



## **Child Safeguarding Policy for The Apollo Theatre IW**

**Updated: July 2024**

**To be reviewed: July 2026**

Definitions:

### **A Child:**

A Child is defined as young person under the age of 18 years old.

A Child performance licence is required when the young person remains of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June following their 16th birthday.

### **Child Abuse:**

“Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or a carer (i.e. the person(s) while not a parent who has actual custody of the child.”

For those working in child protection areas this definition is broken down further to recognise the types of abuse.

- Physical injury
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical neglect
- Non-organic Failure to Thrive

This means children at risk through either something a person has done to them OR something a person is failing to do for them.

The Apollo Theatre managing Committee is the managing body of the Apollo Theatre Child Safeguarding Policy statement.

General principles and policy:

1. The Apollo Theatre is committed to providing a safe environment where children are able to participate in The Apollo Theatre Youth Group or any theatre activity without fear of abuse or harm, giving youngsters the ability to express their views on any issues or decisions that affect them.
2. The Apollo Theatre is committed to providing equal opportunity to participate in Youth activities irrespective of race, gender and ability.
3. Child abuse does exist and the Apollo Theatre managing committee is committed to taking positive steps to prevent such abuse of children involved in theatre activities.
4. It is the responsibility of all members of the Apollo Theatre to be aware of and adhere to the child safeguarding policies and procedures currently in force.
5. The Apollo Theatre managing committee will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), whose responsibilities are outlined later in this document.
6. The Apollo Theatre managing committee recognises its legal obligations to ensure adults in regular contact with children, in a supervisory role, must be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked.
7. It is the clear policy of the Apollo Theatre managing committee that any adults who undertake regular duties as Youth leaders or helpers, either voluntarily or paid, will be DBS checked and approved before they are able to work with any youngsters without close supervision.
8. It is the policy of the Apollo Theatre that Youth Leaders or helpers will also have someone to vouch for their suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.

9. Directors and Stage Managers that use children in any capacity in a production will be given advice and training on child safeguarding matters.

10. The Youth Leader or Director or Stage manager will maintain a register of all children involved in Youth activities or rehearsal or performance activities, and the names and emergency contact numbers should be readily to hand at any time Youth activities , or theatre activities, are taking place. The contents of name list and contact details are not to be divulged to unauthorised persons and must be treated in accordance with data protection legislation.

11. Children Performing Consent form:

The children's parents will provide an authorisation for children to take part in performance and declaration of fitness and number of days licensed within the previous 6 months.

12. During the rehearsal period up until a chaperone is legally required, the Stage Manager will nominate a member of cast to be the liaison for the children to report discuss any concerns.

This person must be DBS checked. SM should liaise with Safeguarding Officer.

13. Collection of children from any theatre activity is the responsibility of the parent, or guardian, and it is also their responsibility to ensure they get home safely.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The Apollo Theatre managing committee will appoint a suitably qualified DSL who must be DBS cleared and is responsible for;

- advising the Apollo Theatre managing committee on best practice in respect of Child Safeguarding matters
- ensuring the Child safeguarding policy and procedures are current and up to date
- ensuring that those concerned are aware of the policy and have read and understood it.

- ensuring that they have to hand the social work, police contact numbers and local authority Child Employment Manager.
- seeking advice and guidance from the local authority social work, police child protection officers and local authority Child Employment Manager.
- agreeing procedures with the Apollo Theatre managing committee and social work on how best to deal with allegations of impropriety or abuse by a child against a member of the company, or club.
- appointing suitably qualified and licensed Chaperones for children in performance.
- ensuring that duties of chaperones are maintained and up to date
- applying for appropriate children in performances licences / Body of Persons exemptions
- ensuring suitable provision of dressing room accommodation for productions when children are used in performances.

Proper Implementation of this policy:

Apollo Theatre managing committee will:

- Communicate to all members their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- Communicate the high level of safeguarding and standards of practice in the protection of children.
- Ensure that members understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a member's conduct towards a child or young person to the appointed Safeguarding Officer or substitute.
- Ensure that procedures for members are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- Facilitate opportunities for children and young people to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues relating to the theatre's

activities and to have access to the Apollo Theatre's complaints procedures

- Facilitate the involvement of Parents in the development of child protection policies and make such policies available to parents.

Creating a safe organisation:

Ensuring a strict communications policy for the safeguarding of children is an important aspect of this policy. Communication between the youngsters and the Apollo Theatre will be via the parent or guardian and not directly with the child. This will include any facebook groups that include cast members, parents will always be included. If children are running late or unable to attend a rehearsal they may text the Stage manager, but any follow up will be via the parent or guardian.

Photographs and images of children.

There are risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on websites and in other publications such as theatre programmes. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information, for example, "this is X who goes to such-and-such a school and who likes playing football". This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to 'groom' that child for abuse. Secondly, the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of this adapted material finding its way on to child pornography sites.

- Parental permission to use an image of a young person must be sought in advance, including posting on social media.
- For both safeguarding and performing rights licensing purposes the Apollo Theatre does not permit taking of photographs or filming during a production.
- When there are children or young persons in the production: The use of cameras or mobile phones with camera or filming capability in dressing rooms and other inappropriate environments is expressly forbidden.

- The only person permitted to use a mobile phone backstage is the Stage Manager.
- Lead Chaperone will hold all children's mobile phones in a secure, safe place during the rehearsal or performance.

## E-Safety

Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.

- The Apollo Theatre e-safety policy explains how we try to keep children safe by not initiating communication with children via their phone, or email but with their parents.
- Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying.

## Parents

- The Apollo Theatre believes it is important that there is a strong relationship with parents of children and young persons attending Youth activities or productions involving youngsters. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the theatre and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- All parents will be given access to a copy the organisation's Child Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

## Collecting Children from the theatre activities:

- It is the responsibility of the parent, or guardian, to ensure that children get home safely from theatre activities.
- Children should be collected from theatre activities by a parent, or guardian, responsible adult or older brother or sister.

Children being collected by an adult, brother or sister who is not that child's parent should provide written notice to authorise this.

- If children are not going to be collected from a theatre activity, then written advice should be provided to this effect.
- Children who are performing as part of a licence to perform or assisting backstage or front of house during a performance will be under the direction of licensed chaperone(s) and will be required to be collected and signed out from the auditorium after the performance has finished.

#### Unsupervised Contact

- The Apollo Theatre will attempt to ensure that no 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 minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open.
- All children will be chaperoned at all times.

#### Working with children:

All Youth Leaders, Directors, Stage Managers, or any adults working with children will ensure that:

- Children are treated with respect
- They recognise that some issues are confidential
- They are aware that someone might misinterpret our actions even if they are well intentioned.
- They respect a child's right to privacy
- They provide time for children to talk to adults
- They encourage children to respect and care for others
- Act to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour

- They refer (not investigate) any suspicions or allegations of abuse to the DSL
- They have received copies of the ‘good practice guidelines’ and ‘how to react and listen to a complaint’
- they are aware of the requirements for DBS checks, children in performance guidelines and data protection requirements when dealing with personal information e.g. telephone numbers and contact details.

Contact Details:

Role/organisation	Name	Contact details
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Stephen Reading	<a href="mailto:boxoffice@apollo-theatre.org.uk">boxoffice@apollo-theatre.org.uk</a> 07817693891
Deputy DSL	Mish Whitmore	
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	IOW LADO c/o MASH, Hampshire County Council, 94-96 Wickham Rd. Fareham. Hampshire. PO16 7JL	Tel: 01962 876364 email: <a href="mailto:child.protection@hants.gov.uk">child.protection@hants.gov.uk</a>
Theatre Director	Paul Jennings	<a href="mailto:director@apollo-theatre.org.uk">director@apollo-theatre.org.uk</a>
Channel helpline		020 7340 7264

Role/organisation	Name	Contact details
Child Employment Manager	Rachael Williams	<a href="mailto:Rachael.Williams@IOW.gov.uk">Rachael.Williams@IOW.gov.uk</a>