



Twickenham Youth Theatre Safeguarding Policy.

Twickenham Youth Theatre is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people up to the age of 18.

We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Twickenham Youth Theatre acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. All staff and volunteers will work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults. Twickenham Youth Theatre recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, the Children Act 1989 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.

Twickenham Youth Theatre will ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.

- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.

- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Twickenham Youth Theatre will ensure that:

- Everyone will be treated with respect and dignity.
- The welfare of each child will always be put first.
- Enthusiastic and constructive criticism will be given to pupils rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- All adult members will provide a positive role model.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate behaviour.
- It will comply with health & safety legislation.
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- It will undertake relevant professional development and training.
- It will ensure all contact and medical details for every child is up to date and available at the place of teaching or performance.

Parents/Guardians are required to complete a registration form before a child's first session and to keep Drama Leaders updated of any changes to key information; including medical details.

- All lead staff members will receive dedicated safeguarding training.

Twickenham Youth Theatre Core Team and guest facilitators and directors adhere to the TYT Code of Conduct and Social Graces code of conduct.

Twickenham Youth Theatre has 2 designated Safeguarding co-leads who are in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy is adhered to. The

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is LAURA-MAY HASSAN,
Co-Safeguarding Lead is ANNA IZQUIERDO. They can be contacted on:
07738 567130 and twickenhamyt@gmail.com.

If your safeguarding concern is urgent, out of TYT teaching hours or you feel unable to contact us directly, eg if the disclosure is regarding a member of our core team, please contact:

- Non-emergencies - Single Point of Access (SPA) on 020 8547 5008 8am-6pm (or out of hours at 020 8770 5000).
- Emergencies - For urgent safeguarding concerns for a child, first call 999 if they are in immediate danger.

In implementing this policy Twickenham Youth Theatre will:

- Ensure that all workers/members understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- Ensure that all workers/members and volunteers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker's

conduct towards a child or young person to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Co-Lead will refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Children's Social Care).
- Children, young people and parents will be informed of who the Designated Safeguarding Leads are and be able to raise any safeguarding concerns & know that these will be taken seriously and acted upon.
- Ensure that workers/members will work in a consistent and equitable manner in line with the safer working practice guidance.

This policy will be regularly monitored by ANNA IZQUIERDO and will be subject to an annual review. Signed: ANNA IZQUIERDO

Date policy agreed: 12/09/2025 Date policy to be reviewed: 11/09/2026

Section 1: Our teachers

- All Twickenham Youth Theatre Leaders and assistants hold Enhanced DBS certificates, updated every 2-3 years.
- At least 1 member of staff at each session holds a 12hr paediatric first aid certificate.
- All new teachers & assistants complete a minimum period of 6 months working under supervision, before leading classes.
- We follow NSPCC guidance in our ratio of Adults to children and where possible aim for 2 members of staff to be present at each class.

NSPCC guidelines recommend:

- 9 - 12 years - one adult to eight children • 13 - 18 years - one adult to ten children
- Additional members of staff present in the buildings where we teach, to help in an emergency.
- Twickenham Youth Theatre always ensure that written consent is given from parents/ carers if children or young people are taken off site.

Section 2: Behaviour Policy (Leaders and Assistants)

- Parents/ carers will be informed if leaders/assistants have had to do things of a personal nature for a child such as changing clothing.
- Staff are alerted to the need to treat children with dignity and not to ask them to do anything which might embarrass them or be contrary to their cultural or religious precepts.
- Workshop leaders are informed of any changes regarding child protection laws or best practice.
- Workshop staff understand that the language and tone they adopt are important factors in a child's sense of safety and reassurance.
- Workshop Leaders adhere to our Code of Conduct and Social Graces Code of Conduct.
- Workshop leaders are responsible for devising sessions and carrying out appropriate risk assessments on the space, activities and equipment used

during each session and are aware of the need to take steps to eliminate any activity or equipment that could endanger the children attending the club.

During workshops, we encourage independent learning where possible, and adults should have minimal physical contact with children. Drama is a physical activity and it is sometimes necessary to have some physical contact when demonstrating exercises or joining in activities to encourage others, but staff should be mindful of what/how much contact is appropriate.

- It is expected that all staff and pupils respect each other.
- If there are incidents of unacceptable verbal or physical behaviour relating to pupils these will be challenged by staff and where appropriate brought to the attention of the parent.
- All prejudice incidents will be challenged.
- Sanctions should be applied in agreement with parents where necessary.

Behaviour Policy (Parents/Carers and Children): Twickenham Youth Theatre aim to offer children and young people a safe space to explore stories and express themselves and their own imaginations in a nurturing environment and with the support of all members of the group. Please take a look at the Behaviour Policy in our [Terms & Conditions page](#) for more details.

Section 3: Medical issues

- A registration form requesting emergency contact details must be completed before joining Twickenham Youth Theatre. Children will not be allowed to take part in the club if parents or guardians have not completed and returned this form.

- Parents /guardians must fill in a new form for each class if there are any changes that we need to be aware of.

- We ask that parents/ guardians complete forms (not nannies or other carers) to ensure that all information is correct.

- Parents/guardians are asked to alert Twickenham Youth Theatre Leaders before the first class/free trial, if their child has any specific needs associated with their health or has a disability which will require Twickenham Youth Theatre to make a reasonable adjustment in order to enable them to participate.

- If any child has an allergy which may be affected by their participation in the club, they must let Twickenham Youth Theatre know before attendance and ensure the carer or parent has any appropriate medicine that they can administer or knows what steps to take to ensure the safety of the child should the need arise.

- If an accident or illness occurs during a Twickenham Youth Theatre workshop, the workshop leader or assistant will assess the situation and remove the child from the activity. They will be taken to a quiet area where they can be comforted and helped (where possible).

- Where appropriate the first aider will take action to administer first aid or contact the emergency services or arrange for the child to return home,

depending on what is necessary. If a child does not need the emergency services, but the child continues to feel ill, the Twickenham Youth Theatre staff will contact the parent/guardian and request that the child is taken home.

- If a child needs to take medication or may need staff to administer medication the parent must discuss this with staff prior to the club.

Section 4 Breaks

- Refreshment breaks: During a 40 min - 1.5 hour workshop a break will not automatically be given. If a child informs the staff that they are thirsty or need the toilet their need will be met.
- During a club of more than 1.5 hours, regular toilet and refreshment breaks are provided where needed.
- If providing snacks, Twickenham Youth

Theatre staff refer to registration forms re allergies.

Section 5 Collection arrangements :

- Parents must come to a designated area to pick up their children – the arrangements for collection will be made clear by the club leader prior to the beginning of class.
- Parents must inform the club leader that they have picked up their child and wait until their child has been signed out before leaving the premises.
- Twickenham Youth Theatre must be informed at least 24 hours in advance, if anyone other than the named parent/carers on the child's

registration form will be collecting a child or if a member has permission to walk alone.

- Club leaders are contracted to stay until all children are picked up by one of the registered carers, we expect parents to be on time or notify us beforehand if they are going to be late.
- Children will not be allowed off the premises to be picked up unless they are in Year 6 or above and have pre-arranged permission to walk home alone.

Section 6: Responding to a child protection concern:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Laura-May Hassan and Co-Lead is Anna Izquierdo. Leaders and assistants are asked to direct all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads who will escalate if needed. Leaders and assistants are also asked to complete an 'incident' report where there is a concern for a child's wellbeing and immediate steps will be taken where it is suspected that a child may be in immediate danger.
- Relevant staff receive regular, sufficient support to enable them to recognise children in need of support and / or safeguarding.
- Relevant staff understand the roles and responsibilities of other departments and agencies in safeguarding children.
- Our advice to all staff in the event of a disclosure:
 - 1) Treat any allegations extremely seriously.
 - 2) Listen to what the child has to tell you. Create a safe space to aid child's openness.

3) Do not interrupt the child, ask leading questions, change the subject or interrogate the child. It is the job of the experienced police and social services to investigate the situation .

4) Tell the child that they are right to tell you.

5) Reassure the child that they are not to blame.

6) Tell the child that you will need to let the Co-Lead know and that you may need to share information with a third party if it is in the best interest of the child.

7) Write down everything that was said using the child's own words (verbatim) where possible. You may have to do this immediately afterwards as you may not be able to write this down when the child is speaking to you.

8) Contact the DSL or their deputy if they are not available immediately.

9) Fill in a Child Protection Incident Report Form available from the DSL and co-safeguarding lead.

10) Limit the disclosure of information only to those who properly need to be aware of it.

11) Do not make promises that you can't keep.

12) Do not cast doubt on what the child has told you.

13) Do not say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.

All teachers and assistants are asked to sign below, to indicate that they have read, understood and will adhere to and reinforce the above.

Section 7 Gender Identity in performance:

Twickenham Youth Theatre recognise that LGBTQ+ children and young people face the same risks as all children and young people, but that they are at greater risk of some types of abuse.

LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and more. This term covers a broad range of people who have different lived experiences and may be at different stages in exploring their identity. It includes people who are asexual or have differences in sex development (sometimes known as being intersex).

We understand that there are a wide variety of terms people might use to describe their sexuality (who they feel attracted to) or their gender identity (their personal, internal perception of their own gender). For example, someone who has a different gender identity from the sex that was registered at their birth might identify as trans or transgender. Other people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'boy' or 'girl' might identify as non-binary, agender, gender fluid or genderqueer (Government Equalities Office, 2018). Twickenham Youth Theatre are respectful of all pronouns and respect the individual's right to use different pronouns to those assigned to them at birth and will use these ourselves when referring to the individual.

We recognise that children and young people might identify as LGBTQ+ in more than one way, for example they could be gay and transgender. Children who are LGBTQ+ might also have other characteristics that mean they face additional challenges or need extra support, for example being in

care, being disabled or being from a Black, Asian or minoritised ethnic group.

With regard to roles in our clubs, young people are encouraged to play characters of all genders. We place importance on what a character, feels, says and the choices they make rather than their written biological sex. Each performer is unique and individual, and each character is approached with the same care and respect. With this in mind, boys may play the role of girls and vice versa in our sessions, and we have a duty to all children in our care, to ensure that language or behaviour that contradicts this in a negative way (for example suggesting that a female character may not be as powerful as a male) be challenged and that positive messages of acceptance and respect for all are shared among the group.

Copies of the signed policy are stored securely in accordance with our privacy policy

Updated by: Anna Izquierdo 12th September 2025