Safeguarding Policy

Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation

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1. INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW
This Safeguarding Policy outlines Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation's (CYTO) policy and procedures for safeguarding children and young people. This policy serves as a guide to staff - salaried, freelance, or volunteer - to prevent abuse and neglect amongst CYTO members, and outlines procedures for reporting concerns, and ensuring the organisation's compliance with UK safeguarding standards and legislation.

WHAT WE RECOGNISE
As a producing youth theatre, CYTO recognises that safeguarding extends beyond workshop practice and includes every aspect of rehearsals, performances, audience management, licensing, technical production and the public presentation of young people.

WHAT WE DO
CYTO provides young people aged 6-19 with an innovative programme of workshops in acting, production & technical theatre, youth board sessions, script writing, script reading and the chance to appear in over six productions a year.

CYTO is committed to the welfare and safety of the people it serves. CYTO's team - salaried, freelance, or volunteer - share theatrical skills with our members in a safe environment, encouraging personal development and boosting physical and mental wellbeing. These activities take place at CYTO's venue at The Shoestring Theatre, Oakley Road, London, SE25 4XG, in external venues and hired spaces, and occasionally online via Zoom or Teams.

The types of contact that staff - salaried, freelance or volunteer - have with children and young people includes:

- Workshops and/or rehearsals
- Theatrical performances both at CYTO and other theatre venues
- Backstage at performances, including hair, make-up, costumes and chaperoning
- Email correspondence
- Social media, including Facebook, TikTok and Instagram
- Theatre trips
- External promotional opportunities such as South Norwood Community Festival
- Youth board session
- Other pastoral care during breaks or downtime in sessions.

The aim of this policy
This policy aims to ensure that CYTO undertakes its responsibilities with regard to the protection of children and young people and will respond to concerns appropriately.

This Safeguarding Policy establishes a framework to support salaried, freelance and volunteer staff in their practices and clarifies CYTO's expectations and commitment to welfare.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To protect the welfare and well-being of vulnerable individuals, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults, from harm, abuse, or neglect. The key purposes of a safeguarding policy are:

A. Prevention of Harm: It establishes clear guidelines and procedures for identifying and preventing abuse, harm, or exploitation.
B. Promoting Safe Practices: Ensures that organisations, institutions, and individuals working with vulnerable groups follow best practices to create safe environments.
C. Accountability: Outlines the responsibilities of staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders in protecting vulnerable people, holding them accountable for following the policy.
D. Reporting and Action: Provides clear procedures for reporting concerns, suspicions, or incidents of abuse, ensuring that the appropriate action is taken promptly and effectively.
E. Compliance with Law and Regulations: Ensures organisations comply with local laws, regulations, and safeguarding standards required by governing bodies or institutions.
F. Support and Training: Educates and trains staff and volunteers to recognise signs of abuse and know how to respond appropriately.
G. Taking Action: to enable everybody at CYTO can achieve the best outcomes.

Ultimately, safeguarding policies aim to create a culture of safety and vigilance to ensure everybody at CYTO has a nurturing space to grow.

CYTO recognises that Safeguarding is the responsibility of all adults involved in the organisation and applies to all service users, especially young people, that we interact with.

3. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England, including:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023, as amended)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- The Care Act 2014
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Human Right Act (1998)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- Local Safeguarding Partnership Procedures (Croydon)

- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Online Safety Act (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)

This Safeguarding Policy should not be read or understood in isolation. It forms part of CYTO's wider framework of policies, procedures and organisational responsibilities and should be read in conjunction with all other relevant CYTO policies to ensure a consistent, joined-up approach to safeguarding, welfare and the protection of everyone involved with the organisation. These include:

- Child Protection Policy
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy
- Data Protection and GDPR Policy
- Members' Code of Conduct
- The Team Code of Conduct
- Workshop Volunteers Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Workshop Risk Assessments
- Production Risk Assessments

4. DEFINITIONS

Child - Anyone who is under the age of 18. Note: CYTO's duty of care applies to all our members, including those over the age of 18 (some of whom may be vulnerable young adults).

Adult - Tutors, directors, staff, volunteers, parents, carers, guardians, hirers, participants of hirers workshops, contractors and visitors who are 18 years old and over.

Vulnerable Adult - A person over the age of 18 who needs extra support or care because of an illness, disability, or other impairment, and is unable to fully safeguard themselves from harm or exploitation. We recognise that some people do not identify as vulnerable, even when they are. We also recognise that an individual can be temporarily considered vulnerable.

Abuse - Any action that causes harm, injury, or distress to another person, particularly where there is an imbalance of power or trust. It can be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, or neglectful, and may occur in person or online. This includes peer to peer

abuse as well as adult on child. Abuse can be perpetrated by members of any class, race, belief system, age group, gender and sexual orientation. (See “definitions of abuse” for a further break down).

Contextual-safeguarding (also known as extra-familial) - An approach that recognises that young people may be at risk of harm outside their home, in settings such as schools, peer groups, or communities, and seeks to identify and address these wider environmental risks. Our aim is for members, staff & volunteers to understand our local community and its culture in order to be aware of potential risks that young people may face.

Extra-familial harms - The risks and harm that children and young people may experience outside their family environment, such as from peers, in schools, online, or within their community. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.

Mental Health - A person’s emotional, psychological, and social well-being, affecting how they think, feel, and behave. Good mental health enables individuals to cope with life’s challenges, work productively, and contribute to their community. The NSPCC emphasises that good mental health allows children and young people to thrive, but they also acknowledge that many factors, including trauma, abuse, or neglect, can negatively impact mental health. They focus on preventing harm and supporting children to recover and build resilience if mental health challenges arise.

5. KEY PRINCIPALS OF SAFEGUARDING

The key principles of safeguarding, particularly in the context of children and vulnerable adults, are based on guidance such as the Care Act 2014 (for adults) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (for children) in the UK. These principles ensure a consistent, person-centred approach to protection.

Child- and Young Person-Centred Approach - The welfare and best interests of the young people are paramount. Every decision, from rehearsal planning to interactions, should prioritise their safety and emotional wellbeing.

Inclusive, Respectful, and Anti-discriminatory Practice - CYTO prides itself on being inclusive and reflecting the communities it serves. Safeguarding should actively uphold equity, anti-racism, and cultural sensitivity, ensuring every young person feels valued and protected.

Creating Brave Spaces - workshop, meeting, rehearsal and performance spaces should be properly risk assessed, appropriately supervised, and well organised. Clear protocols for physical contact, appropriate language and boundaries should be agreed with members. Spaces where young people feel safe allows for a culture of bravery to be created which encourages growth and accelerates learning.

Safe Recruitment and Training - All staff, volunteers, and external facilitators should undergo appropriate background checks (e.g. DBS) and receive regular safeguarding training. This ensures everyone is equipped to recognise and respond to concerns responsibly.

Clear Designated Safeguarding Leads - CYTO appoints two Designated Safeguarding Leads, who are trained to handle concerns, disclosures, and to coordinate responses, ensuring clarity, accountability and effective reporting.

Explicit Behaviour Codes and Good Practice - Practices should be fully transparent and founded on trust. There should be no private or unobserved interactions with young people, appropriate physical contact, and clear boundaries to prevent any form of misconduct.

Empowerment and Participation - Young people should have avenues to voice concerns, share feedback, and participate in shaping safeguarding processes. This helps to develop their awareness of safeguarding and empowers them to be active participants in our supportive and nurtured community of creatives.

Robust Reporting, Response & External Links - CYTO clearly defines procedures for responding to safeguarding concerns, including logging, escalation, and liaising with external agencies when necessary, such as children's services or the police.

Integration with Wider Organisational Planning and Policies - Safeguarding should remain embedded in CYTO's broader planning and policies, such as codes of conduct, health and safety, whistleblowing, and complaints, to ensure coherence and enforceability.

Ongoing Review and Cultural Embedding - Safeguarding policies must be regularly reviewed, updated, and audited. Training should be refreshed, and feedback from young people, staff, and external stakeholders should inform continuous improvement.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS

The purpose of a Designated Safeguarding Lead is to ensure the effective protection of children and vulnerable individuals by leading on safeguarding matters and acting as the main point of contact for concerns. While our DSLs oversee safeguarding matters at CYTO, it is important to note that **all CYTO staff members and volunteers are responsible for safeguarding** our members.

The key responsibilities of our DSLs are:

Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

Receive and respond to safeguarding disclosures or concerns from staff, volunteers, or young people.

Record and report concerns accurately and promptly, following organisational procedures.

Liaise with external agencies, such as social services or the police, when necessary.

Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date, compliant with legislation, and effectively implemented.

Provide support and guidance to staff and volunteers on safeguarding matters.

Ensure all staff and volunteers receive regular safeguarding training and understand their responsibilities.

Maintain secure, confidential records of all safeguarding incidents and concerns.

Promote a culture of safeguarding within the organisation, ensuring that it is embedded in all activities.

Attend regular safeguarding training to stay informed of current legislation and best practices.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - CHAPERONES

All chaperones engaged by CYTO must be suitably vetted, including enhanced DBS checks and safeguarding training, and must understand their responsibilities in line with local authority licensing regulations. Their primary duty is to act in the best interests of the young people in their care, ensuring that the environment is safe, supportive, and conducive to the participants' creative and personal development. Those who are applying to be licensed chaperones need to obtain the application form from the local authority in which they live. The requirements differ from local authority to local authority. Some require mediatory training while others simply include a leaflet with guidance notes on it.

As with our workshop staffing ratios, we work on a 1:6 for 6-8 year olds, 1:8 for 9-12 year olds and 1:10 for 13-17 year olds.

The duties of a **licensed chaperone** are legally defined to ensure the **safety, welfare, and proper supervision** of children who take part in performances, rehearsals, or other regulated activities. Below are the **main duties** of a licensed chaperone, especially in the context of youth theatre or entertainment:

Key Duties of a Licensed Chaperone

Ensure the Child's Safety and Welfare at All Times

The chaperone acts in **loco parentis** (in place of the parent), responsible for the child's care, comfort, and supervision.

Must ensure the child is not exposed to **harm, abuse, neglect**, or **unsafe conditions**.

Supervise the Child During All Activities

Always remain with or near the child unless another responsible adult takes over.

Ensure that the child is **appropriately supervised** backstage, in dressing rooms, during breaks, and between performances or rehearsals.

Ensure Adequate Rest, Meals, and Breaks

Make sure children have access to food, rest, and water.

Monitor compliance with **working hour limits**, ensuring children are not overworked or over-exposed to stress.

Know and Enforce the Terms of the Child's Performance Licence

Understand the details of the licence (e.g. permitted hours, locations, and dates) and ensure all conditions are met.

Monitor Health and Wellbeing

Be alert for signs of **illness, injury, or distress**, and take appropriate action (including removing the child from the activity if needed).

Keep a record of any incidents and report them as required.

Maintain Professional Boundaries

Do not engage in inappropriate behaviour or conversation.

Uphold confidentiality and follow safeguarding protocols.

Report Safeguarding Concerns Immediately

Any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing must be reported to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or relevant authority, in line with safeguarding procedures.

Travel and Dismissal

Supervise children during travel i.e. trips to the theatre, workshop etc.

Ensure children are only handed over to their parent/carer or another authorised adult after an activity.

These duties are set out in **child performance regulations**, such as:

- **The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014**
- Guidance from **local authorities** (e.g., Croydon Council)
- Safeguarding standards such as those from **NSPCC** or **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES - ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The purpose of the code of conduct is to communicate the safeguarding responsibilities for all staff and volunteers at CYTO.

Prioritise the welfare of all young people, ensuring a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment at all times.

Maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoiding any behaviour that could be misinterpreted. An important phrase to remember is **"we are friendly, not friends."**

Relationships should always remain professional, with appropriate boundaries maintained both during and outside CYTO activities.

Treat all young people with dignity and respect, regardless of their background, ability, identity, or beliefs.

Never use physical punishment, aggressive language, a raised voice or humiliating behaviour under any circumstances.

Avoid being alone with a young person in private, unless absolutely necessary and in line with safeguarding procedures.

Report any safeguarding concerns or disclosures immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, following CYTO's procedures.

Use inclusive, age-appropriate, and respectful communication, both in person and online, and avoid favouritism.

Staff and Volunteers must not communicate with members through personal messaging accounts including WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Facebook Messenger or similar platforms. Instead, official email from a CYTO account or phone conversation from CYTO's landline to an official parent/carer/guardian contact number.

Promote positive behaviour and act as a role model by demonstrating integrity, fairness, and professionalism.

Participate in required safeguarding and health & safety training and adhere to all CYTO policies and procedures at all times.

9. SAFE RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

The purpose of safe recruitment practices is to ensure that only suitable, qualified, and trustworthy individuals work with children and young people, helping to create a safe and protective environment.

Clear Role Descriptions - Provide detailed job/volunteer role descriptions outlining responsibilities, safeguarding expectations, and required qualifications/experience.

Application Expectations - Require all applicants to include work history, relevant experience, level of education and any gaps in employment in their application.

Interviews with Safeguarding Questions - Conduct face-to-face or virtual interviews that include specific questions about safeguarding knowledge, values, and scenarios.

Two Independent References - Obtain at least two references, including one from a recent employer or relevant organisation, and verify them before appointment.

Enhanced DBS Checks - Ensure all staff and volunteers working with young people undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before starting. CYTO removes any financial barrier to this by paying for DBS checked to be undertaken.

Right to Work and Identity Checks - Verify the candidate's identity and legal right to work in the UK using official documentation.

Declaration of Criminal Convictions - Ask candidates to declare any criminal convictions or investigations, even if they are spent, in line with the role's requirements.

Induction with Safeguarding Training - Provide all new staff and volunteers with a safeguarding induction and training before they begin working with young people.

Probationary Period - Implement a probationary period during which performance, conduct, and safeguarding awareness are monitored.

Ongoing Supervision and Monitoring - Maintain regular supervision, spot-checks, and performance reviews to ensure staff and volunteers uphold safeguarding standards.

10. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation prioritises safeguarding training and awareness to ensure all staff and volunteers are equipped to recognise, respond to, and prevent harm, creating a safe and supportive environment for young people.

Annual In-house Safeguarding Training - CYTO commits to annual safeguarding training for its facilitators and workshop volunteers.

Access to Free Safeguarding Training - Any CYTO staff member or volunteer can access additional free training via our membership to London Youth (https://londonyouth.org/events/)

Additional Safeguarding Training - Any staff member or volunteer can request to meet with the Artistic Director or the DSLs to receive additional safeguarding training at any time.

Accessible Policies - The Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection policy remains available to download on the footer of any page of the website (https://www.cyto.org.uk/) at all times. Hard copies and accessible versions of the policy can be requested at any time by emailing the Artistic Director.

Safeguarding Awareness for Young People - CYTO's youth board contribute to the safeguarding policy and also sign off on our annual review of it. This helps ensure safeguarding is embedded in their decision making as much as it is in the wider organisation. Facilitators are encouraged to discuss safeguarding and the procedures surrounding it with our members during sessions - providing key information about who they can talk to about any concerns, what happens after a disclosure and how to reach the DSLs should they wish to speak directly with them.

Working Towards Better Practice - CYTO aims to engage as many relevant staff and volunteers in First Aid Training, Mental Health First Aid Training as possible. We also wish to increase the number of licensed chaperones we have within the organisation. While CYTO will cover the cost of these there is an expectation of 6 months continued service with the organisation following the training to ensure impact. These opportunities will be offered to staff and volunteers once they have completed their probationary period, typically around 14 weeks (one term). Additional training will be promoted across the team and accessible to staff via our membership with London Youth.

11. WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

At CYTO, the safety, wellbeing, and inclusion of all young people are at the heart of everything we do. All staff and volunteers must treat young people with respect, fairness, and dignity, regardless of their background, identity, or beliefs. We are committed to creating a positive and supportive environment where every young person feels heard, valued, and safe to express themselves creatively.

We encourage young people to speak openly and share concerns without fear of judgment. All staff and volunteers must be alert to signs of harm and respond calmly and supportively to any disclosure, reporting concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Challenging inappropriate behaviour or language, whether from young people or adults—is part of our shared responsibility to uphold a culture of respect, safety, and trust throughout CYTO.

Staff to young people ratios - 1:6 for 6-8 year olds, 1:8 for 9-12 year olds and 1:10 for 13-17 year olds.

Call and Response - facilitators are encouraged to share a call and response line with their groups. This could be “(name of group),” and they respond “Action!” This can be used to gain the immediate attention of the young people, if something unsafe is happening in the space.

Avoid using “pet-names” - While seemingly endearing, pet names can be misinterpreted by young people. While nicknames are fine, pet-names like “Sweetie,” “Mate,” “Bruv,” or “Lovely” may create attachment issues, especially if they don’t experience this at home.

Programming Risk Assessment - Every production should complete a safeguarding review before being programmed considering:

- intimacy
- violence
- discriminatory language
- costume
- audience interaction
- physical contact
- age appropriateness
- technical risks
- photography considerations

Physical Contact - Theatre exercises may require physical contact. These exercises must only be conducted after a discussion about appropriate physical contact and consent. A child must maintain their right to refuse their consent to physical contact without rebuke. Tutors are responsible for adapting exercises to work without the need for physical contact

where necessary. Where exercises involve changing partners throughout, new consent must be sought in each new grouping.

Where demonstrations of exercises involving physical contact are required, the tutor should aim to use another adult in the space. Should they be working independently with a group of young people, they should verbally describe the exercise for consenting children to explore together.

In rare circumstances where physical contact between an adult and a child is require consent must first be sought and another adult must be present in the space.

If physical contact is required in a production or play, the children must be made aware of this prior to casting the play. If the child changes their mind during the process, every reasonable adaptation should be made to ensure they are comfortable. Only when adaptations have been thoroughly thought through and no solution found, should a recasting take place.

Directors should consider the group they will be working with ahead of programming shows containing physical contact to ensure the group are comfortable with working with such material.

Curse Words - It is not appropriate for any one under the age of 12 to use or be exposed to curse words at CYTO. Those aged twelve and up must be made aware that there are curse words in the show ahead of agreeing to participate. Audiences must be made aware of strong language ahead of purchasing tickets and be warned via signage ahead of entering the auditorium. If a participant changes their mind about using curse words, directors should work with the young person to find adaptations to ensure they are comfortable. If no solution can be found and only as a last resort, a recasting may take place.

Directors should consider the group they will be working with ahead of programming shows containing curse words to ensure the group are comfortable working with such material.

Prejudice-Based Language or Actions - It is not appropriate for any one under the age of 12 to use or be exposed to racist, homophobic, transphobic or any other prejudice-based language or actions at CYTO.

Prejudice based language or actions in productions, i.e. a derogatory insult or opinion expressed by a character or an insulting gesture or imitation, must be discussed with the children ahead of their use. Discussion should revolve around the context of the insult or phrase ensuring that there is a common understanding of what is intended. Children should be able to opt out of their involvement should it make them feel uncomfortable.

To ensure thorough understanding of the context of the offensive language or action and to provide support for children from communities who the phrase is directed at, we would expect that a member of the staff or volunteer who is part of the community that the insult is aimed at should be an active part of the process.

Directors should consider the group they will be working with ahead of programming shows containing Racist, homophobic, transphobic or any other prejudice-based language or actions to ensure the group are comfortable working with such material.

Sexual Simulation, Intimacy and Violent Actions - It is not appropriate for any one under the age of sixteen to use or be exposed to naturalistic sexual or violent actions at CYTO.

We recognise that theatre offers many opportunities to suggest sexual acts or violence without naturalistic simulations. These options should be explored with a view to safeguarding young people and audiences from trauma.

Where a young person is required to simulate sexual activity, including kisses of a romantic nature or extreme violence, the director should prepare a budget to hire a qualified intimacy directors and/or fight coordinators to ensure the safety and promote the wellbeing of the young people. Any simulation of sex or violence must be discussed with the management committee and the DSL ahead of rehearsal, who may deem it necessary to consult with parents/carers/guardians ahead of making a decision. Alternative plans must be made should any concerned party deny permission.

Should an actor change their mind during the process, directors are responsible for making adaptations to ensure the young people are comfortable.

Audiences should be warned of staged sexual or violent actions ahead of purchasing ticket and via signage prior to entering the performance space.

Directors should consider the group they will be working with ahead of programming shows containing sexual or violent action to ensure the group are comfortable working with such material.

Costume Design Considerations - Costumes should be designed with safeguarding in mind. Costumes must always be age appropriate and be made to fit each young person to avoid any malfunctions on stage. Where costume changes are required, young people should be encourage to wear a base layer and offered a quick change space back stage to ensure their privacy and dignity. The same provision must be provided when performing in other venues.

Safety in Dressing Rooms - this is one of the rare occasions that young people are left unsupervised at CYTO. It is only in emergency situations, where a staff member is permitted to enter a dressing room while young people are changing. This is to respect the members privacy and dignity. Clear expectations of behaviour should be outlined before they are asked to change to avoid the need for staff members to enter.

Dressing rooms should be screened off and divided by gender no matter how old the young people are. We recognise that some young people do not prescribe to gender norms and should be asked which dressing space they'd prefer to be in. Should any member prefer to change in a space separately to everybody else, this must be accommodated. Reasons may include religious beliefs, physical injuries, gender identity or general discomfort with changing in front of others. Staff members **do not** need to know why a young person may wish to change separately to others.

Arrangements should be made for those who have disabilities that disallow them to change independently. Solutions here could include, allowing the young person to take their costume home and to arrive at the theatre in costume or allowing space and time for a parent/carer/guardian to assist them with changing in private. These situations should be

managed on a case-by-case basis with the best interests and wellbeing of the young person at the forefront of decision making.

If a young person requires help to change, the young person should be encouraged to dress independently with instructions from a staff member or volunteer. Failing this, a fellow member should be asked to help. If this is still unachievable then a staff member or volunteer can intervene, with another staff member present and ensuring they have the young person consent if physical contact is required.

If a staff member or volunteer is required to enter the dressing room, an appropriate amount of time should be allotted in order for members to be cover up before the they enters. In a first aid circumstance, the injured person becomes a priority however a vocal warning that you are entering should be heard by all.

The same provision must be provided when performing in other venues.

Safety in toilet facilities - CYTO is currently equipped with one toilet for females (four cubicles), one toilet for males (three cubicles) and one accessible toilet (one cubicle).

All adults, staff and volunteers should use the accessible toilet while children are in the building. Only in emergency situations should a staff member or volunteer enter the other toilets.

When adult hirers are sharing the building while CYTO members are in the building, they should be made aware that they too must only use the accessible toilet.

During performances, CYTO members who are performing must be offered to use the toilets between thirty and forty minutes prior to a show. Audience must be instructed that the doors to the building open only thirty minutes before the performance. Should a child need the toilet after 30 minutes prior to the show or during it, they should be chaperoned to the accessible toilet, where the staff member stands outside, before returning them backstage.

Safety during production week - Technical and dress rehearsals are a critical part of the production process and are mandatory for all cast and crew. These sessions allow for the safe integration of technical elements such as lighting, sound, set changes, and costume transitions. They are the only opportunity for participants to experience and rehearse under full performance conditions before an audience is present. Non-attendance may result in individuals being unfamiliar with safety procedures, potentially putting themselves and others at risk during performances.

Punctuality is also a key safeguarding consideration. Call times are established to allow adequate time for warm-ups, briefings, and the safe preparation of both individuals and the production environment. Late arrivals can lead to rushed or incomplete preparation, which increases the likelihood of accidents or distress. All participants, staff, and volunteers are expected to respect call times and attend all required rehearsals to support a safe, professional, and inclusive working environment. Failure to do so may result in the young person being asked to leave the production.

Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) - CYTO produces three principal productions each year that require a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 and The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations

2014. CYTO will apply to the relevant local authority for a BOPA for each applicable production.

As part of every BOPA application, CYTO will ensure that:

- suitable safeguarding arrangements are in place for all children taking part;
- appropriate staffing ratios and licensed chaperones are provided where required;
- risk assessments are completed for rehearsals, performances and backstage areas;
- emergency procedures and first aid provision are in place;
- performance schedules comply with legislation relating to children taking part in performances;
- parents/carers are provided with appropriate information regarding rehearsals, performances and safeguarding arrangements;
- all staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities throughout the production process.

The Artistic Director, Designated Safeguarding Leads and Production Team are responsible for ensuring that all conditions attached to a Body of Persons Approval are complied with throughout rehearsals and performances.

Where a production falls outside the scope of a Body of Persons Approval, CYTO will ensure that the appropriate individual child performance licences are obtained where required.

12. ONLINE SAFETY AND USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

The purpose of the Online Safety and Use of Digital Technology rules at CYTO is to protect young people from inappropriate content, ensure respectful behaviour online, and to promote the safe use of technology in creative projects.

Young people must use the internet and digital devices at CYTO responsibly and respectfully, following staff instructions at all times.

Personal information (such as full name, address, phone number, or school details) should never be shared online during CYTO activities.

Young people must not take photos, videos, or recordings of others without permission from both the individual and a member of staff.

Accessing inappropriate websites, content, or engaging in unsafe online behaviour is strictly prohibited during CYTO sessions or on CYTO devices and will be reported to the young person's parent/carer/guardian.

Online behaviour should reflect CYTO's values of respect, inclusion, and creativity cyberbullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

Young people are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult at CYTO if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable about anything they see or experience online.

Any concerns about online safety or digital behaviour must be reported immediately to a staff member or the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Use of personal devices may be restricted during sessions to ensure focus, safety, and protection of all participants.

Staff, Volunteers and Young People should use AI responsibly. AI must never be used to:

- generate images or recordings of members without consent
- Impersonate members, volunteers or staff
- Produce manipulated (“deepfake”) images or audio
- Share confidential safeguarding information
- Make safeguarding related decisions without consultation with the DSL.

Any concerns regarding AI-generated content involving members should be reported immediately to the DSL.

13. USE OF POWER TOOLS AND TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT

The purpose of rules around the use of tools and technology for young people at CYTO is to ensure their safety by preventing accidents and promoting responsible, supervised use of equipment in a controlled environment.

Only experienced staff or volunteers may facilitate the use power tools or technical equipment, and they must be confident and competent in their use.

Young people must not use power tools or technical equipment unless under direct supervision, and only if they have received age-appropriate training and permission.

A full risk assessment must be completed before any activity involving tools or equipment takes place.

All tools and equipment must be stored securely, out of reach of young people when not in use.

Appropriate protective equipment (e.g. gloves, goggles, ear protection) must be worn, and provided by CYTO for all relevant activities.

Workshops or backstage areas where tools are in use must be clearly supervised, and access limited to authorised individuals.

Young people must be briefed on safety procedures and expected behaviour before engaging in any technical or construction activities.

Faulty or damaged tools must be reported immediately, taken out of use, and repaired or replaced before further use.

Manual tools must be handled responsibly, and young people must be shown the correct way to use and carry them.

No food, drink, or unsupervised use of personal devices is permitted in areas where tools or technical equipment are in use, to minimise distractions and risk.

14. USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRICAL DEVICES

At CYTO, we recognise that personal electrical devices such as smartphones, tablets, and headphones are important tools for communication and creativity. However, to ensure a safe and focused environment during sessions, the use of these devices by young people must be carefully managed. Personal devices should be used responsibly and respectfully, without disrupting rehearsals, workshops, or performances.

During CYTO activities, personal electrical devices may be restricted or used only at designated times and areas, as directed by staff. This helps maintain engagement, safety, and supervision. Young people are encouraged to keep devices on silent or switched off while participating in sessions to minimise distractions. Additionally, CYTO staff reserve the right to ask for devices to be put away if their use is deemed inappropriate or disruptive.

To further safeguard young people and the organisation, all charging cables and electrical accessories brought in by young people must be inspected for damage before use. Any cables that are frayed, worn, or faulty must not be used and should be reported to staff immediately to prevent electrical hazards such as shocks or fires.

CYTO is committed to safeguarding all young people, and part of this involves protecting them from potential risks related to device use, including inappropriate content or communication. Any concerns about misuse of personal devices should be reported to staff immediately. Parents/carers/guardians will be informed if an inappropriate use of a personal electrical device is reported or witnessed.

During productions, the use of mobile phone should be closely monitored, particularly with regard to photos and videos being taken. While we recognise members will want to use their mobile phones to preserve memories of the show via videography and photography, however it is strictly banned in the dressing rooms or quick change areas. We recognise that mobile phones are used backstage for a number of reasons, which is permitted, however consent must be sought from any person featured, (cast, crew, staff and/or volunteer) prior to any photographs, videos or audio recordings.

Live-streaming from backstage, dressing rooms or rehearsal spaces is prohibited.

15. HEALTH & SAFETY AND FIRST AID

The purpose of health and safety and first aid procedures is to prevent accidents and injuries, ensure prompt and effective care when incidents occur, and maintain a safe environment for everyone involved.

CYTO ensures a safe environment by regularly assessing risks associated with all activities, venues, and equipment.

All staff and volunteers receive a health and safety briefing relevant to their roles, including fire safety and emergency procedures.

Certified First Aiders are available at all sessions and rehearsals, and are identified to all staff members.

First Aid kits are accessible and regularly checked to ensure they are fully stocked and up to date. CYTO's first aid kits are located in the theatre (first aid kit, eye-wash kit and single-use ice-packs) and in the kitchen (first aid kit and single-use ice-packs). Only registered first-aiders should offer first aid. If for whatever reason, they are unavailable a responsible adult should call 999 and follow their advice.

Any injuries or accidents must be recorded promptly in an accident book and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Even the smallest of injuries should be recorded. Many small injuries recorded together may build a bigger picture of a more serious incident.

Young people with specific medical needs or allergies must have individual care plans, and staff must be aware of these.

Safe handling and storage of props, sets, costumes, and technical equipment is mandatory to prevent injury. Staff and volunteers should be appropriately trained and supported when carrying out higher risk activities.

Emergency evacuation procedures are in place and practiced regularly, with clear exits and assembly points communicated to all.

Young people are encouraged to report hazards or unsafe conditions immediately to staff or volunteers.

CYTO promotes a culture of wellbeing by encouraging regular breaks, hydration, and a safe working environment during all activities.

Cross building contact points (intercom panels) in the office, green room and dance studio, should be made aware to all staff and volunteers. They should be trained in their use. These can be used to call for help in an emergency situation.

CCTV covers the car park, the emergency exit at the front of the building and both emergency exits at the back of the building. Live footage is available from any of the intercom panels. This could be used to identify any risks from outside (i.e. someone trying to break in). Footage is accessible for up to 30 days.

16. PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEOGRAPHY AND MEDIA CONSENT

CYTO takes photography, videography and voice recording consent very seriously. The image of somebody is their data. GDPR as well as child protection laws apply to the recorded image or voice of a person. It is incredibly important that we remain meticulous with these consents.

When signing up members' parents/carers/guardians (or members if over 18) are asked for the following consents:

- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be taken during CYTO sessions
- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be displayed at CYTO
- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be used in promotional materials that are accessible to the general public i.e. programs and flyers
- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be used on CYTO's website
- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be used on CYTO's social media platforms
- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be use in funding applications and funding reports
- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be distributed in the press (in print and/or online)
- Consent for photographs, videos and/or voice recordings of the young person to be distributed to other parent/carer/guardians and members.

Retracting Consent - CYTO members parent/carers/guardians (or members if over 18) are able to retract their consent at any time. If this happens, every reasonable effort must be made to remove/destroy the image and/or recording of the young person.

Archival Footage - While CYTO's current members are upheld with excellent safeguarding practice, we recognise that CYTO has been running for longer than most GDPR and Child Protection regulations have been around. CYTO is in possession of many photographs and recordings of young people from workshops and productions since the 1960s. This is done so with Implied Consent. Physical copies are kept in a locked spaces on CYTO's premises and are occasionally displayed at events. Digital photographs are displayed on our website (https://www.cyto.org.uk/archive) which is done so with Opt-out Consent with an email address present for the purposes of image removal requests. Some production recordings are stored on Youtube in a private channel that is not accessible to the public.

Pre-show Announcements - Prior to performances, audiences are made aware that photography and recordings of any kind are strictly forbidden. Audiences caught breaking this rule are identified and asked to delete the footage they have taken. CYTO reserves the right to refuse admission or remove audience members who repeatedly breach photography restrictions.

Young People on Stage Before Show Start

To safeguard the privacy of young people and ensure photography and videography restrictions are understood before they are visible to the audience, CYTO does not permit directors to stage pre-shows, interactive performances, or have young people already on stage while audiences are entering the auditorium.

This includes:

- performers remaining in character before the formal start of the performance;
- interactive audience engagement before the pre-show announcement;
- any performance where young people are visible before the photography and videography announcement has been delivered.

The only exceptions are where:

- no young people are present on stage; or
- the audience has already received the full photography and recording announcement before entering the auditorium.

This measure helps protect children and young people from unauthorised photography and filming during audience entry.

National Theatre Connections Productions - CYTO is a regular participant of NT Connections. Part of their process is for us to send recordings of shows to the National Theatre. Members are made aware of this in the sign-up process for being involved in this process. Footage is sent via an unlisted Youtube link to the National Theatre and then made private after the project is finished.

CYTO Photographers are DBS checked and are only allowed to share images on their portfolios after CYTO has released them. They are also aware that they must remove them if requested by CYTO.

Photography in external venues or modelling opportunities - CYTO members are photographed in external events often. If it is an external project - consent forms from the external company must be completed by parent/carer/guardians ahead of the event. External photographers must be DBS checked and photographs can only be used for their intended purpose as per the consent forms. If external venues are unable to provide the appropriate safeguarding provisions surrounding photography and videography consents including ensuring their audiences additionally follow the rules, then CYTO reserves every right to stop/cancel the event with immediate effect. Parent/carer/guardians must be informed if this is the case.

Young Person to Young Person consent - Members are encouraged to ask consent from each other before taking each other photographs. Where this trust is broken, members are encouraged to speak with a staff members, who will intervene and involve parent/carer/guardians where necessary.

17. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

We are committed to maintaining the confidentiality of all personal information relating to young people, their families, staff, and volunteers. Information will only be shared on a

need-to-know basis to protect the wellbeing and safety of individuals, in accordance with legal requirements and CYTO's safeguarding procedures. Staff and volunteers must handle all information sensitively, securely storing records and ensuring that conversations about safeguarding concerns take place in private settings. Respect for privacy is balanced with the organisation's duty to act in the best interests of young people and to safeguard them from harm.

While confidentiality is vital, CYTO recognises that safeguarding sometimes requires sharing information with relevant external agencies such as social services, the police, or health professionals. Information will be shared promptly and appropriately when there is a concern about a young person's safety or wellbeing. All staff and volunteers are trained to understand when and how to share information and must always consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are unsure. The organisation follows clear protocols to ensure that information sharing is lawful, necessary, and proportionate, always prioritising the protection of young people.

Parent/carer/guardians are made aware of this is our sign up form which states:

"Data collected, stored and distributed by CYTO will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. While it is unlikely, CYTO may be required to disclose any data by a court order or to comply with other legal requirements, including medical emergencies. We will use all reasonable endeavours to notify persons concerned before do so, unless we are legally restricted. CYTO shall never sell, rent, distribute or otherwise make user data commercially available to any third party without prior consent, except as described above. For further information please see our full Privacy Policy."

18. RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE

Abuse is any action or behaviour that intentionally harms or causes distress to a young person, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or through neglect. At CYTO, safeguarding young people from abuse is a top priority, ensuring they can participate safely and confidently in all activities. Everyone involved with CYTO has a responsibility to recognise, prevent, and respond to abuse promptly and effectively.

In order to recognise abuse, it is important to understand the types of abuse a young person may be facing.

Types of Abuse	Examples
Neglect	• Failure to provide or allow access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care • Providing care in a way that the person dislikes • Failure to administer medication as prescribed • Refusal of access to visitors • Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs • Not taking account of educational, social and recreational needs • Ignoring or isolating the person • Preventing the person from making their own decisions • Preventing access to glasses, hearing aids, dentures, etc. • Failure to ensure privacy and dignity

Types of Abuse	Examples
Psychological and Emotional Abuse	• Enforced social isolation – preventing someone accessing services, educational and social opportunities and seeing friends • Removing mobility or communication aids or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they need assistance • Preventing someone from meeting their religious and cultural needs • Preventing the expression of choice and opinion • Failure to respect privacy • Preventing stimulation, meaningful occupation or activities • Intimidation, coercion, harassment, use of threats, humiliation, bullying, swearing or verbal abuse • Addressing a person in a patronising or infantilising way • Threats of harm or abandonment • Cyber bullying
Physical Abuse	• Assault, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing • Rough handling • Scalding and burning • Physical punishments • Inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint • Making someone purposefully uncomfortable (e.g. opening a window and removing blankets) • Involuntary isolation or confinement • Misuse of medication (e.g. over-sedation) • Forcible feeding or withholding food • Unauthorised restraint, restricting movement (e.g. tying someone to a chair)
Domestic abuse	• Psychological • Physical • Sexual • Financial • Emotional
Sexual Abuse	• Rape, attempted rape or sexual assault • Inappropriate touch anywhere • Non- consensual masturbation of either or both persons • Non- consensual sexual penetration or attempted penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth • Any sexual activity that the person lacks the capacity to consent to • Inappropriate looking, sexual teasing or innuendo or sexual harassment • Sexual photography or forced use of pornography or witnessing of sexual acts • Indecent exposure
Financial and Material Abuse	• Theft of money or possessions • Fraud, scamming • Preventing a person from accessing their own money, benefits or assets • Employees taking a loan from a person using the service • Undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the person in connection with loans, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions • Arranging less care than is needed to save money to maximise inheritance • Denying assistance to manage/monitor financial affairs • Denying assistance to access benefits • Misuse of personal allowance in a care home • Misuse of benefits or direct payments in a family home • Someone moving into a person's home and living rent free without agreement or under duress • False representation, using another person's bank account, cards or documents • Exploitation of a person's money or assets, e.g. unauthorised use of a car • Misuse of a power of attorney, deputy, appointeeship or other legal authority • Rogue trading – e.g. unnecessary or overpriced property repairs and failure to carry out agreed repairs or poor workmanship

Types of Abuse	Examples
Modern slavery	• Human trafficking • Forced labour • Domestic servitude • Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography • Debt bondage – being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to
Discriminatory Abuse	• Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010) • Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic • Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer or lip-reader • Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic • Denying basic rights to healthcare, education, employment and criminal justice relating to a protected characteristic • Substandard service provision relating to a protected characteristic
Self-neglect	• Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety • Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings • Inability to avoid self-harm • Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs • Inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs

Ways that abuse may be brought to your attention:

- A young person might share information about themself in a direct disclosure
- A young person might disclose something that they've been told about someone else
- A parent/carer/guardian might make the disclosure to you about their child or something they've heard about another young person
- A school or alternative youth provision may get in contact following a disclosure or safeguarding concern from their provision.
- You may notice poor hygiene, or a young person wearing the same clothes several days in a row.
- You may notice a young person asking for food or money from other members or consistent complaints of hunger.
- You may notice cuts or bruises on a young person.
- A young person have a stark change in behaviour - for example: they may suddenly become excessively anxious or disruptive, start isolating themself, feel tired all the time, or seem worried about going home.
- A young persons' clothing might abruptly change - either excessively covering up or wearing inappropriately revealing attire or clothing not suitable for the weather.

No matter how insignificant what has been shared or what you've noticed may seem, it is always better to share your concern with the Artistic Director or one of the DSLs. Lots of small safeguarding concerns can piece together a big picture of something much more serious.

Code of Conduct During a Disclosure

It's important to consider your own wellbeing and behaviour in these moments. It is vital to remain calm and collected during these moments. If a disclosure is becoming more than you can handle, encourage another member of staff to come over and support the process. No two disclosures are ever the same. The following are guidelines that we encourage staff and volunteers to learn as useful tools to help you and the young person during a disclosure.

Creating a Safe Space

- If you are responsible for other young people at this time, ask another member of staff to cover you and notify any co-workers that you need to go and have a chat with a member. Let them know where you will be.
- Invite the person making a disclosure to a more private space, so they can share with you with out fear of interruption.
- Ensure that there is an easy way out of the space for the young person and that you are not blocking the exit to the space. Where possible try and leave the door open.
- Reassure the young person that you are there to listen, what they share with you will be taken seriously and that sharing is the right thing to do.

During the Discussion

- Let them tell their whole story without interruption or time pressure and actively listen to everything they have to say without judgement.
- Never promise to keep secrets or make promises that you can't keep.
- Don't be scared of silence - disclosures can be very overwhelming, be patient while they get their thoughts in order.
- Don't try to investigate or quiz them, but make sure you are clear about what they are saying. It can be helpful to repeat back the words they've said to ensure you have received the story accurately.
- Don't ask leading questions or inflammatory language, for example "Can you describe the *terrible* things this person did?"
- Don't criticise the abuser or express any disbelief.
- Explain that the information they have shared will be passed on to the Safeguarding team, who are trained professionals who manage situations like this often.

How to Structure the Discussion:

Disclosures can be a distressing event for both the young person and the listener, having an understanding of the ALGEE action plan can help structure the conversation.

The **ALGEE Action Plan** is:

- **ASSESS** and assist with any crisis - assess the risk of suicide or harm and look for signs of trauma and high anxiety.
- **LISTEN** non-judgmentally.
- **GIVE** reassurance, support and information.
- **ENCOURAGE** them to seek appropriate professional help.
- **ENCOURAGE** them to seek self-help and other support strategies.

Low-Level Concerns

CYTO encourages staff and volunteers to report any behaviour that causes a sense of unease, even where it does not meet the threshold of abuse.

Recording low-level concerns helps identify patterns of behaviour and supports early intervention.

19. REPORTING PROCEDURES AND ESCALATION

If the young person is in immediate danger call 999 immediately and follow their guidance. It is important to note that mental health crises are just as urgent as physical crises.

Following this, or if the young person is not in immediate danger **complete a Record of Concern form**. This can be downloaded from the footer of any page of CYTO's website (https://www.cyto.org.uk/).

Ensure what you are writing is clear, unbiased and unemotional. Imagine it a bit like a police report. Any of your opinions or emotive language are effectively useless if the case needs to be escalated, so stick to the facts. Add as much detail as you can. Email the form to safeguarding@cyto.org.uk and notify the Artistic Director so they can highlight it to the DSLs.

While you may be well intentioned, it is important that you don't try to tackle the situation yourself. You may be putting yourself in danger. The DSLs will discuss the issue & decide on appropriate action. They must refer cases of suspected abuse to the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub), who receive and deal with all safeguarding referrals in local authority area/LADO, offer support to the staff who make referrals & refer cases, where a crime may have been committed, to the Police. It is their responsibility to monitor concerns, report back to the reporter, alert leaders & volunteers appropriately, while respecting confidentiality. It is also their responsibility to follow up referrals & progress. It's important to note that the DSLs are there to help you as well, so feel free to share if you have been personally effected by the disclosure. The DSLs will support you in the best way they can.

Alternatively, you can consult Croydon Social Services (0208 255 2888) or the NSPCC Helpline (0808 800 5000) without disclosing the identity of the child.

The DSLs may decide to discuss concerns with the member themself or the child's family unless a family member might be responsible for the abuse or someone may be endangered by the family being informed.

If the abuse involves an adult working at CYTO call the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice (020 8726 6000 Ext 24817)

20. HISTORIC SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS

CYTO recognises that it was established in 1965, at a time when many of the safeguarding laws, regulations, policies and professional standards that govern organisations working with children and young people today were not yet in place.

We acknowledge that historical safeguarding concerns or allegations may relate to events, practices or experiences dating back many decades. We recognise the potential impact that these experiences can have on individuals, both at the time and throughout their lives.

CYTO is committed to treating all historical safeguarding concerns and allegations with sensitivity, compassion, respect and appropriate seriousness, regardless of when the alleged incident occurred.

Where an individual approaches CYTO with a historical safeguarding concern or allegation, we will endeavour to:

- Listen respectfully and sensitively, providing an appropriate opportunity for the individual to share their experience.
- Treat the information shared seriously and without judgement or prejudice.
- Consider what information, records or documentation may still be available and assist in accessing these where reasonably possible and lawful.
- Cooperate appropriately with relevant statutory authorities, including the police and local safeguarding services, where required.
- Signpost individuals to appropriate independent support services and organisations where helpful.
- Provide reasonable assistance and support within the scope of CYTO's resources, responsibilities and ability to do so.

CYTO recognises that records from earlier periods may be incomplete, unavailable or no longer held, and that individuals involved may no longer be connected with the organisation. We will be open and transparent about any limitations in our ability to establish historical facts or provide further information.

The fact that an incident may have occurred before current safeguarding legislation or standards were introduced will not, in itself, prevent CYTO from considering or responding to a concern.

All historical allegations will be considered on an individual basis, with due regard to the nature of the concern, the information available, the welfare of any individuals who may currently be at risk and any appropriate statutory guidance or reporting requirements.

CYTO is committed to doing what it reasonably can to assist individuals seeking answers, acknowledgement or support in relation to historical safeguarding experiences. We recognise that we may not always be able to provide the answers or resolution an individual is seeking, but we will endeavour to approach every situation with openness, dignity, compassion and a willingness to help.

21. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Any allegation made against a staff member or volunteer will be taken seriously and handled promptly, fairly, and in accordance with CYTO’s safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance.

If an allegation suggests that a staff member or volunteer has:

- Harmed or may have harmed a young person,
- Committed a criminal offence against or related to a young person, or
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children or young people,

the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be immediately informed and will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and other relevant agencies where appropriate.

To ensure the safety of all parties and the integrity of the investigation, the individual concerned may be suspended on full pay for up to 14 days while the matter is investigated. Suspension is a neutral act and does not imply guilt. During this time, CYTO will ensure that the process is managed with sensitivity, confidentiality, and clear communication.

Support will be offered to both the person against whom the allegation is made and the young people involved. All outcomes will be documented, and appropriate actions will be taken based on the findings of the investigation.

22. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS/GUARDIANS

We believe that safeguarding young people is a shared responsibility, and strong, trusting relationships with parents, carers, and guardians are vital to keeping children safe. We are committed to working in partnership with families to promote the wellbeing, safety, and development of every young person involved in our activities. This includes keeping parents and carers informed about how we safeguard participants and the steps we take to create a safe and inclusive environment.

CYTO encourages open communication and values the insights that parents and carers can provide about their child's needs, behaviours, and experiences. We will always seek to engage families appropriately when concerns arise about a young person's welfare, unless doing so would place the young person at greater risk. Where appropriate, we will also signpost families to additional sources of support and ensure they are included in key decisions that affect their child's safety and participation at CYTO.

All parents, carers, and guardians are expected to support CYTO's safeguarding approach by keeping emergency contact details up to date, informing us of any relevant medical or welfare concerns, and reinforcing safe and respectful behaviour outside of sessions. By working together, we can build a positive, transparent safeguarding culture that helps young people feel secure, valued, and empowered both at CYTO and beyond.

23. MONITORING AND REVISING THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

CYTO is committed to maintaining high safeguarding standards and takes full responsibility for regularly monitoring and reviewing its Safeguarding Policy. The policy will be formally reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains up to date with current legislation, guidance, and best practice. In addition, CYTO will undertake an immediate review of the policy if there are significant changes in safeguarding law, organisational

structure, or in response to any incident, concern, or learning that highlights a need for improvement. This ensures that our safeguarding approach remains proactive, effective, and responsive to the needs of the young people we work with.

This Policy was recreated by Andrew McPherson (Artistic Director) in August 2025. Revised from August-November 2026 and will be reviewed again in November 2027 unless significant changes to the law or an event take place that causes need for a more immediate review.

24. KEY CONTACTS AND EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Sheril Chase - CYTO, Designated Safeguarding Lead
Donna Crookes - CYTO, Designated Safeguarding Lead
Email: safeguarding@cyto.org.uk

Anna Shields and Roger Weeks - CYTO, Co-chairs of the Board of Trustees
Tel: 020 8655 1098
Email: annashields@cyto.org.uk, rogerweeks@cyto.org.uk

Andrew McPherson - CYTO, Artistic Director
Tel: 020 8655 1098
Email: andrewmcpherson@cyto.org.uk

Croydon Safeguarding Consultation Line & MASH
Tel: 020 8726 6464

Croydon Child Protection
Tel: 020 8726 6400 / 0208 726 6000 (24 hours)
Email: childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk

Croydon Safeguarding Children Board
Tel: 020 8726 6400 ext 63358

Steven Hall - Croydon Council, Local Authority Designated Officer
Tel: 020 8726 6000 Ext 84322 / Mob: 07825 830 328
Email: steve.hall@croydon.gov.uk / lado@croydon.gov.uk
4th Floor, Zone F, Bernard Weatherill House 8 Mint Walk, Croydon, CR0 1EA

Hate Crime & Prevent Duty Coordinator - Carl Parker
Tel: 020 8726 6000 ex. 88974
carl.parker@croydon.gov.uk

Other Contacts:

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285

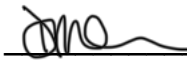
Childline Tel: 0800 1111

Text: 0800 400 2222
www.childline.org.uk

SIGNED:

Sheril Chase: 

CYTO - Designated Safeguarding Lead

Donna Crookes: 

CYTO - Designated Safeguarding Lead

Anna Shields: 

CYTO - Co-Chair of Board of Trustees

Roger Weeks: 

CYTO - Co-Chair of Board of Trustees