

BROS

THEATRE COMPANY

Child Protection & Safeguarding Procedures (2025)

Approved: November 2025

Next Review: November 2026 (and annually thereafter)

1. Policy Statement

BROS Theatre Company is committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all children and young people who participate in our productions, workshops, and related activities. We believe that every child, irrespective of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or background, has the right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The welfare of the child is always paramount.

This policy applies to all members, volunteers, contractors, and visiting professionals who have contact with children and young people through our activities within the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

2. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is based on the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- London Child Protection Procedures
- Guidance from the Richmond and Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership (RWSCP)

3. Definitions

- Child / Young Person: Anyone under the age of 18.
- Adult: Anyone aged 18 or over.
- Chaperone: An adult approved by the Local Authority to take responsibility for the welfare and supervision of children taking part in performances.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): The person within the organisation responsible for managing and coordinating safeguarding matters.

4. Safeguarding Principles

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
- All children have a right to protection from harm.
- All adults have a duty to protect children from harm and promote their welfare.
- Concerns or allegations must be reported immediately and appropriately.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Committee / Trustees

- Adopt, implement, and review this policy annually.
- Appoint a Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP).
Ensure all members and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Role of the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP)

The NSP is responsible for:

- Receiving and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations.
- Referring suspected abuse or neglect to Richmond SPA.
- Reporting allegations against staff or volunteers to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Maintaining confidential safeguarding records.
- Ensuring all members are aware of safeguarding procedures and receive annual training.
- Keeping up to date with current legislation and guidance.

All Adults (Members, Volunteers, Chaperones)

- Must read and comply with this policy.
- Must treat all children with respect and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Must report any safeguarding concerns or inappropriate behaviour immediately by contacting the [Nominated Safeguarding Person](#) and filling in the serious incident form

6. Safer Recruitment and Vetting

- All adults in regular contact with children must hold an Enhanced DBS check (with barred list check if appropriate).
- All chaperones must hold valid Local Authority approval from Richmond Council.
- New volunteers or staff will be asked to provide references and complete a safeguarding declaration.

7. Supervision and Ratios

- Children will always be supervised by at least one approved chaperone or responsible adult.
- Recommended minimum ratio: 1 adult per 10 children, with more adults for younger or more vulnerable groups.
- Children must never be left alone with an unvetted adult.
- Separate dressing rooms for adults and children will be provided wherever possible. Where shared spaces are unavoidable, clear supervision and privacy measures will be implemented.

8. Role of Chaperones

Chaperones act *in loco parentis* and are responsible for children's welfare, comfort, rest, and safety during rehearsals and performances.

They must:

- All chaperones must hold a valid Local Authority Licence and Enhanced DBS check.
- Be approved by Richmond Council Children's Licensing Team.
- Ensure proper supervision, meals, and rest periods.
- Keep accurate sign-in/out and attendance records.
- Report any safeguarding concern to the NSP immediately.
- Challenge unsafe practices and uphold this policy.
- Prevent children entering adult dressing rooms.
- Ensure children are not asked to perform dangerous or inappropriate acts.
- Supervise children at all times, including to/from toilets.

Contact for Chaperone Licensing:

 childlicensing@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

 020 8871 7441

9. Reporting Concerns

If a child is in immediate danger or risk of harm, call 999.

Otherwise:

- Report all concerns to the NSP as soon as possible.
- The NSP will decide whether to refer to the Richmond Council Single Point of Access (SPA) or another appropriate agency.

Richmond SPA Contact:

 020 8547 5008 (24/7)

 spa.referrals@richmond.gov.uk

No one should attempt to investigate or confront an alleged abuser personally.

10. Responding to a Disclosure of Abuse

Children may disclose abuse or neglect to an adult they trust. All adults must know how to respond appropriately.

If a Child Confides in You:

1. Listen carefully and calmly. Allow the child to speak freely.
2. Reassure them. Acknowledge their courage and explain you need to share this information to help keep them safe.
3. Avoid leading questions. Use open prompts such as "Tell me what happened."
4. Stay calm. Do not express shock or disbelief.
5. Report immediately to the NSP if the child is at risk, contact SPA or the police.

Recording a Disclosure:

- Record the disclosure as soon as possible (ideally within one hour).
- Use the child's own words; do not paraphrase or interpret.
- Include:
 - Your name and role

- Child's name and age
 - Date, time, and place of disclosure
 - What the child said (verbatim if possible)
 - Observations of behaviour or appearance
 - Actions taken and who was informed
- Sign and date the record.
 - Store securely and confidentially with the [NSP](#).

11. Allegations Against Adults and Contacting the LADO

Purpose of the LADO

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) oversees allegations about adults who work with or care for children, ensuring they are managed properly and safely.

Contact the LADO Immediately If:

- An allegation or concern is made about a member, volunteer, or chaperone;
- There are witnessed or suspected boundary breaches;
- You are unsure whether a situation meets the threshold for a formal allegation.

Procedure:

1. Do not investigate yourself.
2. Report to the [NSP](#) immediately.
3. The NSP will:
 - Record details of the allegation;
 - Contact the LADO within one working day;
 - Follow advice on next steps (e.g., suspension, referral, or investigation).
4. If the allegation involves the NSP, report directly to the [Chair of the Committee](#), who must contact the LADO.

Richmond LADO Contact:

 lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk

 020 8871 7208 (ask for the Duty LADO)

Out of hours: 020 8770 5000

Confidentiality and Records

All records must be stored securely and retained according to data protection requirements. Information will be shared only with those who need to know.

12. Online Safety and Photography

- Online rehearsals or communications must use secure, approved platforms (e.g. Zoom, Teams).
- Parental consent is required for all online participation by minors.
- No private messaging between adults and minors is permitted.
- Photos/videos of children may only be taken or shared with written parental consent and for official BROS publicity.
- Images must never be taken in private areas (e.g. dressing rooms).

- Social media use must comply with the BROS Social media Policy.
- No photos or videos of children will be taken or shared without written parental consent.
- Children's full names will never be published alongside images.
- Company social media accounts will be monitored by designated adults.

13. Code of Conduct for Adults

All adults must:

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Treat children with respect and dignity.
- Avoid one-to-one private situations where possible.
- Never use physical punishment, ridicule, or inappropriate language.
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately.

Supervision and Contact

- The Society will take all reasonable steps to ensure no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- Wherever possible, at least two adults will be present when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk (e.g. meeting in a public or open space, or keeping the door open).
- Adults likely to have regular unsupervised contact with children may be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- No private arrangements or meetings with children are permitted outside official Society activities.
- Rehearsals must only take place in agreed venues and at scheduled times.
- Rehearsal schedules will be sent to all parents or guardians, and consent must be obtained for each child's attendance.
- Any changes to schedules will be communicated directly to parents or guardians.

Physical Contact

- Adults must maintain appropriate and professional boundaries with children at all times.
- Physical contact will only occur when absolutely necessary for the purpose of the activity (e.g. stage direction).
- Adults must seek the child's consent before any physical contact and explain its purpose clearly.
- Contact should always be appropriate to the child's age, understanding, and needs, and never of a personal or intrusive nature.

14. Parental Involvement

- The Society values a strong partnership between parents and the organisation in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.

- Parents and guardians are encouraged to be actively involved in Society activities and share responsibility for their children’s care.
- All parents and guardians will receive a copy of the Society’s Child Protection Policy and safeguarding procedures.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for collecting, or arranging collection of, their children after rehearsals or performances.
- The Society is not responsible for transporting children home.

15. Accidents & First Aid

- All children and chaperones will be briefed on venue safety and “house rules.”
- A qualified First Aider must be present during rehearsals and performances.
- All injuries or accidents will be recorded in the Accident Book and counter-signed by the NSP.
- Pre-existing injuries will also be documented.

16. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All personal and safeguarding information is handled in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

Confidentiality will be maintained except where information must be shared to protect a child from harm.

17. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.
Next review date: December 2026.

18. Key Contacts

- Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP): Helen Shore | 07740 778670 | membership@brostc.org
- Richmond SPA: 020 8547 5008 | spa.referrals@richmond.gov.uk
- LADO: lado@achievingforchildren.org.uk | 020 8871 7208
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

19. Approval and Adoption

This policy was formally adopted by the Committee/Trustees of BROS Theatre Company on:

Date: ___8th January 2026_____

Chair’s Signature: ___  _____

Nominated Safeguarding Person’s Signature: ___Helen Shore_____