



**Safeguarding Policy:
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

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Senior Designated Person	[redacted]	
Designated Person for Child Protection	[redacted] (Engagement Manager, DSO)	[redacted] [redacted]
Other Key Company Members	[redacted] (Producer) Updates and disseminates policy within HighTide	[redacted] [redacted]

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, freelancers, volunteers, students, or anyone working on behalf of HighTide Festival Theatre (the Company).

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults who receive the Company's services;
- To provide staff, freelancers, and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection;

HighTide Festival Theatre believes that a child, young person, or vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

For the purposes of this policy, a young person is all persons not over the compulsory school age or who are under the age of 16. This also includes those under the age of 18 years of age as although young persons of 16 or 17 years of age can legally consent to some types of sexual activity, they may still be relatively immature emotionally.

For the purposes of this policy, vulnerable beneficiaries are defined as children under the age of 18 or anyone over the age of 18 who requires activities which lead to them being considered vulnerable to significant harm or exploitation at that time.

A Vulnerable Beneficiary can be anyone:

- Who receives social care services or personal care
- Who require assistance in relation to general household matters such as paying bills, shopping etc. due to a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem

- Who is detained by Her Majesty's Government or in contact with probation services

For ease of reading in this document whenever the terms *Child, Children or Young People* are used, it refers to all Vulnerable Beneficiaries, including vulnerable adults.

Staff and all working behalf of the company accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which could cause Vulnerable Beneficiaries harm.

HighTide recognises that young persons and/or vulnerable adults have the fundamental right to be protected from all forms of abuse including mental, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, as well as abuses of trust, financial manipulation, or discrimination because of a disability or other factor that makes them vulnerable. It is HighTide's duty and intent to protect those rights and comply with the principles enshrined in laws and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, through ensuring that responsibilities for the protection of young persons and/or vulnerable adults are effectively assigned, accepted, and fulfilled at all levels within the organisational structure.

HighTide acknowledges that subconscious or unintentional barriers may exist that deter the optimum level of participation from the widest section of society. Additionally, the company is aware that these barriers are part of larger cultural and societal issues. HighTide strongly believes that theatre creates society at the same time as reflecting it; therefore, HighTide is committed to creating an environment that challenges these barriers and this discrimination.

Although it is anticipated that this policy will only be relevant to very specific areas of HighTide's work (as the nature of the organisation's activity results in limited contact with young persons and/or vulnerable adults), it shall be the duty and responsibility of HighTide, its board, employees and freelance employees to co-operate fully in the pursuance of the protection of young persons and/or vulnerable adults and ensure that the following is implemented, so far as is reasonably practicable.

This policy is accompanied by three appendices. Appendix A is an Incident Report Form, Appendix B details Useful Contacts and Appendix C details definitions of abuse.

Duty of Care

Good practice shall be used wherever possible in interpersonal dealings with young persons and/or vulnerable adults. It is important to HighTide that those in a position of trust have a clear understanding of the responsibilities this carries and clear guidance to ensure they do not abuse their position or put themselves in a position where allegations of abuse, whether justified or unfounded, could be made.

Every reasonable attempt shall be made to create an environment in which the young person and/or vulnerable adult feels comfortable and effective, in terms of their physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being.

Communication about HighTide's commitment to a culture of safety within and between the organisation, parents, youth-workers, carers, and young persons and/or vulnerable adults shall be openly and readily available, taking language or communication differences into account.

Contact with young person and vulnerable adults

Staff should:

- Actively avoid spending any time alone with children or vulnerable beneficiaries, away from others

- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable beneficiary this meeting must be as open as possible and other HighTide staff members will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. The meeting should not take place in a room that is private, unless absolutely necessary. If no adult is available as company to the meeting, the young person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

Physical Contact

- Staff and volunteers should never engage in any type of physical contact with any young person or vulnerable beneficiary without first asking permission.
- HighTide will always require a responsible adult to accompany any vulnerable beneficiaries or groups of vulnerable beneficiaries. The responsible adult will never be a member of HighTide staff.
- If a child or vulnerable beneficiary is reliant upon an adult for any aspects personal care, e.g., toileting or assistance of movement, HighTide will engage the responsible adult, which will never be a member of HighTide staff.
- Staff should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind.

Online Contact

- HighTide will only contact a child directly via email or telephone in reference to workshops, performances, or related HighTide work.
- Where possible, all contact with children will be conducted via schools, or relevant and responsible adults.
- HighTide will not contact a child directly in regard to non-professional or personal matters.
- HighTide staff will never issue or accept “friend requests” or equivalent from social networking sites from a child.
- If a child contacts a company member via social media, the member of the company should report it to the Artistic Director/CEO, who will ensure it is followed up and the appropriate action taken. On no account should the company member respond of their own volition.
- HighTide staff will not take or share photos or video footage of children without confirmation from the Artistic Director/CEO that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.
- The relevant member of related to any given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms to schools and for discussing how best to document projects, and will circulate this information
- Confidential data that is collected on children including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between adults only on a need-to-know basis.
- When sharing information, HighTide personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.
- All children and vulnerable adults have a right to know the information HighTide holds on them.

Projects

The person(s) with designated protection responsibility for young persons and/or vulnerable adults shall be identified at the outset of relevant projects.

HighTide endeavours to foster good links with appropriate statutory services such as social services, health, police, and education.

No employee of HighTide shall be legally responsible for a young person and/or a vulnerable adult in the absence (in 'loco parentis') of a parent, or guardian, or carer; neither shall any employee be permitted to have unsupervised contact with (or 'sole charge' of) a young person and/or a vulnerable adult, excepting a licensed chaperone, parent/guardian, youth-worker or carer.

HighTide acts in alignment with good practice for the management of sensitive information regarding taking, using, and storing photographs or images of the young person and/or vulnerable adult. So far as is reasonably practicable, the access and use of the internet when promoting activities in which young persons and/or vulnerable adults are involved will be monitored.

Consuming alcohol, taking drugs or smoking is only permitted within the law.

Risk Assessment and Risk Management

Risk assessments for HighTide's activities involving young persons and/or vulnerable adults will be undertaken, monitored and subject to periodical review, considering any inexperience, lack of awareness of risks, age and/or mental competence in order to maintain agreed standards.

Safeguarding in Recruitment Practice

HighTide believes in good recruitment practice and abides by the Police Act of 1997, which makes it a criminal offence for an employer not to check an employee working with young persons and/or vulnerable adults, and/or to knowingly give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with such persons.

Members of staff who come into direct contact with young persons and/or vulnerable adults may be required to undergo checks through the Disclosure and Barring service. Such information shall remain confidential.

Positive action statements will be included in relevant job advertisements.

Training Provision

HighTide is committed to the use of good practice regarding professional development. So far as is reasonably practicable, relevant development and training shall be undertaken and relevant persons shall be provided with such information, instruction, training, and supervision as is necessary to secure the protection of young persons and/or vulnerable adults who encounter HighTide, the safety of others who may be affected by their actions, and to protect all parties from being placed in a potentially compromising position.

It is imperative that each member of the HighTide staff is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of the HighTide's safeguarding procedures. Each member of staff will receive this Policy as part of the Company Handbook when they start working for HighTide.

- HighTide will issue the company handbook to each new starter at HighTide, which clearly lays out the Safeguarding Policy

- Any training in relation to Vulnerable Beneficiaries and Safeguarding needs of each individual staff members are identified.
- After each review, the Safeguarding Policy will be shared with current and incoming staff members, so updates within the Policy are known and upheld by all staff and volunteers.

Audiences

HighTide strongly believes in the right of access to the arts for all. Every reasonable attempt is to be made to encourage young persons and/or vulnerable adults to attend HighTide Theatre. However, the company's work often contains strong language or other content that may be unsuitable for those under 15 years of age and HighTide believes that it is the company's duty of care to protect young persons and/or vulnerable adults in our audience. As and when the content of the performance is not considered to be suitable for young persons and/or vulnerable adults, such audience members must be forewarned and accompanied by a responsible adult.

So far as is reasonably practicable, publicity material shall clearly indicate suitability guidelines if the content of the performance is not considered to be suitable for young persons and/or vulnerable adults.

Reporting Procedures

All suspicions and allegations of any form of abuse or an 'abuse of trust' must be reported immediately to the person with legal responsibility for the young person and/or vulnerable adult, taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. If there is a suspicion that the person with legal responsibility is the source of the problem, concerns must be made known to another appropriate staff member/authority.

All disciplinary measures shall be consistent, fair, and appropriate to the individual's stage of development and identity, considering any disability and the nature and extent of the concern/allegation.

Young persons and/or vulnerable adults in the employ of HighTide will have a 'named person' to whom they are aware that they should report any worries or concerns.

Procedure for Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

In any case where someone HighTide has concerns or an allegation is made, a record will be made using a standardised format Details must include:

- Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary
- Date of Birth of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary (if available)
- Approximate Age of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary if Date of Birth is not available
- Name of staff member completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action Taken
- Were the parents informed?

The record must then be signed by the completing person and the designated Child Protection Officer.

Disclosure

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Protection of Vulnerable Beneficiaries will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Ensure you never use closed questioning or leading questions
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises and take what is said seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption, accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you must do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact one of HighTide's Designated Persons for advice / guidance.
- The Designated Person may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.
- Record any discussions or actions taken as soon as is practicable.

Record-keeping

- Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

If a complaint or allegation is made against a member of staff s/he shall be made aware of his/her rights under both employment law and internal disciplinary procedures. Both the person against whom an accusation has been alleged and the accuser have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998.

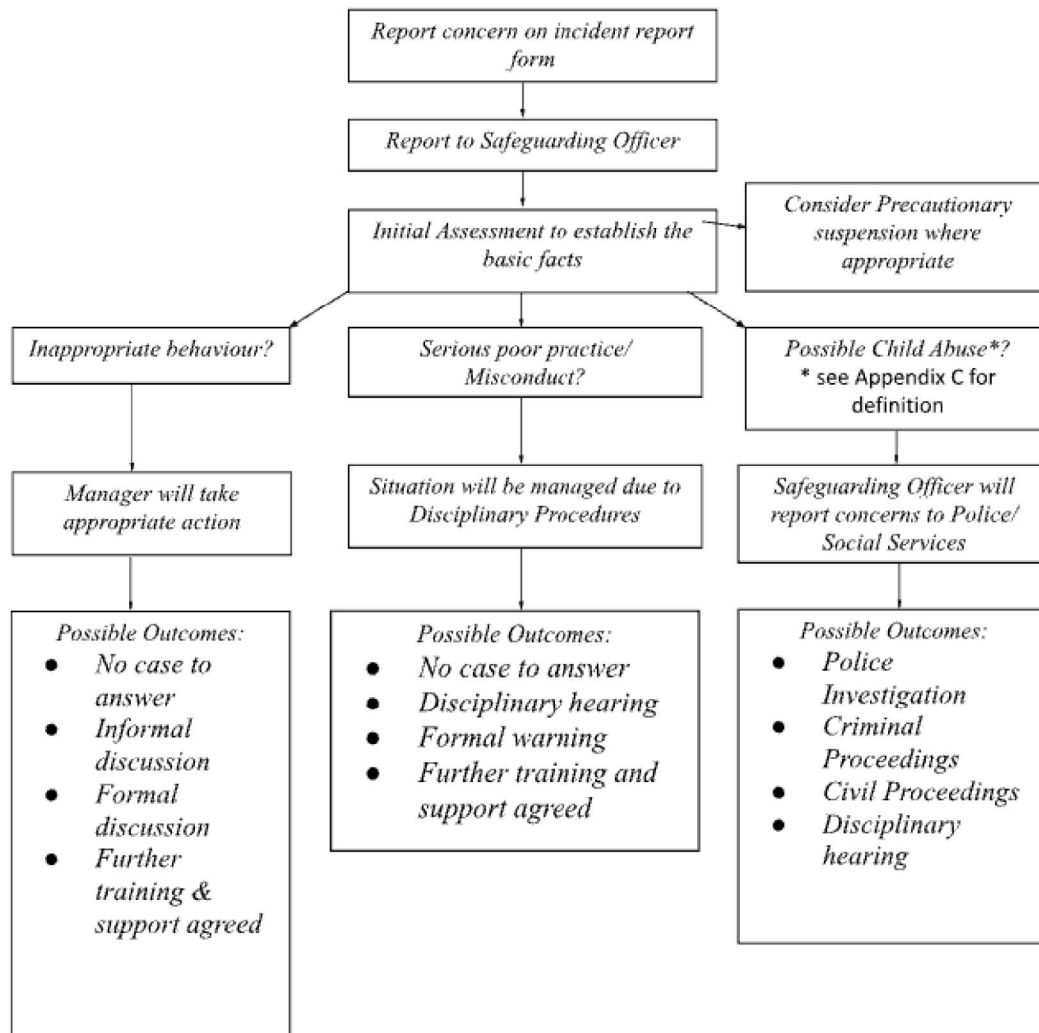
A record shall be made in HighTide Theatre's accident book of any injury that a young person and/or vulnerable adult sustains at the venue or rehearsal space or if a young person and/or vulnerable adult (including an audience member) arrives at the venue or rehearsal space with an obvious physical injury. The accident book record must be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for the individual and kept for 21 years.

The failure of employees to comply with this Policy for the Protection of Young Persons and/or Vulnerable Adults may be subject to disciplinary proceedings and, where appropriate, criminal prosecution.

Responding to Concerns Made by a Young Person / Vulnerable Adult of Suspected Abuse



Responding to Concerns About the Conduct of a Member of Staff / Person Working on Behalf of Company



Appendix A

Incident Report Form

Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary:	Name of staff member completing form:
Date of Birth/ Approximate Age:	
Date the incident took place:	
Time:	
Where did the incident take place:	
Who else was involved/witnessed the incident:	
Details- Please provide a statement of fact:	
Action taken:	Parents informed? Yes/No

Signature of staff member reporting incident: _____

Signature of designated C.P. officer: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B Useful Contacts

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Helpline 01325 953795

01752 346984

Available 5pm to 8.30am Monday to Friday
and all day Saturday and Sunday

The NSPCC (National Centre)

42 Curtain Road

London, EC2A 3NH

0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.org.uk/

Suffolk County Council Local Safeguarding Children Board:

The LSCB Team can be contacted on: **01473 265359**

Email: safeguardingpartnership@suffolk.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.suffolkscb.org.uk>

Endeavour House

8 Russel Road

Ipswich

Suffolk

IP1 2BX

Suffolk County Council Social Services Advice

Email: customer.first@suffolk.gov.uk

Urgent referrals: 0808 800 4005

Childline UK

*(help for children and young
people)*

Freepost 1111

London, N1 0BR

0800 1111

Appendix C

WHAT IS ABUSE?

*The following definitions are taken from The Department for Children Schools and Families (2013)
Working Together to Safeguard Children document.*

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. (e.g., via the internet). They 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: 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 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally 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 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs