

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Excerpt from YTAS Company Handbook, Policies and Procedures

Introduction

YTAS believes that children and young people should not experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children and we are committed to practicing in a way that protects them from harm.

This policy applies to all YTAS staff, including freelancers and volunteers, or anyone working on behalf of the charity. The policy will be reviewed every two years or as and when new, relevant legislation or guidance is introduced or amended. Copies of the policy are available on request.

Links to Other Policies and Procedures

This policy links to other policies and procedures throughout YTAS's Staff Handbook, Policies and Procedures including, but not limited to; *Recruitment and Selection procedures, EDI Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures, Disciplinary Rules and Procedure, Data Protection Policy, Social Media Guidance, and Bring Your Own Device Policy.*

Legal Framework

The key pieces of legislation and guidance which inform this policy, include:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014)
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act (2007)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2018)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)
- Creating Safety

Age Definition of 'children'

The UNCRC and Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014) define a child as being anyone **under the age of 18** which is a definition YTAS also adopts for the purposes of this policy.

Our Principles

YTAS recognises the importance of encouraging children and young people to attend, enjoy and participate in the arts. Their protection should be a matter of concern for us all. We have a shared responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children and young people.

Our Child Protection Principles recognise that:

- The best interests of the child must always be a primary consideration.
- All children and young people should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
- All children and young people have the right to protection from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- All children and young people have the right to express their views on matters that affect them.

Our Safeguarding Pledge

This pledge is made to all children and young people YTAS engages.

All of us at YTAS promise to make sure that you have the best time possible while you are taking part in our activities. We all believe that you have a right to feel safe and comfortable while you are with us. We will do our very best to live up to the promises that we make to you.

We will:

- Make you feel welcome
- Always think about your needs as the main consideration
- Treat all children and young people fairly
- Make sure that all our staff and volunteers know what they are supposed to be doing
- Make our activities are as safe as possible
- Listen to what you want to tell us
- Do our best to make sure you have fun
- Do what we say we will do

Procedures and Resources

Child Protection Officer

YTAS's designated Child Protection Officer is **CEO, Kenny McGlashan**.

The role of YTAS's Child Protection Officer is to:

- Provide appropriate advice and guidance to employees and volunteers who have concerns about the care, protection and welfare of children (particularly where they suspect that a child is being abused or has disclosed abuse).
- Ensure that a clear referral procedure is in place that facilitates effective referral to the statutory child protection agencies and that all employees and volunteers who work with and support children understand the obligation to following these procedures.
- Ensure that employees and volunteers have access to, and are encouraged to attend, appropriate training in child protection issues that are pertinent to their roles and responsibilities.
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the child protection policy. Keeping up-to-date child protection "best practice" as it relates to the voluntary and non-statutory sectors.

Kenny can be contacted directly at kenny@ytas.org.uk or by phone at 0131 538 0591 (YTAS landline) and 07779 646550 (mobile phone).

If required, other YTAS staff and the Board can also be reached via info@ytas.org.uk

Recruitment, Training and Staff Development

YTAS will ensure that employees and volunteers receive appropriate child protection and safeguarding training and guidance. This will be designed to meet the needs of their role this policy.

Staff who undertake 'regulated work' for YTAS will be required to be a member of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme, administered by Disclosure Scotland. To ensure this, YTAS will either apply for PVG membership for new members of staff undertaking 'regulated work' or will carry out a disclosure check for staff

or freelancers who have an existing PVG scheme record.

'Regulated work' which applies to YTAS's activities may include:

- Teaching, instructing, training or supervising children
- Being in sole charge of children
- Providing advice or guidance to a child or to particular children which relates to physical or emotional wellbeing, education or training
- Moderating a public electronic interactive communication service which is intended for use wholly or mainly by children

Incidents

If during any YTAS activity, there is an incident where a child or young person requires medical treatment and a teacher/parent/carer is not present, an ambulance will be called, or they will be taken to hospital. An appropriate adult will remain with the child until the teacher/parent/carer arrives.

Details of medical incidents must be recorded in the YTAS Incident Log spread sheet and reported to the CEO.

Incidents of a non-medical nature should also be noted in the YTAS Incident Log spreadsheet.

Managing Concerns and Disclosure of Abuse

If you are concerned that a child or young person is at risk of harm or they have made a disclosure of abuse:

- Never promise a child that you will not tell anyone.
- Your reaction should be neutral and non-judgmental.
- Do not press the child for more information.
- Keep in mind that the child may have been told not to tell anyone about the abuse.
- Write down what the child has told you as soon as you can.
- Report all the information to YTAS's designated Child Protection Officer.

Referral Procedure

If a child discloses abuse to you or you suspect abuse:

1. Report your concerns to the designated YTAS's designated Child Protection Officer.
2. Do **not** investigate the child's disclosure or your suspicion further.
3. Record the nature of the disclosure or your concerns using YTAS's pro-forma.
4. YTAS's designated Child Protection Officer will then make a referral to either the social work department, the police or reporter and will seek advice on how to manage the immediate situation.
5. Once this advice has been obtained, appropriate support is offered to the child and where appropriate the carer or parent

Useful Contact Numbers:

- Police Scotland: call 101 (or in an emergency 999).
- Crimestoppers: call 0800 555 111.
- NSPCC: If you are an adult and worried about a child you can call the 24-hour NSPCC helpline on 0800 800 5000
- A child or young person can call Childline on 0800 1111.
- ParentLine Scotland: call 0800 028 2233 or email parentlinescotland@children1st.org.uk
- ParentLine's opening hours are from 9am - 9pm Monday to Friday.

First Aid

Employees and volunteers will be notified of the location of first aid kits and first aid-trained staff.

Transport

YTAS' discourages the use of private cars to transport children and young people involved in its activities unless there is written permission from the parent/carer.

Managing intimate care needs

Intimate care commonly involves meeting toileting and medical needs. It is YTAS' policy that intimate care needs are met by the child's parent/carer.

Use of photographs and images of children

YTAS recognises that photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information. This information can make the child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to 'groom' the child for abuse. YTAS also recognises that photo images are adapted by certain individuals and groups for inappropriate use. It is therefore YTAS' policy that

- Where photos of individuals are to be published, the name of the child will not be printed with the photograph.
- Where it is felt to be important to publish a child's name, a photograph will not support this.
- Where group photographs are published, individual children will not be named.

Data protection and storage of confidential records

YTAS recognises its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018. Information relating to child protection issues will be stored in a secure place. Access to this information will be restricted to YTAS's Child Protection Officer.

YTAS is aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 allows for disclosure of information without the consent of the subject in certain conditions, including for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. The need to safeguard children will always be considered within these parameters

Safeguarding – Staff Code of Behaviour

This code outlines what is expected of all staff and volunteers working for YTAS as well as anyone working in partnership with us or on our behalf.

The purpose of this code is to protect children and young people from harm and to help staff and volunteers maintain the standard of behaviour we expect.

All staff and volunteers working for YTAS are acting in a position of trust and are expected to behave in an appropriate manner at all times.

Staff and volunteers should:

- Operate within YTAS's policies and procedures including the child protection guidelines
- Treat everyone fairly, with respect, dignity and as an individual
- Engage with children and young people in a meaningful way, valuing their contribution
- Ensure that contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to YTAS's work
- Ensure that language used is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory
- Be aware of any additional vulnerabilities that some children, young people or communities may face
- Respect children and young people's right to privacy
- Ensure that activities are run as safely as possible with risks minimised
- Where possible, try to ensure there is more than one adult present during activities
- Understand when physical contact is appropriate and be aware that physical contact can be misinterpreted
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report any concerns or allegations
- If concerns have been raised, record these as soon as possible.

Staff and volunteers should not:

- Ignore or trivialise any concerns
- Promise confidentiality to a child or young person
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children, young people or their families, such as contact outside of work
- Provide personal contact details or engage on online activity outside of YTAS's policy
- Make sarcastic, offensive or sexually suggestive remarks or gestures directly to, or in front of, children and young people
- Conduct a sexual relationship with a young person
- Act in a way that could be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- Allow bullying to take place without challenge
- Take unnecessary risks when assessment or policy suggest a different approach.