

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **Protection of Children, Young People & Adults at Risk**

**Last review: February 2026**

**Due for review: February 2027**

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## 1. Durham Fringe Festival (DFF) Vision and Aims

DFF is a grassroots organisation set up to stage an annual fringe arts festival in Durham, encompassing theatre, music, dance, comedy and more. It is local people, working alongside local businesses, venues & practitioners, nurturing a collective vision in the North East's most majestic city.

## 2. Safeguarding statement

Durham Fringe Festival believes that children, young people and adults at risk should not experience abuse of any kind. As a society, we all have a responsibility to promote their welfare and to keep them safe. We are committed to providing safe spaces and activities that consider their physical and emotional wellbeing that promote equality and diversity and that support their development. They will be referred to as children and adults at risk throughout this document.

## 3. The scope of the policy

This policy applies to all people working with DFF in whatever capacity: paid staff; volunteers; sessional workers; freelance workers; agency workers or contractors; students; trustees; donors; sponsors and suppliers, interns, placements, artists or anyone else working on behalf of DFF. They will be referred to as 'DFF staff and volunteers' throughout this document.

DFF staff and volunteers are expected to comply with this policy at all times. Any breach of this policy may result in action being taken against you and/or in you ceasing to be able to work for or represent DFF.

## 4. The purpose of the policy is:

- To protect children and adults at risk who engage with our organisation. This includes the children of adults who work or participate with us.
- To provide DFF staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that support and guide our approach to safeguarding and the protection of children and Adults at Risk.

## 5. Definitions of children, young people and adults at risk

We define children and young people as:

Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection (Working

Together to Safeguard Children 2018). We define adult at risk as an adult (over the age of 18) who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of any care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

## 6. Creating a safe environment

That the welfare of children and young people is paramount, as enshrined by the Children's Act 1989 and and we acknowledge the right for all children and adults at risk to be equally protected from all types of harm regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We acknowledge that some children and adults at risk may be more vulnerable than others due to their specific circumstance and experience. It is therefore vital that organisations, agencies and individuals work together to better support and promote their welfare by following guidelines laid out by the document.

We will do this by:

- Having Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)
- By having a designated Director lead to take responsibility and oversight for safeguarding arrangements
- Ensuring that all DFF staff and volunteers are aware of their safeguarding duties and have support and confidence in implementing these approaches
- Provide training for DFF staff and volunteer roles that work with children and adults at risk
- Providing effective management and supervision for all DFF staff and volunteers
- Following safe recruitment procedures for those roles that work with or come into regular contact with children and adults at risk
- Ensuring that all policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and kept up to date and reflect our commitment to safeguarding
- Having clear reporting procedures for concerns, accusations and incidents
- Providing policies for storing sensitive information and sharing information
- Ensuring incidents are dealt with, recorded and reported appropriately
- Creating a culture in which all people feel valued, safe and heard

## 7. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed based on the law and guidance in place to protect children, young people and Adults at Risk. This includes:

- The Protection of Children Act 1999, the Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Care Act 2014
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Equality Act 2010.

## 8. Raising Concerns about the procedures

If you have any concerns or questions about appropriate procedures, please contact one of DFF's Designated Safeguarding Officers at [safeguarding@durhamfringe.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@durhamfringe.co.uk)

## 9. Interpersonal behaviour between adult staff and volunteers

We ask all our members to respect our venues, other users and respect each other. All adults involved with DFF have a responsibility to model good behaviour to the young people and adults at risk who may be in the same venue.

One area of particular importance is modelling appropriate adult to adult behaviour around physical and potentially sexual behaviours. It is important that all staff and volunteers maintain a professional relationship with each other and avoid unnecessary physical contact.

We should also be concerned with moderating our own behaviour including, though not limited to thinking about our language and actions and their impact on other parties as well as those we are directly communicating with at the time

Swearing, displays of aggression and anger are not acceptable at the DFF. Similarly, it is not appropriate for staff and volunteers to become drunk or use other substances while working on behalf of DFF. Overtly sexualised behaviour is also not appropriate at the DFF.

## 10. Recruitment and Training

The majority of DFF's staff and volunteers do not work directly with children or adults at risk. Basic screening of all applications and checks are in line with our recruitment and vetting procedures.

Where the activity of the role means that DFF is entitled to request a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in relation to DFF staff and volunteers, a check will be undertaken at the appropriate level.

It is mandatory that all DFF staff and volunteers read this policy and are comfortable with its content and how to apply the policy.

All DSOs and DFF staff and volunteers who work with children and Adults at Risk will undertake suitable training.

## 11. Identifying and indicators of abuse

Abuse and neglect take many forms and can lead to a violation of someone's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, verbal or psychological. It can be the result of an act or a failure to act through neglect.

### Recognition and definitions of abuse

In summary for children and young people they are:

- Sexual Abuse – when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities by and an adult or young person or are exploited for money, power or status. Harmful sexual behaviour is when children or young people develop harmful sexual behaviour, harm themselves and others. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- Physical Abuse – deliberately hurting a child causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.
- Neglect – the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs: love; food; warmth; safety; education and medical attention.
- Emotional Abuse – when they are denied love or affection, or constantly threatened or humiliated. Sarcasm, degrading punishments and ignoring a child also undermine a child's confidence and sense of self-worth. Witnessing domestic abuse is also child abuse and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in the relationships.
- Child Trafficking – recruitment, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.
- Grooming – online or in the real world by a stranger or by someone they know eg. family member, friend or professional.

In summary for adults at risk they are:

- Physical Abuse - this is non-accidental infliction of physical force that results in, or could result in bodily injury, pain or impairment.
- Domestic Abuse – this includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse, forced marriages, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation.
- Sexual Abuse – the direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent, it can include rape, indecent assault, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography and subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts.
- Psychological Abuse – sometimes known as emotional abuse, is behaviour that has a harmful effect on a person’s emotional health, wellbeing and development.
- Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, pressure relating to an individual’s financial arrangements eg. Wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions.
- Modern Slavery – slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- Neglect and self-neglect – failure to provide the amount of care that a reasonable person would expect.
- Discriminatory abuse – including racist and sexist remarks or comments.
- Organisational or institutional abuse – mistreatment, abuse or neglect by a regime or individuals in a setting or service where the adult lives or that they use.
- Bullying or cyberbullying

## 12. Online interactions

In summary DFF staff and volunteers should not:

- behave in a way that could suggest that you are trying to develop a personal relationship with a child
- use your own technology to photograph or communicate with a child, young person or Adult at Risk
- give your personal information to service users – children / young people, their parents/ carers. This includes mobile phone numbers, social networking accounts, personal website/ blog URLs, online image storage sites, passwords etc
- use your personal mobile phone to communicate with children/young people/Adults at Risk. This includes phone calls, texts, emails, social

networking sites, and playing online games with children, young people and Adults at Risk

- use the internet or web-based communication to send personal messages to children/young people/Adults at Risk
- add/allow a service user to join your contacts/friends list on personal social networking profiles.
- use your own digital camera/video for work documenting work with children, young people and Adults at Risk. This includes integral cameras on mobile phones.

13. Procedure for responding to and reporting concerns or allegations of abuse

DFF staff and volunteers must make a decision based on the current situation and their knowledge as to whether the child or adult at risk is at immediate risk and/or needs medical attention. If this is the case, 999 should be called immediately. Alert the emergency operator that their records may be required for evidence purposes and the child or vulnerable adult is 'at risk'

Responding to a disclosure of abuse:

- A. Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- B. Listen carefully
- C. Tell the person disclosing the abuse or allegation of abuse that you will take it seriously
- D. Record what has been said as soon as possible using the individual's own words.
- E. Give them information about the steps that will be taken.
- F. Inform them that they will receive feedback as to the result of the concerns they have raised and from whom.

Do not:

- A. Promise to keep it a secret
- B. Press for further details asking detailed or leading questions
- C. Stop someone who is speaking freely
- D. Contact the alleged perpetrator
- E. Tell anyone that does not need to be informed

DFF staff and volunteers should feel able to make or report an allegation in good faith without fear of reprisal. DFF will not subject any member of staff or volunteer to any detriment who makes a report or reports an allegation in good faith and in accordance with this policy.

If you have concerns that a child or adult at risk is being abused or a disclosure/allegation of abuse is made the following procedure must be followed:

- A. Contact the DSO in the first instance and inform them that you have concerns or that a disclosure/allegation has been made.
- B. Complete a Safeguarding Incident/Disclosure Report on the same day and email it to the DSO via [safeguarding@durhamfringe.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@durhamfringe.co.uk).
- C. Keep the matter strictly confidential and do not seek to investigate or otherwise report the incident of suspicion.
- D. The DSO will consider the Safeguarding Incident/Disclosure Report and determine the next steps.
- E. They will seek advice from the Local Authority and follow their advice and guidance, if appropriate.
- F. The DSO will confirm receipt of the Safeguarding Incident/Disclosure Report to the member of staff who submitted it and notify them whether an external report has been made. They will not discuss the incident further with the member of staff except for seeking clarification. If the member of staff is not satisfied with the action taken by the DSO then they may escalate to the Trustee responsible for Safeguarding in the first instance. If they are not satisfied with the action taken by DFF then they may contact the Local Authority or involve the police.
- G. If the allegation relates to a DFF staff or volunteer and an investigation is carried out by the Local Authority or the police, the DSO will decide whether to re-allocate activities carried out by the person under investigation.
- H. If an investigation concludes that abuse has taken place the DFF staff will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Such a breach would constitute gross misconduct.
- I. The DSO will keep all the sensitive information secure and, as appropriate, report to the Trustee responsible for safeguarding. The Trustee will consider whether to make a serious incident report to the Charities Commission.

#### 14. Confidentiality and information sharing

Confidentiality and information sharing is essential to safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect. Whilst the details of the information shared will be on a case-by-case basis or whether the information is shared with or without consent the following rules apply:

- A. Remember GDPR is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
- B. The protection of children takes precedence over legislation concerning data protection and other rights. If you share any information in an

appropriate manner, in accordance with this policy and in good faith, the law will protect you.

- C. For adults at risk information should be shared in an appropriate manner and when it is in the interests of the adult.
- D. It is best practice to gain verbal or written consent from a child or adult before any personal contact data relating to them is shared with another organisation.
- E. Be open and honest with the person from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

#### 15. Code of conduct / Good Practice

When working or interacting with children and adults at risk you are acting in a position of trust. You are likely to be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

You will do this by:

- providing a safe environment for children and adults at risk
- maintaining a good awareness of safeguarding and child protection following our principles, policies and procedures on safeguarding, including raising concerns when necessary
- making yourself familiar with and following all other policies linked to safeguarding staying within the law at all times
- challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the code of conduct to DFF's Designated Safeguarding Officers
- reporting all allegations/suspicions of abuse following our reporting procedures - this includes abusive behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age
- modelling good behaviour for children and adults at risk to follow in person and online.

Whilst carrying out your role you should:

- ensure your contact with children and adults at risk is appropriate and relevant to the work of the project or work you are involved in and in an open and transparent way
- ensure that there is more than one adult present during activities with children and adults at risk, if this isn't possible, ensure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults

You should:

- treat children and adults at risk fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children and adults at risk are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems between yourself and others, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to DFF
- challenge any discrimination and prejudice
- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid favouritism and be patient with others
- use special caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children and adults at risk
- listen to and respect children and adults at risk at all times
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible

#### 16. Unacceptable behaviour

When working or interacting with children and adults at risk you must not:

allow concerns or allegations to go unreported

- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children, young people, and Adults at Risk
- make inappropriate promises to children, young people, and Adults at Risk
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive this includes having any form of sexual contact with a child or adult at risk
- let children and adults at risk have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- act in a way that could be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children and adults at risk, make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and adults at risk



17. Contacts

DFF Contact Details

**Designated Safeguarding Officers**

Stephen Cronin  
DFF Director  
[stephen@durhamfringe.co.uk](mailto:stephen@durhamfringe.co.uk)  
07903 871 238

Suzanne Cronin  
Volunteer Coordinator  
[suzanne@durhamfringe.co.uk](mailto:suzanne@durhamfringe.co.uk)

Maria Baranowska  
Festival Manager  
[maria@durhamfringe.co.uk](mailto:maria@durhamfringe.co.uk)

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LADO Contact Number – 03000 268835

Durham Police  
If you suspect someone is in immediate danger, call 999. If it isn't an emergency, please call the non-emergency, 24/7 number: 101

NSPCC Helpline  
0808 800 5000

Useful information/further reading  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

**Appendix I**

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Safeguarding Incident and Disclosure/Allegation Report

**Appendix II**

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Reporting a Safeguarding concern or disclosure allegation

**Appendix III**

(page 14)

Recognise, Respect, Respond, Report Aide Memoire

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Appendix I

**DDF SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT/DISCLOSURE RECORD**

Details of person at risk:

Name of at-risk person:

Child/Young person or Adult at risk (circle as appropriate)

Gender:

Age:

Date of birth:

Ethnicity:

Language:

Additional needs:

Name of parents(s)/carer(s) or support worker(s):

Home address and address(es) of parents (if different from child's) or carers:

Your details

Your name and contact details:

Your role/position:

Date and time of incident (if applicable):

Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else? (tick below)

- Reporting own concerns
- Responding to concerns raised by someone else

If you are responding to concerns raised by someone else, please provide their name, and position if they are from an organisation or group:

Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have:  
*(times, dates, location, description of any injuries or describe any physical or behavioural indicators which you have observed. State whether the information is first-hand or the accounts of others, whether it is fact, opinion or hearsay and clearly outline what has been said and include any other relevant details)*

**About the incident or concern**

NATURE OF CONCERN / INCIDENT INCLUDING SHOW/ACTIVITY NAME:  
(Please record the details of your concern or the incident that took place including the full name and address if possible, of the subject of your concern, time, place, what occurred, any witnesses and why you are reporting it.)

Signature:

Date:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY DFF DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

FULL NAME:

DATE REPORT RECEIVED:

HOW REPORT MADE:

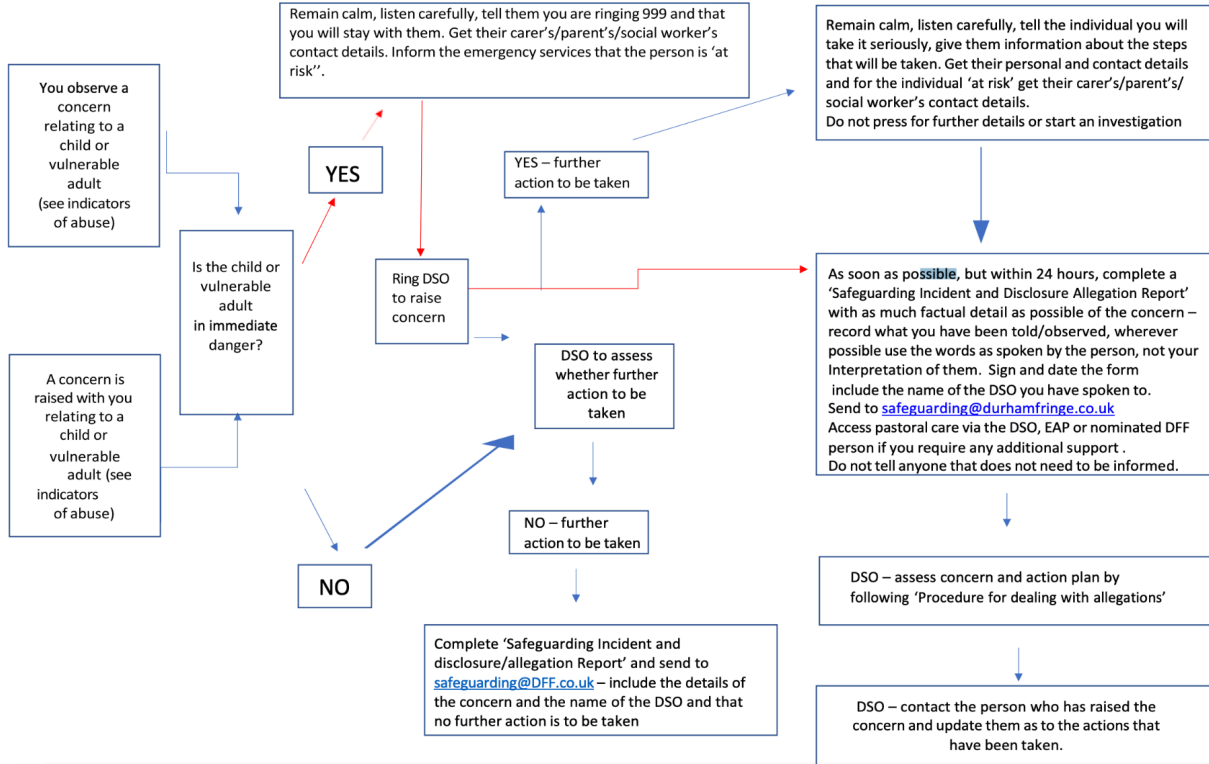
WHAT IS THE FOLLOW UP ACTION TO BE TAKEN, WITH WHOM AND BY WHEN?

Signature:

Date:

**Appendix II**

Reporting a Safeguarding concern or disclosure allegation



**Appendix III**

Recognise, Respect, Respond, Report Aide Memoire



<h2>Recognise</h2>	<p><b>Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk at DFF</b>                  we acknowledge the right for all children and vulnerable adults to be equally protected from all types of harm. Abuse and neglect take many forms and can lead to a violation of someone's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, verbal or psychological. It can be the result of an act or a failure to act - neglect. A summary is provided in the Safeguarding policy of indicators of abuse. If you are concerned or an alleged concern is disclosed to you then ensure you follow the Safeguarding the policy and process.</p>
<h2>Respect</h2>	<p>Always provide a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults and challenge all unacceptable behaviour and report any breaches of the code of conduct to DFF's DSO                  Model good behaviour for children and vulnerable adults to follow in person and online. Treat children and vulnerable adults fairly and without prejudice or discrimination, understand that they are individuals with individual needs use special caution and listen to and respect at all times.                  Please refer to the policy for a full code of practice that you must adhere to at all times.</p>
<h2>Respond</h2>	<p>If a concern or disclosure is made to you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief - Listen carefully to what is being said to you</li> <li>• Tell the person disclosing the abuse or allegation of abuse that you will take it seriously</li> <li>• Record what has been said as soon as possible using the individuals own words</li> <li>• Give them information about the steps that will be taken.</li> <li>• Inform them that they will receive feedback as to the result of the concerns they have raised and from whom.</li> </ul>
<h2>Report</h2>	<p>Contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer in the first instance, unless the individual is in immediate danger, when you should call the emergency services on 999. As soon as possible, but within 24 hours, complete a 'Safeguarding Incident and Disclosure Allegation Report' with as much factual detail as possible of the concern – record what you have been told/observed, wherever possible use the words as spoken by the person, not your interpretation of them. Sign and date the form include the name of the DSO you have spoken to. Send to <a href="mailto:safeguarding@durhamfringe.co.uk">safeguarding@durhamfringe.co.uk</a>. Access pastoral care via the DSO if you require any additional support. Do not tell anyone that does not need to be informed.</p>