



Safeguarding Policy and Operational Procedures

For the attention of:	All staff, volunteers, service providers and contractors
Responsibility of:	CEO/Director, Learning, Participation & Community Engagement DSP
Approved by:	AWAITING APPROVAL by trustees
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KEY POINTS:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Safeguarding is about protecting children, vulnerable adults and those who work with them.
- If you need to report abuse or concern about a child please email mash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or call 01344 352005 and forward a copy of your concern and action taken to your Designated Senior Person.
- If you are concerned a child is in immediate danger of abuse or harm, call 999
- If you are concerned about yourself or a vulnerable adult please complete [THIS](#) online form or call 01344 351500 and forward a copy of your concern and action taken to your Designated Senior Person.
- If you are concerned you or a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger of abuse or harm, call 999
- If emergency help or advice is needed outside of office hours, call the out-of-hours emergency team on 01344 351999

Who is this document for?

This document is for everyone working at South Hill Park, including:

- Full and part time staff
- Tutors, Artists and their assistants
- Interns
- Volunteers
- Bar staff
- Trustees
- Contractors working for visiting companies
- Any other individuals delivering a service on a paid or voluntary basis

What is this document for?

The purpose of this document is to provide detailed information about the safeguarding policies and procedures at South Hill Park, and therefore to make sure that children¹ and vulnerable adults² are kept safe when on site and/or participating in the activities offered by the venue.

Knowledge of this document

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. You must read the whole document when you initially receive it. If you are a full time and/or long-term member of staff, you must re-read the document after each annual review, ensuring you are aware of any changes and have refreshed your knowledge. Additionally, you must know where the current version of this document is stored so you can refer to it as necessary.

Review and amendment

This document is reviewed and submitted to the board for approval every 12 months. On occasion, for instance in the case of new or emerging local or national guidance or legislation, it may be necessary to make changes to this document prior to the review date. Where this is the case, the amendments will be submitted to the board for approval on an ad hoc basis, and staff provided with the amended document as soon as is practical. A full compliance check, performed by an appropriate external expert will be carried out every three years. The date of the next check will be carried out in

¹ Anyone under the age of 18

² Someone aged 18 or above who may need community care services for reasons like mental health issues, disability, age or illness. They may not be able to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

2025. This version was evaluated by Ellie Wheeler, previously Director of Safeguarding & Pastoral Support for a group of colleges.

Terms and abbreviations

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
CEO	Chief Executive Officer.
Child	Any individual under the age of 18 years.
DBS check	Disclosure and Barring Service check, a process through which it can be established whether an individual has any relevant convictions which might impact on their ability to work safely with children and vulnerable adults
EHA	Early Help Assessment (EHA) (previously known as CAF – Common Assessment Framework), a way to work with a child and their family to assess and understand their needs
SHP/The Venue	South Hill Park.
Staff	People who are employed by SHP, full-time or part-time.
Freelance	A person engaged on a freelance contract to deliver work on behalf of SHP.
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
RAP	Regulated Activity Provider
Vulnerable Adult	Someone aged 18 or above who may need community care services for reasons like mental health issues, disability, age or illness. They may not be able to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

Who to contact if you have any questions or concerns?

Your Designated Senior Persons are the CEO and the Director of Learning

Craig Titley
CEO
craig.titley@southhillpark.org.uk

Mark Hooper
Director of Learning
mark.hooper@southhillpark.org.uk

If you have any questions about this document or need advice or support with any aspect of safeguarding, please contact one of the above.

If you have a safeguarding concern that relates to one of the above, and therefore it is inappropriate to share it with them, you should direct your concern to the Chairperson.

If you require any advice on behaviour strategies, workshop delivery, dealing with parents or any other issues regarding your work with children or vulnerable adults, please discuss them with one of the DSPs.

In relation to safeguarding and child protection there are no silly questions and nothing you have observed is too minor to report or talk through. It is always better to raise a concern that turns out to be nothing, than to delay raising a concern that turns out to be something.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 South Hill Park and its staff take seriously their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults using the venue. SHP recognises its responsibility to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

1.2 Through our contact with participants who are children or vulnerable adults (and the occasional ability to observe their interaction with their families), staff at the venue have a role to play in being aware of indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them (via the Designated Senior People) to Children and Family Services (Social Care).

1.3 This document sets out how the Board of Trustees and Executive discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who visit and use our venue.

Specifically, it ensures that:

- All staff, volunteers and contractors are working in line with current legislation and best practice in relation to safeguarding and child protection, and that they understand their responsibility to prevent abuse and to keep safe those in their care
- That all knowledge or suspicion of abuse or inadequate practice is taken seriously and acted on appropriately and quickly
- That everyone working at the centre, in whatever capacity and for whatever length of time, is carefully vetted and is subject to an appropriate and rigorous selection process in order to prevent abuse and harm. In line with the organisations Safer Recruitment Policy.

1.4 This policy is written to operate within the parameters of the [Pan Berkshire Child protection procedures](#) and in line with the expectations of the [Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board \(BFSB\)](#).

1.5 South Hill Park supports the concept that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and that everyone using or working at the venue has a right to be safeguarded.

1.6 SHP ensures all staff, employees, freelancers, volunteers, contractors and others as outlined on page 3 above have read this document.

1.7 As a Regulated Activity Provider (RAP), we recognise and implement the obligations we have under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#). South Hill Park is committed to:

- Relating effectively to, listening to and valuing vulnerable adults and children while ensuring their safety and protection within our activities and services

- Encouraging and supporting parents.
- Ensuring that people working with children are given appropriate training and support.
- Having a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.

1.8 South Hill Park works within the boundaries of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(1991\)](#).

South Hill Park therefore agrees that:

- All children have a right to expect that their best interests are a priority when decisions are being made about them by South Hill Park.
- All children have a right to have a say in anything that affects them.
- All children have a right to be protected by those who look after them.
- All children have the right to rest, play and have the opportunity to join in a wide variety of activities.

All the rights in the Convention must apply to all children without discrimination of any kind. Every child should experience equality. This is further outlined in our *Equal Opportunities Statement*.

2. Local Context

2.1 South Hill Park is located in the Birch Hill ward in the north of the Bracknell Forest borough. Bracknell Forest is an area with relatively low deprivation as a whole, but contains areas of extremely high deprivation in and around the ward in which SHP is located. Areas of high deprivation are associated with high unemployment, overcrowding, poor health, high premature mortality, lower life expectancy, high crime and high anti-social behaviour levels.

2.2 Although Bracknell Forest has a lower recorded crime rate than Berkshire as a whole, it is similar to many parts of the UK in that it experiences a range of issues that can create safeguarding concerns for children and vulnerable adults. This ranges from public order offences to drug use and violent crime.

2.3 Whilst crime is of course not the only factor that contributes to the need to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, the venue is mindful that the area is not safe for everyone and therefore they will encounter participants who may be at risk outside of their homes and unconnected to their families. This is known as contextual

safeguarding³ and those working at the venue are likely to need to respond to disclosures or suspicions of this.

2.4 South Hill Park and its staff are aware that irrespective of the level of deprivation someone experiences, there are likely to be children and vulnerable adults using the venue who may face wide ranging difficulties that impact on their safety, but that this might be more common for those from areas of significant deprivation. This might include exploitation, gang and weapons violence, honour-based abuse and exposure to extremist views, alongside the four categories of abuse commonly recognised in safeguarding and child protection (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect – see appendix I).

3. Code of practice

The following expectations ensure the best possible protection for children and vulnerable adults and for the staff working with them.

ALL staff must:

1. Report any disclosures or suspicions of harm, abuse or danger to children and vulnerable adults, using the procedures in this document to the Director of Learning, Participation and Community Engagement or CEO without delay
2. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all,
3. Ensure that all working practices promote equality and the inclusion of all
4. Working in open and public environments with children and vulnerable adults, avoiding situations where you and a child or vulnerable adult are alone, unobserved or unable to be seen by others
5. Consider whether physical contact is necessary, and if so, ensure it is done openly, transparently and where possible with permission of the participant
6. Ensure that the activities you direct, supervise or facilitate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the participants
7. Be aware of diverse and differing customs and cultural requirements
8. Report any accidental injury, distress or harm you cause to a participant immediately to one of the Designated Safeguarding Persons supported by a brief written report of the incident
9. Avoid, at all times, smoking or using bad language while around participants. Smoking should happen discreetly, out of view of all participants and their families.

³ Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships. <https://www.csnetwork.org.uk/en/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding>

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 **The Board of Trustees** will:

- nominate a trustee for safeguarding and child protection who will have appropriate training and will monitor the venue's compliance with statutory requirements and practice and champion safeguarding and child protection issues
- Ensure an annual report is made to the full board of trustees. This will include a self-assessment audit of safeguarding arrangements for the venue.
- Ensure that this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is annually reviewed and updated and shared with staff.

4.2 **The Board of Trustees and the CEO** will ensure there is a designated senior person who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection at South Hill Park. These responsibilities will be listed in their job description.

4.3 **The Board of Trustees and the CEO** will ensure there is a minimum of one deputy designated person who can fulfil the role in the absence or unavailability of the senior person. These responsibilities will be listed in their job description.

4.4 **The Designated Senior Leads for Child Protection and Safeguarding** are responsible for the implementation, delivery, review and management of South Hill Park's Safeguarding Policy and Operational Procedures.

4.5 **The Designated Senior Leads** will be held accountable (including for staff compliance and effective delivery of the policy and procedures) by the Board of Trustees.

4.6 **The Designated Senior Leads** (or their delegate) will advise on, manage and monitor any referrals to the Local Authority using the Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Children procedures, following a report from a staff member, volunteer or contractor of a safeguarding disclosure, concern or allegation

4.7 **The Designated Senior Leads** (or their delegate) will ensure advice is sought from Child Protection specialists when dealing with complex cases or when abuse or harm is suspected or disclosed.

4.8 **The Designated Senior Leads** (or their delegate) will ensure:

- every member of staff and every trustee knows the name(s) of the designated person(s) and their roles
- That all staff, volunteers and contractors have the information, resources and training to fulfil their responsibilities as listed in 4.10 below

2. 4.9 **The Designated Senior Leads** will ensure all staff, both paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children and that such concerns are addressed

sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with the agreed *whistle-blowing policy*.

3. 4.10 **All staff, volunteers, contractors** and those listed on page 3 above will attend training as required and accept their responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring:
- They know how to identify signs of abuse, harm and neglect, including Child Sexual Exploitation, female genital mutilation, extremism and radicalisation, grooming, county lines and sexting.
 - That they understand their individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the Designated Person(s)
 - They record appropriately and confidentially any safeguarding concerns about a participant
 - They meet their responsibility to provide children and vulnerable adults with a safe environment in which to participate in and enjoy the arts.
 - They have read SHP's Safeguarding Policy and Operational Procedures (this document) and know where to find the local Child Protection Procedures
 - They cooperate with any data sharing requests or meeting invitations from the Local Authority in relation to a safeguarding or child protection concern, ensuring the Designated Senior Lead is aware of these requests and any actions taken

4. 4.11 Key Contacts

Designation	Name	Job Title	Contact
Designated Senior Lead	Mark Hooper	Director of Learning, Participation & Community Engagement	mark.hooper@southhillpark.org.uk
Designated Senior Lead	Craig Titley	Chief Executive Officer	craig.titley@southhillpark.org.uk
Deputy Designated Lead	Paul McCormack	Director of Operations	paul.mccormack@southhillpark.org.uk
Nominated Trustee for Safeguarding and Child Protection	Jessica Jhundo-Evans	Chair of Trustees	jessica.jhundoevans@southhillpark.org.uk

5. Approach and Procedures

Our approach to safeguarding and the underpinning procedures are designed to ensure the best possible protection for children and vulnerable adults, and for the staff working with them.

Our processes and approach are divided into five key elements:

PREVENTION: Maintaining an organisation-wide protective ethos, contributing to the prevention of abuse and harm through good staff awareness, and through effective support offered to children and vulnerable adults who may be at risk of harm

PROCEDURES: Clear processes and expectations in place for identifying, recording and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse and harm.

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE ADULTS and CHILDREN: The provision of support, in line with the ability of the organisation, and as part of a multi-agency approach, for those who may have been abused or harmed or have witnessed violence towards others.

PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN: Clear processes and pre-employment checks in place to ensure those who are barred from regulated activity, or who may pose a risk to participants or staff, are prevented from working at the venue.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN PERFORMANCE: Ensuring the venue is compliant with the law in relation to children taking part in performances, and that these children are safeguarded appropriately whilst performing

5.1 Prevention

We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with trusted adults help to protect young people and vulnerable adults.

Everyone at South Hill Park will therefore:

1. Establish and maintain an environment where children and vulnerable adults feel safe in both the real and virtual world, and are encouraged to talk and are sure they will be listened to.
2. Ensure children and vulnerable adults know that there are staff within the organisation that they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and that their concerns will be taken seriously and acted on appropriately.
3. Include within all programmes at South Hill Park the chance for young people to develop new skills, both practical and social, which will better equip them to tackle adult life.
4. Cultivate an environment where creativity, self-expression and the notion of individuality are explored and celebrated.
5. Cultivate an environment where young people are free to express themselves openly without fear of prejudice in relation to
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
6. Keep up to date with key issues within Safeguarding, including Child Sexual Exploitation, County Lines, Extremism and Radicalisation and Online Safety
7. As a RAP, recognise and follow the obligations we have under the [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
8. Ensure we do not use social media to interact with participants who are under the age of 18 unless through approved and monitored channels.

9. Ensure we do not pass on our personal details, including private telephone numbers to children.
10. Ensure that images (still and moving) are only captured, stored and used, in compliance with the venue's GDPR policy.

5.2 Procedures

- 5.2.1 SHP will follow the procedures set out in the [Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Children Procedures](#) Manual.
- 5.2.2 The decision to refer to Children's or Adult Social Care, will be made by the Designated Senior Person (or their delegate), who will also supervise and/or direct/manage the referral itself and the case moving forward.
- 5.2.3 Staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to raise their concerns with the Designated Senior Person (or their delegate) should they identify signs of abuse, potential harm, receive a disclosure or an allegation, or have the suspicion that someone is at risk of harm (see appendix I for examples of abuse and harm and for more information about concerns staff should refer).
- 5.2.4 If, following discussion with the Designated Senior Lead, a referral is made to an external agency, the staff member should make themselves available to speak to a social worker or other professional and to remain involved in the case to support the participant if required
- 5.2.5 Staff, Volunteers and Contractors should not a) promise participants confidentiality or the ability to keep secrets for them or b) contact parents, carers or community members about any disclosures or suspicions without first discussing the situation with the Designated Senior Lead and determining whether this is an appropriate course of action
- 5.2.6 Where possible, staff, volunteers and contractors should work transparently with participants making disclosures or where abuse/harm is suspected. Tell the participant what you are doing, and who you need to talk to about what has happened or what they have said. Try to seek consent and involve the participant in the decisions being made (but be mindful that you have a statutory duty to refer any disclosures or suspicions of abuse with or without consent when the person is under 18 or a vulnerable adult).
- 5.2.7 If you receive a disclosure or allegation in relation to a colleague, you must not discuss this further with the participant, but refer it immediately as with any other safeguarding concern.

Liaison with other agencies

The Designated Senior Leads will:

5.2.8 Work with staff to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and wellbeing of participants. This might include colleagues and departments across social care, health and police.

5.2.9 Cooperate as required, in line with [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(DfE 2018\)](#).

Record keeping

All staff will:

5.2.10 Keep clear, detailed, accurate written records of concerns about children (noting the date, event and action taken), even when there is no need to refer the matter to Social Care immediately.

5.2.11 Ensure all records are kept securely, separately from any day-to-day administrative paperwork and in a locked location (or a restricted location if stored electronically).

5.2.12 Staff should be mindful that whilst most safeguarding notes and records cannot be viewed under data protection rules, there are exceptions to this and therefore notes should be clear, factual and free of unsubstantiated opinions. Professional judgement and curiosity may be included, but it is important to clearly differentiate between direct quotes, judgements and evidenced facts.

Information sharing

5.2.13 Child protection and Safeguarding case notes will be stored and handled in line with GDPR legislation and the Data Protection Act 2018 principals, and using the guidance [Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers \(2018\)](#). The Data Protection Act does not prevent staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child or vulnerable adult.

5.2.14 Safeguarding records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a pupil or parent to see child protection requests, they will refer the request to the Designated Senior Person.

5.2.15 The Designated Senior Person will ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality or data sharing, staff must seek advice from the Designated Person(s)

5.2.16 All staff should only disclose safeguarding information about a participant on a 'need to know' basis. Safeguarding cases should not be discussed amongst

colleagues or outside of the venue unless there is a clear and recordable reason to do so.

Off-site visits

5.2.17 If the venue provides activities off-site under the supervision or management of South Hill Park staff/freelancers, the venue's arrangements for child protection as written in this policy shall apply.

5.2.18 Where services or activities are provided on behalf of the venue by another organisation, either on or off site, the Designated Senior Person will seek assurance and record evidence that the body concerned has appropriate and robust policies and procedures in place for safeguarding children and child protection (including checks on any adults carrying out regulated activity), and that they are aware of the required safeguarding procedures of the venue.

5.2.19 Staff should complete a risk-assessment and have it signed off by the Director of Operations and a Designated Senior Person.

Communication with parents/carers

The Designated Senior Leads will:

5.2.20 Ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on South Hill Park and its staff in relation to safeguarding and child protection by setting out its duties on the venue's website.

5.2.21 Undertake or arrange appropriate discussions with parents/carers about an at-risk participant prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action. If South Hill Park believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the situation, advice will be sought from Children's Social Care.

5.3 Supporting vulnerable adults and children

We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on children and vulnerable adults, which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support.

5.3.1 South Hill Park may be one of the only stable, secure and predictable elements in the lives of children and vulnerable adults at risk. Nevertheless, when at South Hill Park, their behaviour may be challenging and extra support may be required from external agencies.

5.3.2 We recognise that some children and vulnerable adults may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on to appropriate agencies for support and intervention.

5.3.3 South Hill Park's staff handbook provides information to help support vulnerable participants. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child but does not damage the participants sense of self-worth. South Hill Park will ensure that the participant knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which may have occurred.

5.3.4 Where additional support needs are identified, liaison will take place with agencies including the Behaviour Support Team, Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services or other agencies as deemed appropriate.

5.3.5 SHP also has a commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers to help children and vulnerable adults settle into the venue and make the most of the activities we offer.

5.3.6 If a child goes missing or reports themselves as missing while on or off-site, South Hill Park will contact the police and report the incident to Child/Adult Social Services. The incident will also be reported to a Designated Senior Person.

Children with special educational needs

5.3.7 South Hill Park is an inclusive community which welcomes children and vulnerable adults with a variety of different needs. We recognise that statistically, children with emotional and behavioural difficulties and disabilities are the most vulnerable to abuse. When working with children who have complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems we are particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse (see appendix I). We recognise that behaviour, mood and injury may relate to possible abuse and not just a child's SEND⁴.

5.3.8 We also recognise that there is a greater risk of peer group isolation and disproportionate impact of bullying among children with SEND, in particular for those children with communication needs. We strive to ensure any such issues are dealt with at the earliest opportunity and that these matters are dealt with proactively by staff.

5.3.9 Where necessary in order to support children with communication needs, South Hill Park will provide additional training to staff on different communication strategies.

⁴ Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

5.4 Preventing unsuitable people from working with children

Recruitment and Selection

Safe recruitment and selection practice is vital in safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults. South Hill Park takes seriously its responsibility to use recruitment methods and practices which minimise risk by ensuring that measures are in place to identify and reject people who might abuse children and vulnerable adults, or who are otherwise unsuitable to work with them.

5.4.1 SHP will ensure that:

- Appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who are undertaking regulated activity or who have access to children and vulnerable adults
- SHP's expectations around responsibility for the safety of children and vulnerable adults is explicitly stated in job descriptions
- Gaps in employment history and any other anomalies are addressed at the interview stage.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are carried out for relevant roles and are completed and cleared prior to start.
- Doors are open and staff are encouraged to observe each other when rehearsing is taking place or during workshop activities, to offer transparency and good practice in working openly and safely
- Permanent staff, volunteers and freelancers are carefully selected, trained and supervised to provide a safe environment for all children and vulnerable adults. Depending on the position being filled, this will include:
 - Shortlisted candidates being interviewed by a panel of at least two staff, including a manager or a trustee, at least one of whom has had safer recruitment training
 - Selected candidates will be required to provide at least two written references.
 - Staff will undergo mandatory safeguarding training on arrival and will require a probationary period.
 - Freelance staff will require written references which confirm their suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults, and will be required to confirm their understanding of SHP's operational safeguarding procedures

5.4.2 The following members of staff require regular Safer Recruitment training: Chief Executive, Office Manager and the SLT team.

Allegations against members of staff/those working at the venue

5.4.3 Any allegation of abuse or harmful behaviour made against a member of staff must be reported without delay to the CEO.

5.4.4 In cases where the CEO is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

5.4.5 The CEO or their delegate will consult with the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) within one working day in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or where there are concerns about the practice of a staff member.

5.4.6 No one connected to SHP will seek to interview the participant or members of staff involved until advice has been sought. Doing so may compromise any police interviews that may be necessary.

5.4.7 Following advice from the LADO, an investigation will usually be launched and a plan of action created and implemented. The actions taken will take into account the nature and severity of the allegation, the evidence available, the need to further safeguard the person making the allegation, and the rights and dignity of the person against whom the allegation has been made.

5.4.8 South Hill Park will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full, even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the venue and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

5.4.9 Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that participants, and the accused staff member, are protected.

5.4.10 Consideration will be given to the needs of the participant and a recognition that false allegations are sometimes made. It is rare for someone to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen. SHP will therefore ensure that any investigation and reporting is carried out by a suitably neutral person (usually the Designated Senior Person)

Professional Standards for working with Children and Vulnerable Adults

5.4.11 South Hill Park will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with participants and parents/carers. As part of the Induction process, all staff will receive **guidance** about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all participants, especially those with a learning need, disability or who are vulnerable and/or under the age of 18.

5.4.12 South Hill Park will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with participants aged under 18 are unlawful for those staff members who are in a [role defined as a position of trust](#) and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

5.4.13 South Hill Park will ensure that communication between participants and adults, by whatever method, are transparent and take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.

5.5 Supporting children in performance and compliance with the law

5.5.1 South Hill Park recognises its responsibility to ensure children are safeguarded while taking part in performances organised and produced by the venue. Visiting companies must make their own arrangements for the legal supervision and licensing of young people featuring in their production.

5.5.2 At all times, and in line with current legislation and the law, South Hill Park will follow the strict guidance relating to appropriate supervision and hours of work and rest.

5.5.3 South Hill Park will use the NNCEE's documentation to ensure legal and legislative responsibilities are being met. The document (A Guide to Child Performance Licensing August 2020) can be downloaded at:

<https://www.nncee.org.uk/page/39/legislation-england>

5.5.4 Staff making arrangements for supervision and hours of rest shall pay particular attention to the table found on the NNCEE Child Performance Regulations table. Available at the link above.

5.5.5 South Hill Park will appoint a matron to all performances involving young people. The matron shall have intimate knowledge of the legislation and shall be responsible for arranging appropriate supervision of the children in rehearsals and performance.

5.5.6 South Hill Park has been granted a rolling 12 month BOPA⁵ which enables the venue to use DBS checked adults in place of licence chaperones. Professional projects (those where children are receiving remuneration or must take time off of school) must be supervised by a licensed chaperone in rehearsal and performance.

5.5.7 In cases where the venue has any questions concerning chaperoning or appropriate supervision in the context of performance, they will take advice from the Local Child Employment officer who can be reached at: child-employment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or 01344 464714.

5.5.8 South Hill Park will provide the Child Employment Office with a list of all hiring companies who have indicated young people will be appearing in their production.

⁵ Body of Persons Approval - an exemption where there would normally be a requirement under the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014 to individually licence any children taking part in performances.

5.5.9 South Hill Park reserve the right to inspect visiting companies to ensure high Safeguarding Practices are being met while on site. These visits can be conducted by either of the Designated Persons.

6. Training

South Hill Park recognises that staff, contractors, volunteers, freelancers, managers and trustees will need on-going support and training to meet their safeguarding responsibilities. It also recognises that safeguarding legislation, themes and priorities evolve and change regularly.

1. The Board of Trustees and the CEO will ensure both the lead and deputy designated people have undertaken, as a minimum, the 'Targeted' level child protection training course run by representatives of the Local Authority or other approved provider(s), and that this training is updated every two years.
2. The Board of Trustees and the CEO will ensure the continued professional development of the designated and deputy designated person, and any other staff members with designated safeguarding responsibilities through at least annual update training (including network meetings).
3. South Hill Park recognises the importance of the role of the designated person/s and will ensure they have the time, training and support necessary to undertake their duties which include providing advice and support to staff.
4. The Designated Senior Person will ensure staff recognise and understand their obligations working for a RAP (Regulated Activity Provider) under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
5. The Designated Senior Person will ensure that every member of staff and those who may come into contact with young people have read and understood this document, and its related procedures and appendices.
6. South Hill Park will arrange an appropriate level of child protection training for all staff and volunteers including as a mandatory part of their induction. With refresher training every three years. This training will ensure staff are confident about:

- South Hill Park's legal responsibilities.
 - Their individual responsibilities.
 - Identifying signs of abuse or harm
 - South Hill Park's policies and procedures.
 - How to share and record concerns.
 - How to support and respond to a child who discloses abuse.
7. The Designated Senior Person will arrange ongoing continuous professional development around safeguarding and child protection matters with regular opportunity for update briefings and discussion (at least annually).
 8. SHP will keep a record of all safeguarding training undertaken by staff, volunteers, contractors and freelancers and will remind them when they are due to attend further training.

7. Useful resources and contacts

Online Guidance and Resources

Pan Berkshire Local Safeguarding Guide	http://berks.proceduresonline.com
DBS Check Tool	https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check
Regulated Activity Guidance	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550197/Regulated_activity_in_relation_to_children.pdf
DBS Eligibility Guidance	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/753972/Standards_eligibility_guide_v1.0_051118.pdf
DBS Child Workforce Guidance	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/735505/Child_workforce_guide_v10_0_030818.pdf
Working Together to Safeguard Children	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/778224/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children_2018.pdf
Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents
A Guide to Child Performance Licensing (NNCEE 2020)	https://www.nncee.org.uk/page/485/what-is-child-performance
Contextual Safeguarding Network	https://www.csnetwork.org.uk/en/about/what-is-contextual-safeguarding

Telephone numbers

Concern for a child (MASH)	01344 352005
Concern for an Adult	01344 351500
Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours)	01344 351999
Child Employment / Performance Licensing	01344 464714

Email addresses

Child Employment / Performance Licensing	child.employment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
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8. Related policies and procedures

- Health and Safety
- Whistleblowing
- Staff Handbook
- Safer Employment Policy

Appendix I

Guidance for Staff on types of abuse and harm.

It is important to note that most children and vulnerable adults who are being harmed or abused will not tell you about it directly. Staff must be alert to the types of abuse outlined below, and any key indicators.

Staff should work with a “it could happen here” approach and consider whether any behaviours they notice, comments or conversations they hear, or any disclosures they receive could indicate that a participant is at risk of harm or is being abused.

Any concern that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm should be relayed to the Senior Designated Person without delay.

The Senior Designated Person will usually then require your help to carry out agreed actions and referrals.

Types of Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. However, it is not up to any individual staff member to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. This applies regardless of whether you have a concern about the behaviour/practice of another SHP employee, or the possibility that a child or vulnerable adult might be a victim of abuse at home or elsewhere.

Definitions of child abuse

There are four main forms of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of illness in a child, or deliberately causes illness.
- **Emotional abuse** is the emotional ill-treatment of a child, which can cause severe adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It can take many forms. For example, it can involve conveying to a child that he or she is worthless, or imposing expectations that are not appropriate for a child's age. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of children, but it can also occur alone.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at or producing pornographic material.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. It can occur if a parent fails to provide

adequate food or clothing or fails to respond to a child's basic emotional needs.

Further definitions of abuse and neglect are available in the [Responding to Abuse and Neglect](#) chapter of the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Board's Procedures Manual

Recognising abuse

• Physical abuse

Most children get cuts and bruises during their normal daily life, but the location of bruises can be indicators of abuse. For example a bruise on a part of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely can be a worrying sign. Bruises that reflect hand marks, or injuries where the explanation does not make sense, are other causes for concern, as are unexplained changes in behaviour.

• Emotional abuse

This can be difficult to measure, but signs can include developmental delay, fear of making mistakes, self-harm and a fear of a parent being approached regarding their behaviour. Children or vulnerable adults being abused in another way will almost certainly also be suffering emotional abuse

• Sexual abuse

In this case, it is usually the child's behaviour that causes people to become concerned. **In all cases**, children or vulnerable adults who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important, therefore, to listen to any child who talks to you about this and to take the discussion seriously. Behavioural changes that can indicate sexual abuse include nightmares, sexual knowledge/behaviour that is beyond a child's age or development, eating problems, self-harm and drugs misuse. A child who is being sexually abused may also talk about friendships with adults that do not appear normal for a child of their age, and may also be in possession of unexplained expensive gifts, given by a perpetrator in exchange for keeping quiet about the abuse.

• Neglect

Physical signs can include hunger, loss of weight, inappropriate dress for the conditions and poor hygiene. Children may also complain of being tired all the time, and talk about being left alone or unsupervised. Children and vulnerable adults being neglected may talk of having responsibilities inappropriate for their age or ability, may come to activities without required equipment and may be regularly picked up or dropped off late.

The four categories of abuse outlined above constitute the main definitions of abuse, and staff have a statutory duty to report concerns to the Designated Senior Person if they believe and of the above is happening to a child or vulnerable adult at the venue.

In addition to the above, staff should be mindful, and report in the same way, any disclosures or suspicions of the following harms:

Peer-on-peer abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse (including those behaviours that might be described as bullying) is not acceptable at SHP.

Peer on peer abuse is abuse carried out between children (i.e. both perpetrator and victim are under the age of 18). It should be recognised by all staff that children can abuse other children.

It includes, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying);
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

Further definitions of behaviours seen in peer-on-peer abuse

Bullying: Behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. This includes any repeated words or actions, which are aimed at causing someone to feel frightened, miserable and helpless. Bullying can take many forms, including:

- Verbal: e.g. name calling, sarcasm, threatening & teasing
- Physical: e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, punching or any use of physical aggressive contact
- Social: e.g. ignoring, spreading rumours or treating someone like an outsider
- Psychological: e.g. stalking & intimidation

Cyber-bullying: 'Virtual' bullying using technology (e.g. chat rooms, instant messaging, email & mobile phone) which can occur within or outside the venue. Cyber-bullying can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, as people can forward on content very quickly and easily.

Sexting: Many professionals consider sexting to be sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the internet but children may be more likely to interpret sexting as writing and sharing explicit messages with people they know. Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of under-18s, including selfies, is illegal.

Harassment: Any conduct which is unwanted by a child or vulnerable adult, which affects the dignity of that person or of a group of people. Harassment may be repetitive or an isolated occurrence against one or more child or vulnerable adult

Upskirting: Upskirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. This has recently become a criminal offence in the UK.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment means 'unwanted conduct of a sexual nature' that can occur online and offline. Sexual harassment is likely to: violate a child's or vulnerable adult's dignity, and/or make them feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated and/or create a hostile, offensive or sexualised environment.

Sexual harassment can include;

- Sexual comments, such as: telling sexual stories, making lewd comments, making sexual remarks about clothes and appearance and calling someone sexualised names;
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting;

- Physical behaviour, such as: deliberately brushing against someone, interfering with someone's clothes
- displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature;
- Online sexual harassment. This may be standalone, or part of a wider pattern of sexual harassment and/or sexual violence.

Online sexual harassment may include:

- Non-consensual sharing of sexual images and videos;
- Sexualised online bullying;
- Unwanted sexual comments and messages, including, on social media; and Sexual exploitation; coercion and threats.

If a child tells you they are being bullied or abused by a peer, the matter must be taken seriously, and the child given support. You should initially liaise with the Senior Designated Person. The perpetrator may need to be supported, as they may also be a victim of abuse/bullying. Any incident of peer-on-peer abuse/bullying involving a child must be discussed with victim's and the bully's parent.

Where South Hill Park becomes aware of any instances of Sexual violence and sexual harassment, this will be dealt with in line with the Employee/Worker Handbook and the disciplinary procedure therein. Children's Social Care will be contacted in line with safeguarding procedures.

Substance misuse

The discovery that a child or vulnerable adult is misusing legal or illegal substances or has reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the venue will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe:

- That the child's or vulnerable adult's substance misuse may cause them to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual harm or exploitation.
- That the child's or vulnerable adult's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults.
- Where there is reasonable cause to believe the child or vulnerable adult is already being exploited in a drugs-related context (e.g. is being used to move drugs as part of a county line, or is being given drugs in payment for storing or selling illegal substances)
- Where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.

7. Where it is suspected that the parent/carer is misusing, SHP will seek advice from Social Care and may enact safeguarding procedures, depending on the details of the situation.

Domestic abuse

Where there is Domestic Abuse taking place within a family, the children/vulnerable adults will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.

In any instances where South Hill Park have been alerted to Domestic Abuse, the venue will take appropriate action to ensure these children and vulnerable adults receive appropriate help and support. This will usually involve making a referral to social care.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a form of abuse that does occur in the UK, usually to girls who were born in the UK but whose families originate from communities where FGM is practiced.

FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0-15. It is extremely harmful and has short- and long-term effects on physical and psychological health.

FGM is internationally recognised as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK.

Signs that FGM might have taken place include:

- Having difficulty walking, standing or sitting.
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet.
- Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed.
- Acting differently after an absence
- Reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations.
- Asking for help - though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed.

South Hill Park takes these concerns seriously and staff may see or hear signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. Any indication that FGM is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place, will need to be reported to the Designated Senior Lead.

The Designated Person will make appropriate and timely referrals to the Police and Social Care if FGM is suspected or disclosed. In these cases, parents will not be

informed before seeking advice. The case will still be referred to Children's Social Care even if it is against the participant's wishes.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited, even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.'

Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming.

It is important to recognise that some children who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognise it as abuse.

Children who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and so procedures are in place to ensure appropriate action when a child is missing without explanation; report the incident to Children/Adult Social Care and then to a Designated Senior Person.

South Hill Park will refer to Children's Social Care any concerns that a child may be at risk of sexual exploitation.

Extremism and radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism

There is no place for extremist views of any kind in our venue, whether from internal sources - participants, staff or trustees, or external sources - local community, external agencies or individuals. We strive to ensure our participants see the venue as a safe place.

South Hill Park recognise that extremism and exposure to extremist materials and influences can lead to poor outcomes for children and vulnerable adults and so should be addressed as a safeguarding concern. We also recognise that if we fail to challenge extremist views, we are failing to protect our participants.

Extremists of all persuasions aim to develop destructive relationships between different communities by promoting division, fear and mistrust of others based on ignorance or prejudice and thereby limiting the life chances of children and vulnerable adults.

We will provide a broad and balanced programme which embraces diversity; ensuring all young people thrive and feel valued, not marginalised.

We are aware that young people can be exposed to extremist influences or prejudiced views from an early age, which emanate from a variety of sources and

media, including via the internet, and at times participants may themselves reflect or display views that may be discriminatory, prejudiced or extremist, including using derogatory language.

When this happens, staff should attempt to provide a counter-narrative, rather than shut down the conversation. SHP recognises that this can be difficult, and support should be sought from the Senior Designated Person if required.

Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language, displayed by participants or staff will always be challenged and where appropriate dealt with in line with the procedures set out in the Staff/Worker Handbook.

As part of wider safeguarding responsibilities staff will be alert to:

- Disclosures by pupils of their exposure to the extremist actions, views or materials of others outside of school, such as in their homes or community groups, especially where pupils have not actively sought these out.
- Graffiti symbols, writing or art work promoting extremist messages or images.
- Participants accessing extremist material online, including through social networking sites.
- Parental reports of changes in behaviour, friendship or actions.
- Pupils voicing opinions drawn from extremist ideologies and narratives.
- Use of extremist or 'hate' terms to exclude others or incite violence.
- Intolerance of difference, whether secular or religious or, in line with our equalities policy, views based on, but not exclusive to, gender, disability, sexuality, race, colour or culture.
- Attempts to impose extremist views or practices on others.
- Religious or politically extremist views that contradict the values of democracy, individual liberty, rule of law, understanding and tolerance of others' faiths and cultures.

In the event of concerns about a person becoming radicalised, staff should inform the Senior Designated Person, who will take advice from the relevant authorities and may make a referral via the Channel process. Channel is a multi-agency panel, which meets to support individuals who have been identified as being at risk of radicalisation but have not committed any terrorism offence.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage occurs when one or both individuals being married has not given their consent to the marriage, or gives their consent under coercion. Forced marriages are usually planned by parents, family or community leaders. They may involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional abuse.

A forced marriage should not be confused with an arranged marriage. In an arranged marriage, introductions are made by third parties, but those involved have a choice about whether they get married or not. Arranged marriages are a legal and positive cultural tradition for many people, but forced marriages are an abuse of human rights.

Forced marriage is against the law in the UK and any concern that anyone may be being forced into marriage should be referred to the Designated Senior Lead. If the person being forced to marry is under 18, forced marriage is categorised as child abuse as well as a criminal act.

Sexting

Sexting is an increasingly common activity among children, and means the sharing of inappropriate or explicit images online or through mobile phones. It can also refer to explicit written messages

It is often seen as 'flirting' by children who may feel that it is a part of normal life.

Sharing explicit images can leave children and vulnerable adults open to blackmail, bullying, unwanted attention and emotional distress.

Sharing an explicit image of a child is illegal, even if the person who does it is a child themselves and is sharing a self-made image. By doing this, a child is producing and distributing child abuse images and risks being prosecuted, even if they have consented to the use of the image.

Any awareness of sexting or the sharing of explicit images at SHP should be reported without delay to the Designated Senior Person, who will make a plan to notify parents and Children's Social Care as appropriate.

Gangs and Weapons Violence

Children and young people involved with, or on the edges of gangs, might be victims of violence or they might be pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They are usually being abused, exploited or put into dangerous situations, even if they themselves do not recognise this.

Involvement in gangs brings with it the possibility of coming into contact with drugs, violence and weapons. It can lead into serious organised crime, limiting life chances, and can also lead to injury and death.

Children are more likely to join gangs if they are vulnerable, socially isolated, in the care system, have already experienced trauma or had difficult life experiences, or have poor mental health, behavioural problems or learning needs.

For many children, being part of a gang makes them feel part of a family so they might not want to leave. Even if they do, leaving or attempting to leave can be a really scary idea. They might be frightened about what will happen to them, their friends or their family if they leave.

South Hill Park takes gang activity seriously and will respond to concerns about gang membership through multi agency working and appropriate referrals. These may include Youth Offending Service, Police and Children's Social Care.

County lines and criminal exploitation

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

Key to identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes, when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs. This makes it extremely important that staff follow missing child procedures if someone disappears from the venue or doesn't arrive as expected.

Concerns around criminal exploitation or county lines should be referred without delay to the Senior Designated Person who will seek advice or make a referral to Children's Social Care.

South Hill Park, where appropriate and relevant to our programmes, will always promote:

- Healthy and respectful relationships;
- What respectful behaviour looks like;
- Consent;
- Gender roles, stereotyping, equality;
- Body confidence and self-esteem;
- Non-prejudice behaviour;