

HAZZA THEATRE ACADEMY

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Hazza Theatre Academy is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where every child and young person can learn, perform and develop with confidence.

The welfare of every child is our highest priority. We believe every child has the right to feel safe, be listened to and be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

This policy explains how Hazza Theatre Academy safeguards children and young people attending our activities and outlines the responsibilities of everyone working or volunteering on behalf of the Academy.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every member of staff, volunteer, visiting practitioner and contractor working with Hazza Theatre Academy is expected to understand and follow this policy at all times.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to every activity organised or delivered by Hazza Theatre Academy, including but not limited to:

- Weekly theatre classes
- Singing classes
- Dance classes
- Acting classes
- Workshops
- Holiday programmes

- **Private tuition**
- **Show Team rehearsals**
- **Technical rehearsals**
- **Dress rehearsals**
- **Theatre performances**
- **Public performances**
- **Competitions and showcases (where applicable)**
- **Trips and external events**
- **Any activity delivered on behalf of Hazza Theatre Academy**

This policy applies regardless of where an activity takes place, including:

- **Our regular class venues**
- **Community venues**
- **Hired rehearsal spaces**
- **Professional theatres**
- **Outdoor performance spaces**
- **Any external venue hired or used by Hazza Theatre Academy**

This policy applies to:

- **Employees**
- **Freelance teachers**
- **Volunteers**
- **Student helpers**
- **Visiting practitioners**
- **Licensed chaperones**
- **Contractors**
- **Anyone representing Hazza Theatre Academy**

Parents and carers also play an important role in helping us maintain a safe environment and are expected to support this policy whilst attending Academy events.

3. Our Safeguarding Commitment

Hazza Theatre Academy is committed to:

- **Providing a safe environment where every child feels valued and respected.**
- **Promoting children's welfare in everything we do.**
- **Listening to children and taking their views seriously.**
- **Responding quickly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns.**
- **Working in partnership with parents, carers and statutory agencies.**
- **Ensuring staff receive appropriate safeguarding training.**
- **Recruiting staff safely through appropriate vetting procedures.**
- **Creating a culture where concerns can be raised without fear.**
- **Ensuring safeguarding remains central during classes, rehearsals and performances.**

We recognise that safeguarding extends beyond protecting children from abuse and includes promoting their physical and emotional wellbeing, preventing harm and ensuring every child has the opportunity to thrive.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Hazza Theatre Academy has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Harrison Tyler Horsfall

Founder & Designated Safeguarding Lead

Email: hello@hazzatheatreacademy.com

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The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- **Receiving safeguarding concerns and disclosures.**
- **Maintaining confidential safeguarding records.**
- **Liaising with parents, Children's Services, Police and other agencies where appropriate.**
- **Ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed.**
- **Supporting staff and volunteers.**
- **Reviewing safeguarding policies annually.**
- **Promoting a culture of safeguarding throughout the Academy.**

In the event that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable and there is an immediate risk to a child, staff should contact the emergency services or Children's Social Care without delay before informing the DSL as soon as possible.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff and Volunteers

Every adult working on behalf of Hazza Theatre Academy has a responsibility to:

- **Put the welfare of children first.**
- **Remain alert to signs of abuse or neglect.**
- **Treat every child with dignity and respect.**
- **Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.**
- **Report concerns immediately.**
- **Follow Academy safeguarding procedures.**
- **Attend safeguarding training where required.**
- **Challenge behaviour that may place a child at risk.**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, regardless of role or seniority.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- **Provide accurate emergency contact information.**
- **Inform the Academy of any relevant medical, behavioural or safeguarding needs.**

- **Collect children promptly at the end of sessions unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.**
- **Respect safeguarding procedures during rehearsals and performances.**
- **Raise any safeguarding concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

Children and Young People

We encourage every child to:

- **Treat others with kindness and respect.**
- **Speak to a trusted adult if they feel worried or unsafe.**
- **Respect staff instructions during rehearsals and performances.**
- **Report bullying or inappropriate behaviour.**

Every child has the right to be heard and taken seriously.

6. Safeguarding Principles

Hazza Theatre Academy will always:

- **Place the welfare of the child above all other considerations.**
- **Take all safeguarding concerns seriously.**
- **Act promptly where concerns arise.**
- **Maintain appropriate confidentiality while sharing information when necessary to protect a child.**
- **Ensure suitable supervision during all Academy activities.**
- **Complete appropriate risk assessments for activities and venues.**
- **Maintain appropriate staff-to-child ratios wherever possible.**
- **Promote an inclusive environment where every child feels safe regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief.**

Safeguarding arrangements apply equally during:

- **Weekly classes**
- **Rehearsals**
- **Backstage preparation**
- **Theatre performances**
- **Workshops**
- **Trips**
- **External events**
- **Social activities organised by the Academy**

Children should always know who they can speak to if they are worried, upset or concerned about their own welfare or the welfare of another child.

7. Recognising Abuse

Abuse can occur in any family, community or organisation, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or socio-economic background. Staff and volunteers should remain vigilant and be aware that abuse may not always be obvious.

The main categories of abuse are:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves deliberately causing physical harm to a child. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or any action that causes physical injury.

Possible indicators include:

- **Unexplained injuries**
- **Frequent bruising or burns**
- **Injuries inconsistent with the explanation given**
- **Fear of going home**
- **Flinching when approached**

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that affects their emotional development and self-esteem.

Possible indicators include:

- **Low confidence or self-worth**
- **Excessive withdrawal**
- **Extreme anxiety**
- **Sudden behavioural changes**
- **Self-harm or talk of worthlessness**

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, persuading or encouraging a child to participate in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening.

Possible indicators include:

- **Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge**
- **Sudden changes in behaviour**
- **Fear of particular individuals**
- **Unexplained gifts or money**
- **Reluctance to change clothes for rehearsals or performances**

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs.

Possible indicators include:

- **Poor hygiene**
- **Inappropriate clothing**
- **Persistent hunger**
- **Frequent absence from sessions**
- **Untreated medical conditions**

Staff should also remain aware of safeguarding concerns including:

- **Bullying**

- **Cyberbullying**
- **Online abuse**
- **Grooming**
- **Criminal exploitation**
- **Child sexual exploitation**
- **Domestic abuse**
- **Self-harm**
- **Peer-on-peer abuse**
- **Radicalisation**
- **Exposure to harmful online content**

Not every indicator means abuse is occurring. However, concerns should never be ignored and must always be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

If any member of staff, volunteer or contractor has concerns about the welfare of a child, they must act immediately.

Safeguarding concerns should always be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and no later than the end of the same day.

Staff should never:

- **Assume someone else has reported the concern.**
- **Attempt to investigate the concern themselves.**
- **Promise confidentiality to a child.**
- **Delay reporting because they are unsure.**

If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, emergency services should be contacted by calling **999** before informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The welfare of the child must always take priority.

9. Responding to a Disclosure

If a child chooses to tell you something that concerns their safety or wellbeing, your response can make a significant difference.

Do:

- **Stay calm.**
- **Listen carefully.**
- **Allow the child to speak without interruption.**
- **Take what they say seriously.**
- **Reassure them that they have done the right thing.**
- **Explain that you may need to share the information with people who can help keep them safe.**
- **Record the conversation as accurately as possible using the child's own words.**

- **Report the disclosure immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.**

Do Not:

- **Ask leading or investigative questions.**
- **Make promises you cannot keep.**
- **Express shock or disbelief.**
- **Challenge the child's account.**
- **Discuss the disclosure with anyone who does not need to know.**

The child should never be made to repeat their disclosure multiple times unless requested by the appropriate statutory agencies.

10. Recording and Reporting

Every safeguarding concern must be recorded accurately and confidentially.

Records should include:

- **Child's full name**
- **Date and time**
- **Nature of the concern**
- **What was seen, heard or disclosed**
- **Exact words used by the child where possible**
- **Any witnesses**
- **Actions taken**
- **Name of the person completing the report**

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and shared only with those who have a legitimate safeguarding responsibility.

Confidentiality should never prevent information being shared where this is necessary to protect a child.

11. Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers or Contractors

Hazza Theatre Academy is committed to creating a culture where concerns about adults working with children can be raised safely and without fear.

Any allegation that an adult has:

- **Behaved in a way that has harmed or may harm a child;**
- **Committed a criminal offence against a child;**
- **Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children; or**
- **Failed to maintain appropriate professional boundaries,**

must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where appropriate, referrals will be made to Children's Social Care, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

All allegations will be treated fairly, confidentially and in accordance with statutory guidance.

12. Whistleblowing

All staff, volunteers and contractors have a duty to report concerns about unsafe practice or misconduct within the Academy.

This includes concerns about:

- **Poor safeguarding practice**
- **Inappropriate behaviour by adults**
- **Failure to follow safeguarding procedures**
- **Behaviour that places children at risk**

Anyone raising a genuine concern in good faith will be supported and treated fairly.

No member of staff or volunteer will be disadvantaged for reporting a safeguarding concern honestly and appropriately.

13. Safeguarding During Classes, Rehearsals & Performances

Hazza Theatre Academy recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond weekly classes and apply equally during rehearsals, performances and any Academy event.

Appropriate supervision will be maintained throughout all Academy activities, whether held in our regular venues, hired rehearsal spaces or professional theatres.

Supervision

Children will be supervised by suitably trained members of staff throughout organised Academy activities.

Registers will be taken at the beginning of each session to ensure all children are accounted for.

Children must not leave a class, rehearsal or performance venue without permission from a member of staff and must be collected by a parent, carer or another authorised adult unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in advance.

Where performances take place in theatres, additional supervision arrangements may be introduced depending on the size and nature of the production.

Rehearsals

During rehearsals, staff will:

- Maintain appropriate supervision at all times.
- Ensure rehearsal spaces remain safe and suitable.
- Monitor children's wellbeing throughout longer rehearsal days.

- Provide regular breaks where appropriate.
- Ensure emergency exits remain clear and accessible.
- Complete venue-specific risk assessments where necessary.

Theatre Performances

When performances take place in theatres or external venues:

- Children will remain under the supervision of Hazza Theatre Academy staff or licensed chaperones until they are signed out to a parent or authorised adult.
- Access to backstage areas will be restricted to authorised personnel only.
- Dressing rooms should remain safe, respectful and appropriately supervised.
- Children should never be left unsupervised backstage unless this has been risk assessed and deemed appropriate for their age.
- Staff will ensure children know who to approach if they need support during a performance.
- Fire evacuation procedures will be explained before each performance.

Parents and audience members will not normally have unrestricted access to backstage areas unless authorised by Academy staff.

14. Professional Boundaries & Staff Conduct

All adults representing Hazza Theatre Academy are expected to maintain the highest professional standards.

Staff, volunteers and contractors must always:

- Treat every child fairly and with respect.
- Be positive role models.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Use appropriate language and behaviour.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour.
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly.
- Follow Academy safeguarding procedures.

Adults must never:

- Develop inappropriate personal relationships with children.
- Communicate privately with children through personal social media accounts.
- Exchange personal contact details unless authorised as part of Academy procedures.
- Be alone with a child where this can reasonably be avoided.
- Use inappropriate or offensive language.
- Consume alcohol or illegal substances whilst responsible for children.

Where physical contact is necessary during performing arts training, it must always:

- Be appropriate.
- Be explained beforehand where possible.

- Be respectful.
- Be proportionate.
- Be for the child's benefit and only where necessary for instruction or safety.

Children should always be encouraged to communicate if they feel uncomfortable.

15. Photography, Filming & Online Safety

Hazza Theatre Academy recognises that photographs and videos play an important role in celebrating children's achievements while also recognising the need to safeguard children.

Photographs or videos will only be taken where appropriate consent has been obtained through the Academy's registration process or specific event consent.

Images will be used responsibly for purposes including:

- Academy marketing
- Website
- Social media
- Promotional material
- Show programmes

Wherever possible, children will not be identified by full name alongside photographs.

Photography and filming may be restricted in certain areas, particularly backstage and within dressing rooms, to protect children's privacy.

Staff should never use personal devices to take photographs of children unless authorised by the Academy.

Online communication with children should only take place through approved Academy channels where necessary.

16. Safer Recruitment & Training

Hazza Theatre Academy is committed to ensuring suitable adults work with children.

Where appropriate, staff and volunteers working directly with children will:

- Hold an appropriate Enhanced DBS check.
- Receive safeguarding training relevant to their role.
- Understand this policy before working with children.
- Receive regular safeguarding updates.

Visiting teachers, contractors and volunteers will be expected to follow Academy safeguarding procedures whilst working on behalf of Hazza Theatre Academy.

17. Confidentiality

Information relating to safeguarding concerns will be treated sensitively and shared only with those who need to know in order to protect a child.

All safeguarding records will be stored securely.

While confidentiality is important, it must never prevent appropriate information being shared where this is necessary to safeguard a child.

18. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where:

- Legislation changes.
- National safeguarding guidance is updated.
- Organisational procedures change.
- A safeguarding incident identifies improvements that should be made.

All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves with the most recent version of this policy.

Key Contact

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Policy Approval

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Organisation: Hazza Theatre Academy

Approved By: Harrison Tyler Horsfall

Position: Founder & Designated Safeguarding Lead

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