



ROYAL EXCHANGE THEATRE

Safeguarding Policy

**The Policy has been approved by:
Royal Exchange Theatre's Board of Directors on 9th April 2025**

Any queries relating to this document should be addressed to:

Inga Hirst
Director of Engagement
Inga.hirst@royalexchange.co.uk



Royal Exchange Theatre

Occupying Manchester's grade II listed Royal Exchange, we are the UK's largest producing theatre-in-the-round. Our work is celebrated for its originality, relevance and artistic risk, on and off stage. We present work in our unique modular theatre-in-the-round in the centre of Manchester as well as spaces across Greater Manchester (GM) and in our equally unique pop-up theatre, The Den. Our exemplary engagement work with the people of Greater Manchester stands side-by-side with the theatre we produce. Being an accessible world-class theatre and a thriving civic space is central to our mission and to achieve this collaboration and partnership is paramount.

RET commitment to safeguarding

RET welcomes individuals of all ages and backgrounds to visit the building and take part in activities, as audience members, workshop and event participants, diners and casual visitors. RET activities also take place outside of the building in community spaces, digital spaces, schools, and organisations across GM. They can also access RET via our website and social media platforms.

We are committed to creating and maintaining the same protection, and safest possible environment, for people of all ages, genders, sexual orientation or identity, racial heritage, religious beliefs and cultures, health conditions, those with or without disabilities, and from any model of family life.

This policy applies to

Our safeguarding policy and guidelines recognises our duty to actively safeguard the welfare of all children and adults at risk. This is a responsibility of **every** member of staff, including freelancers and volunteers, at the theatre. To achieve this, RET has developed a policy and set of procedures to be followed by all individuals, whether they are directly employed by the company, engaged as freelancers on behalf of the company, or are volunteers.

This policy acknowledges that abuse exists and can present itself in many different forms including **physical, emotional, neglect** and **sexual**. It also acknowledges that abuse can be perpetrated by anyone.

The procedures outlined in this policy will allow all staff, freelancers and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.



How we will do this:

Designated Safeguarding Officer

The overall responsibility for safeguarding lies with the Leadership Team and Trustees of RET. The Trustees have appointed the Director of Engagement as the Safeguarding Lead. In addition, there is a team of Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO). See below for contact details.

The role of the DSO is, in close liaison with the Safeguarding Lead, to lead on day-to-day safeguarding for RET. This will include:

- attending safeguarding training and keeping up to date with current legislation and developments in the field of child and adults at risk protection and safeguarding.
- acting as the main point of contact for RET's employees and volunteers on matters of safeguarding and good practice for working with children and adults at risk.
- Identify and respond to safeguarding issues, raising and sharing concerns and making referrals when necessary.
- Ensure that everyone is clear about how to report a concern and staff, volunteers and freelancers are familiar with and up to date with safeguarding procedures.
- To ensure that sufficient training is given to those who need it including delivering quarterly safeguarding training for new starters, freelancers and casual staff and refresher training for all staff.
- To review and revise policies and procedures on a regular basis and particularly after any concern has been raised.
- Encourage a culture of openness in which people feel able to fully engage and support safeguarding practice.

In consultation with the Safeguarding Lead, the DSOs will respond to safeguarding concerns from staff, parents, participants, public and outside agencies. Together, the DSOs and Safeguarding Lead will act on any allegations and incidents in liaison with partners and relevant agencies.

There may be circumstances where the concerns are about poor practice rather than abuse; in these cases, it is still important to report and investigate as this may be just one of a series of other instances which, taken together, give cause for concern.

Procedures

Please read the relevant safeguarding procedures for full information on:

- Safeguarding Code of practice
- Safeguarding Children Procedures
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures
- Staff: Recruitment, Training & Allegations
- Digital Safeguarding



Training

All RET staff, volunteers, and freelancers as part of the Engagement pool will be required to attend our bespoke inhouse Safeguarding training as part of their induction. Training will be delivered every quarter. All staff will be required to attend a refresher training every two years.

Dissemination

RET will make the Safeguarding Policy available to all staff, freelancers, and volunteers. It should be made clear that failure to conform to the policy could result in disciplinary action and possible exclusion from the organisation. All new staff, freelancers and volunteers will be required to sign a declaration that they have read the Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by the procedures outlined within it. (See Appendix A). Please note the Safeguarding Declaration Form will be available to complete through your SAGE account if you are a permanent member of staff. Freelancers and volunteers will be asked to complete and return the form when provided with this policy.

RET will ensure all participants understand and are aware of the importance of safeguarding and the RET's commitment to ensuring their welfare and safety is central to their engagement with us.

When RET is working in partnership with another organisation or agency (e.g. a school, community group, hirer), they will be made aware that this policy is in place and sent a copy with any contract or partnership agreement.

This policy will be available to all RET staff, volunteers and any outside organisations or individuals, and is published on our website. Requests for copies of the documents should be submitted to the Safeguarding Lead or any DSO.

Please click [here](#) to watch an introductory film to safeguarding at the Royal Exchange Theatre.

Legal Framework

This policy and related procedures are written against the following legal requirements:

- Children's Act 1989 Backbone for current law protecting children in UK focused on social worker responsibility to safeguard children.
- Children Act 2004 This adds to and strengthens the Children's 1989 Act. It encourages agencies to work together, share information and tightens up accountability.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child – Children have a right to be free from any form of abuse.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) - statutory guidance about sharing information.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)



- Information Sharing: practitioners' guide (2018) for information sharing for under 18s without consent.
- Adoption and Children Act 2002: expanded definition of harm to include witnessing domestic abuse.
- Sexual Offences Act 2003 Made the abuse of 'Position of Trust' illegal, also made 'grooming' a criminal offence.
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003: FGM is illegal in England and Wales under this Act. It introduced a mandatory reporting duty to report 'known' cases to the Police in 2015
- Care Act 2014 Backbone for law supporting adults (over 18s) at risk, placing them at the centre of the process.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Police Act 1997 Made it a criminal offence for an employer not to take sufficient steps to check an employee.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006: was passed to help avoid harm, or risk of harm, it prevents people who are considered unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from accessing them through their work. Established DBS as a single decision-making group. Manage barred lists.

This policy should be read in line with our other policies:

- Code of Conduct
- Equality and Diversity
- Bullying and Harassment
- Disciplinary
- Social Media Policy
- DBS protocol
- Intergenerational working best practise

RET Commitment to Equality

The RET, Board and staff are committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in the Company's employment practices, in the work we deliver, as well as our work in engagement and artistic delivery. Our underlying principle is that all individuals are unique and have something different to offer. Our aim is to fully engage with our staff and our audience to value these differences and utilise everyone's talents.

The company recognises our responsibility to reflect the diversity of the community we serve. We will pursue strategies to ensure that our employees are truly representative and that our services are that of an inclusive organisation. Cultural diversity will also inform the company's Business plan and artistic planning. (Please see RET Equality and Diversity Policy for full details)

Responsibility and Review



It is the responsibility of all RET staff, freelancers and volunteers to adhere to this policy and its guidelines. The effectiveness of this policy and its related procedures will be monitored and developed where necessary by the DSOs, Safeguarding Lead and Leadership team.

A Safeguarding working group meets quarterly with responsibility to regularly review Safeguarding policy and procedures, chaired by the Safeguarding Lead with the DSOs.

The board member responsible for Safeguarding is: The chair of the People & Culture Committee. Quarterly reports will be provided by the Safeguarding Lead to the People & Culture Committee.

The Board of Directors will review the policy annually. The next policy will be reviewed March 2026.

Key Contacts

The Royal Exchange's staff members with responsibility for Safeguarding are:

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| Director of Engagement Inga Hirst | Telephone: 0161 615 6720 Email: inga.hirst@royalexchange.co.uk |
| Associate Director Andy Barry | Telephone: 0161 615 6792 Email: andy.barry@royalexchange.co.uk |
| Community Producer Emily Oldroyd | Telephone: 0161 615 6721 Mobile: 07494 315213 Email: emily.oldroyd@royalexchange.co.uk |
| Children & Young People Producer Scarlett Spiro Beazley | Telephone: 0161 615 6693 Email: scarlett.spiro-beazley@royalexchange.co.uk |
| Engagement & Volunteer Manager Molly Taylor | Telephone: 0161 615 6782 Email: molly.taylor@royalexchange.co.uk |
| Company Manager Scott McDonald | Telephone: 07742919692 Email: scott.mcdonald@royalexchange.co.uk |
| HR Michelle Hickman | Telephone: 0161 615 6704 Email: michelle.hickman@royalexchange.co.uk |
| Visitor Experience Leads Rachel Davies Mike Seal | Telephone: 0161 615 6737 Email: Rachel.davies@royalexchange.co.uk mike.seal@royalexchange.co.uk |

All queries and concerns in relation to any aspect of safeguarding should be addressed to a DSO. If you cannot get in contact with a DSO visit or call or Stage Door on **0161 833 9333** and they can let you know if a DSO is available.

If there is no way of contacting a DSO at that time, please contact:

Manchester Safeguarding Partnership Contact Centre

Telephone: **0161 234 5001** (open 24 hours a day, seven days a week)

Email: socialcare@manchester.gov.uk



Even if you're unsure, report it so they can give advice. You can report your concerns anonymously if you want.

If an adult or child is in immediate danger you should ring the emergency services or contact the police on 999.