

Safeguarding Policy

Skylight Circus Arts (Skylight) fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding.

Our policy applies to all staff, freelance artists, trustees and volunteers working for Skylight. There are four main elements to our policy.

1. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, freelance artists and volunteers to work with children, young people and adults at risk
2. Raising awareness of child-protection issues and equipping children, young people and adults at risk with the skills needed to keep them safe.
3. Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
4. Establishing a safe environment in which children and adults can learn and develop.

We recognise that because of the regular contact with children, young people and adults at risk, Skylight staff, freelance artists and volunteers are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. Skylight will therefore:

Establish and maintain an environment where children, young people and adults at risk feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to

Ensure children, young people and adults at risk know that there are adults at Skylight whom they can approach if they are worried

Include opportunities within our training programmes for children, young people and adults at risk to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB) and the Local Safeguarding Adults Board (RBSAB) and take account of guidance issued by the Department to:

Ensure we have a designated senior person for safeguarding who has received appropriate training and support for this role

Ensure we have a nominated Trustee responsible for safeguarding

Ensure every member of staff (including freelance artists, trustees and volunteers) knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for safeguarding and their role

Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for safeguarding

Ensure that parents and carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on Skylight and staff for safeguarding

Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences

Keep written records of concerns about children and adults, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately

Ensure all records are kept securely and in a locked location

Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff, freelance artist, trustee or volunteer

We recognise that children and adults at risk who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Skylight may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at Skylight their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Skylight will endeavour to support the person through:

Skylight ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives everyone a sense of being valued

Skylight behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable people in our sessions. Skylight will ensure that the child, young person or adult at risk knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred

Liaison with other agencies that support the person such as social services, child and adult mental health service, education welfare service and educational psychology service

Child and Adult at Risk Safeguarding Procedure

Skylight Circus Arts has a duty of care to safeguard all children and adults at risk involved in Skylight Circus Arts from harm. All children and adults at risk have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Skylight Circus Arts will ensure the safety and protection of all children and adults at risk involved in Skylight Circus Arts through adherence to the Child and Adults at Risk Safeguarding guidelines adopted by Skylight Circus Arts.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children and Social Work Act 2017).
Adult at risk: means adults who need community care services because of mental or other disability, age or illness and who are, or may be unable to take care of themselves against significant harm or exploitation. The term replaces 'vulnerable adult'.

Policy aims

The aim of the Skylight Safeguarding Policy is to promote good practice:

- providing children, young people and adults at risk with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Skylight Circus Arts.
- allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.

Staff Conduct

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behavior in order to promote children's and adults welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good staff conduct means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/adults equally, and with respect and dignity.

