

Child Protection Policy

This document is based on guidelines from OSCB, Charity Commission, ITC, Arts Council England, Oxford City Council, and NSPCC.

Last updated: 12/07/21 by Katie Blackwell

All Aboard Opera! is a professional opera company with a growing education department running workshops and young people aged 5-18 years. It is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of children, young people and staff who are involved with us as part of our workshops or in our productions.

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child. Safeguarding children and child protection guidance and legislation applies to all children up to the age of 18.

We at All Aboard Opera! have established the following code of practice.

The purpose of the policy:

- To provide protection for the children and young people who use the services of All Aboard Opera!
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety and in-person safeguarding
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm. This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of All Aboard Opera!.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Having a Designated Safeguarding Officer who can ensure that all necessary procedures are being followed within All Aboard Opera!

- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

Commitment to equality and anti-discriminatory practice

All Aboard Opera! will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

All Aboard Opera! recognises the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, for example with communication or from the impact of discrimination.

Safeguarding and reporting signs of neglect/abuse

According to government policy and agreed prevention criteria set out by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's board, All Aboard Opera! have the right to report any evidence of harm or neglect where a child in their care is concerned. Any signs of abuse of any kind will be reported to the local authority's safeguarding board by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Workshop leaders should contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer if they have evidence of harm or neglect where a child in their care is concerned. If your concerns are about the DSO please report these to Emily Sloan, the co director of All Aboard Opera!.

If the situation is an emergency, you must dial 999. The police have the power to intervene if a child is in immediate danger.

Recognising and Responding to signs of abuse

Many children and young people will seek help because they know where to go and believe that it will make a difference. All Aboard Opera! commits to creating an environment where it is as easy as possible for young people to find and take up the offer of help. To ensure this we shall:

- Reinforce positive messages about those who seek help – seeking help is a sign of strength.
- Encourage parents to support their children in seeking help.
- Be positive about young people, their capacity for change and their resilience.

- Build trust – treat young people with respect.
- Help young people to help each other – equip young people with the skills and tools to support their friends/peers and family members.

Child Protection Records

All Aboard Opera! will comply with Data Protection and ICO guidelines when compiling and storing confidential information.

- Information about child protection concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child, which will be started as soon as you become aware of any concerns.
- If records need to be shared (within your own organisation or externally), they will be kept confidential via the use of passwords and encryption.
- All Aboard Opera! commits to following government guidelines on the retention and subsequent destruction of records.
- For more information: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1442/child-protection-records-retention-and-storage-guidelines-september-2019.pdf>

Protecting children from bullying

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours, including but not limited to:

- Verbal abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Cyberbullying

All Aboard Opera! commits to following our [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) and to educate our staff, students and volunteers on the above and our [Child Behaviour Policy](#).

Safe Recruitment

All Aboard Opera! commits to following recommended safe recruitment guidelines, including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding and protecting all children and young people by implementing robust safer recruitment practices
- Identifying and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people
- Responding to concerns about the suitability of applicants during the recruitment process

- Responding to concerns about the suitability of employees/volunteers once they have begun their role
- Ensuring all staff/volunteers who are working directly with children and young people have valid DBS checks.
- Ensuring all new staff/volunteers participate in an induction which includes child protection

Managing concerns and allegations

Any allegation or concern that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly, regardless of where the alleged incident took place. All Aboard Opera!'s Child Protection Lead is Emily Sloan, and All Aboard Opera! commits to ensuring all staff and volunteers are aware of how to contact the Child Protection Lead.

In the event of an allegation being made or a concern being raised, All Aboard Opera! commits to complying with NSPCC and OSCB guidelines by gathering the facts of the case and keeping written records.

If an allegation is made that a staff member or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

All Aboard Opera! will report this to the LADO, and will liaise with them to take further steps.

Running workshops and activities safely

At All Aboard Opera! we will ensure that workshops and activities including young people and children are run safely by complying with the following measures.

- Safer recruitment; as detailed above, all staff/volunteers who work with young people at All Aboard Opera! will undergo vetting and barring checks. The relevant paperwork (eg. DBS checks) must be sent to All Aboard Opera! before a staff member or volunteer begins working with the company.
- Child Protection training: all staff/volunteers working directly with children or young people must undergo relevant Child Protection training.
- All staff/volunteers must follow the [All Aboard Opera! Code of Conduct](#).
- All staff/volunteers must follow the All Aboard Opera! Child Protection Policy.
- All staff/volunteers are aware of who the Child Protection Lead in All Aboard Opera! is.

- Lost or missing children: measures will be in place to prevent children or young people going missing during All Aboard Opera! activities. All Aboard Opera! will retain contact details for parents/guardians of all children and young people taking part in our workshops so that in the event of a situation arising they are able to be contacted; when All Aboard Opera! is conducting a workshop in an external organisation (eg. a school) then the workshop leader will coordinate with the teacher to contact parents.
- Photography/Filming: during workshops and rehearsals photographs may be taken for publicity purposes. All Aboard Opera! will not take any photographs or recordings of children or young people without first gaining permission from parents/guardians. For more information, see All Aboard Opera!'s Photography and Safeguarding Statement.
- Ratios of staff to children: All Aboard Opera! will comply with NSPCC and OSCB guidelines with a ratio of 1 staff member (with a valid DBS check) to every 8 children/young people during our workshops.

Legislation and Guidance

This Child Protection Policy follows guidelines from OSCB, Charity Commission, ITC, NSPCC, Arts Council England and Oxford City Council.

More information about Child Protection (headed by the Department for Education) laws in England can be found here: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england>

We at All Aboard Opera! are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Contact Details

Co-Director | Designated Safeguarding Officer
Katie Blackwell: allaboardopera@gmail.com

Co-Director | Child Protection Lead
Emily Sloan: allaboardopera@gmail.com

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'KB'.

Katie Blackwell

Co-Director | Designated Safeguarding Officer

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Emily Sloan

Co-Director | Child Protection Lead