free from abuse, harm, and neglect.

Child: Anyone under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable Adult: A person aged 18 years or over whose ability to protect themselves from harm or exploitation is significantly impaired through mental or physical disability, illness, age, or a combination of these.

Our Responsibilities

1. Admission of Children and Vulnerable Adults:
 - a. No child or vulnerable adult will be admitted onto Abbey Theatre premises unless accompanied by a parent, carer, or an appropriate adult (e.g., teacher or group organizer).
 - b. Staff and volunteers will not take responsibility for supervising unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults.
2. Safeguarding in Abbey Theatre-Organised Activities:
 - a. If Nuneaton Arts or the Abbey Theatre directly organizes an activity involving children or vulnerable adults, all necessary licensing, chaperoning, and record-keeping requirements will be followed.
3. Promoting a Safe Environment:
 - a. All staff and volunteers are expected to remain vigilant, notice changes in behaviour, and report any safeguarding concerns promptly.

Incident Reporting Procedure

If a safeguarding concern arises, the following steps must be taken:

1. Report to a Trusted Adult:
 - a. Any individual (staff member, volunteer, performer, or visitor) who witnesses concerning activity should report it immediately to a trusted adult within the theatre organisation.
2. Document the Concern:
 - a. The incident should be logged on the theatre's safeguarding log. This ensures a written record is maintained for accountability and follow-up. There is a QR posted around the theatre for the concerns to be shared through.
3. Escalation to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):
 - a. The safeguarding log will be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is responsible for reviewing the report and taking appropriate action.
4. Action by DSL:
 - a. The DSL will address the concern in accordance with established safeguarding procedures, legal requirements, and in liaison with external agencies such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or Adult Social Care.
5. Confidentiality:

- a. All reports will be handled confidentially to protect the privacy of all parties involved, sharing information only on a need-to-know basis.

External Reporting

If you believe that a child is in immediate danger, you should call the police on 999.

For immediate concerns regarding a child, contact:

Front Door Team: 01926 414144 (Out of hours: 01926 886922)

Coventry MASH Team: 02476 788555

Prevent Duty

The Abbey Theatre recognises the Prevent Duty and will work to safeguard individuals from being drawn into terrorism. This includes providing support and redirecting vulnerable individuals at risk of radicalisation.

Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed annually or whenever there are significant changes in safeguarding regulations or following any serious safeguarding incident. All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and always adhere to its guidelines.

External visits and trips

For staff that are visiting external venues, please be aware that there should be policies in place at the venues visited. The theatre does not cover occurrences external from the site.