

# ScRUffY MuTt T H E A T R E

**Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

## **-Safeguarding Policy Guidelines-**

**For Drama, Workshop and Performance Leaders  
(Voluntary and Paid)**

### **Child Protection Policy Statement**

Scruffy Mutt Theatre is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people in order for them to benefit from and enjoy all the opportunities the Youth Theatre has to offer.

We do this by:

- Recognizing that all children have the right to freedom from abuse.
- Ensuring that our volunteer staff are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and providing parents and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
- Appointing a designated person for child protection (Jayde Evans) who will take specific responsibility for child safety and act as the main point of contact for parents, children and outside agencies.
- Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted to the designated person or the appropriate external authorities.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection Policy annually.

## Policy Guidelines

Scruffy Mutt Theatre staff and volunteer workers are strongly advised that they should not:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with a young person away from others.
- Take young people alone in a car on journeys, however short .
- Take a young person to their home.

If an occasions arise where one of the above situations is unavoidable, then they should only occur with the full knowledge of the young person's parents.

Scruffy Mutt Theatre staff and volunteer workers **must never**:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to any child or young person.
- Deter young people from making allegations through a fear of not being believed.
- Use inappropriate language or conduct a conversation that involves descriptions of sexual activity within earshot of any child young person.

Scruffy Mutt Theatre staff and volunteers **should**:

- Understand their personal responsibility for protecting the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom they work.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect those people from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment.
- Respond in an appropriate manner to any child who alleges or discloses that abuse is happening.

- Respond to any allegations swiftly in accordance with the company Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- Accept responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for all users, to safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from harm.
- Take appropriate action if there are suggestions or suspicions that a child or young person is being abused.

Scruffy Mutt staff and volunteers have a duty to keep vigilant for signs or indicators of harm and to take appropriate action early.

Signs of abuse can include:

- Physical signs of abuse or neglect. This could include bruises, burns, fractures (broken bones) or regular patterns of injuries.
- Behavioural signs of abuse or neglect. This could include showing little or no emotion when hurt, seeming to be afraid of their parents, alcohol or drug abuse, or age inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- If the child talks about being abused.

If a Scruffy Mutt member of staff or volunteer suspects a child or young person is being or has been abused they should:

- Tell the designated person for child protection – Jayde Evans.
- Record any FACTS supporting their suspicions.
- Sign and date their notes, storing them in a safe and secure place

If a member of staff or a volunteer is informed by a child or young person that they are being or have been abused they should:

- Ensure that the young person is given the opportunity to talk to them, or to an independent person.
- Listen to the young person without interruption and not ask leading questions.

- Make notes as soon as possible and fill in an incident report form (ideally within 1 hour of being told). They should write down exactly what the child has said, what was said in reply and what was happening immediately before being told (i.e. the activity being delivered). Dates and times should be recorded.
- Not approach a suspected abuser themselves.
- Provide support to the young person.
- Accept at face value what the young person says.
- Not pass judgment on what is said, but try to alleviate any fears or guilt which the young person may have.
- Make it clear that they can offer support but that they *must* pass on the information to the designated person for child protection.
- Report the discussion to the designated person as soon as possible.
- Under no circumstances discuss suspicions or allegations with anyone other than the designated person.

#### The Role of the Designated Person for Child Protection:

- To Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the company and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals, liaising with Children's Services and other relevant agencies in cases of abuse and allegations of abuse, regarding both young people and members of staff/volunteers.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to, and is aware of, Scruffy Mutt Theatre's Safeguarding Policy.
- To Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually.
- To keep accurate, detailed and secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- To Ensure parents/carers see copies of the Safeguarding Policy to alert them to the fact that Scruffy Mutt Theatre may need to make referrals and that

children are made aware some information cannot be assured of confidentiality.

- Obtain information from staff, volunteers, children or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and to record this information.
- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate.
- Check whether a common assessment has been completed; if so, add to it and contact the lead professional. Otherwise, complete a common assessment.
- Consult with a statutory child protection agency such as the local children's social services department or the NSPCC to clarify any doubts or worries.
- Should the concern persist to make a referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay.

Contact details for the designated person for child protection (Jayde Evans) are:

07450 438 571

[scruffy.mutt.theatre@gmail.com](mailto:scruffy.mutt.theatre@gmail.com)

## INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name of Scruffy Mutt Member concerned (Child, Young Person or Vulnerable Adult)	
Date of birth:	Ethnicity
Religion:	First language:
Disability:	
Any special factors:	Parent / Carer Name:
Home Address:	
Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details-	
Description of what has prompted the concerns: Dates, times, any specific incidents.	
Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?	
Have you spoken to the child/YP/adult? If so, what was said?	
Have you spoken to the parent(s)? If so, what was said?	
Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details.	
Have you consulted anybody else? Give details.	
Your name & position-	
To whom has this been reported and date of reporting Any action agreed?	
Signature-	

Contact details	Today's date:
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