

WEST END CALLING

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Registered charity number: 1204485

Last updated:	17th December 2023
Approved by:	The Trustees at their 17th December 2023 meeting, as recorded in the Minutes
Review:	The policy must be reviewed annually and updated as necessary

West End Calling is dedicated to providing a safe and secure environment for its students. It is our aim to give each child the best possible experience.

Every member of staff at West End Calling has a significant contribution to make with regards to safeguarding our students. We recognise that all of our staff have responsibilities to play an active part in protecting our students from harm and keeping them safe during our auditions and show days. As adults, professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

West End Calling commit to giving their students a high quality artistic and professional experience of the performing arts and are committed to providing a positive and safe environment, in which students can express themselves with confidence.

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the students' development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To raise the awareness to staff of the need to safeguard students and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse or risk of abuse.
- To provide and emphasise the need for good communication levels between all of our staff.

Introduction

1. The objects of the Charity as set out in its governing document (a CIO constitution, foundation model) ("the Objects") are:-

"to advance in life and help young people as a means of:-

- (1) *developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals; and*
- (2) *advancing education through participation in the performing arts and in particular, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, by providing young people with the opportunity to participate in musical theatre auditions and live performances and to receive training in the art of musical theatre."*

In the Objects “young people” means children and young persons up to the age of 25 years.

2. The Charity furthers the Objects by running a national musical theatre performance competition for children and young persons (currently between the ages of seven and 21 years).
3. Through adherence to this policy the Trustees demonstrate the Charity’s commitment to safeguarding individuals from harm, including:-
 1. beneficiaries (ie the competition contestants who are referred to in the remainder of this document as “Students”);
 2. employees; competition judges, hosts, event co-ordinators, chaperones; independent contractors; volunteers; advisors; secondees, members of any sub-committees or advisory boards and/or any patrons (“Charity Personnel”); and
 3. other people who come into contact with the Charity.
4. The fundamental principle that underpins this policy is that all individuals without exception have the right to be free from harm and the right to protection from any such harm. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no one is harmed in any way through their contact or relationship with the Charity. All Charity Personnel must ensure they not only understand, but also act in line with, this policy.

Definitions

5. **Safeguarding** is a broader term than protection, as it also includes prevention. The promotion of welfare is paramount. For the purposes of this policy, safeguarding includes the Charity’s Personnel taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risk of harm is minimised and, where there are concerns or specific incidents disclosed or observed, taking appropriate actions as necessary.
6. Further to definitions provided in the [Department of Health “No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care”](#) publication, this policy has the following focus and scope:
 - **Harm**, which *“should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development”.*
 - **Abuse**, i.e. *“a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.”*
7. Harm and abuse can be physical, verbal or psychological in nature, and inflicted through a single act or repeated acts. They can be planned or reactive, intentional or unintentional, and via an act of neglect or an omission to act. They may occur

when a person is persuaded to do something to which they have not consented or cannot consent. *“Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.”*

8. The term **“vulnerable beneficiaries”** includes children and young people; people with physical or learning disabilities; people with a physical or mental illness (chronic or otherwise, including addiction to alcohol or drugs); older people; and those with a reduction in physical or mental capacity.

Scope

9. As per the Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding (latest version as at the date of adoption of this policy (1 June 2022) entitled *“Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees”* (“Safeguarding Guidance”) – link below - safeguarding is a priority for all Trustees and their responsibilities are not confined to vulnerable beneficiaries:

“Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities should be a governance priority for all charities.

As part of fulfilling your trustee duties, you must take reasonable steps to protect people who come into contact with your charity.”

10. Consequently, this policy applies equally (as appropriate) to all Charity Personnel regarding (a) their relationship with each other and (b) in relation to all those who come into contact with the Charity during the course of the Charity’s work.
11. It its Safeguarding Guidance the Charity Commission expects Trustees to make sure their charity:-
 - *has appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all trustees, any employees, independent contractors, advisors, secondees, members of any sub-committees or advisory boards, patrons and/or volunteers and beneficiaries*
 - *checks that people are suitable to act in their roles*
 - *knows how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner*
 - *has a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant organisations as soon as concerns are suspected or identified*
 - *sets out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which is regularly reviewed*
 - *follows statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant to their charity [see the guidance referred to in the main body of this policy and the additional guidance referred to at the end of this policy]*
 - *is quick to respond to concerns and carry out investigations*
 - *does not ignore or downplay failures*
 - *has a balanced trustee board and does not let one trustee dominate its work – trustees should work together*
 - *makes sure protecting people from harm is central to its culture*
 - *has enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers for safeguarding and protecting people*
 - *conducts periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice*

Procedures

12. The procedures outlined below have been prepared with a view to ensuring that the Trustees comply with the above mentioned expectations of the Charity Commission as set out in its Safeguarding Guidance.

Code of conduct

13. It is expected that the Charity Personnel:
 - (1) act with integrity, respect and honesty;
 - (2) take a collaborative, friendly and open approach, working together (as appropriate) to deliver the activities of the Charity in furtherance of the Charity's Objects;
 - (3) are inclusive and respect diversity (see also the Inclusivity Policy below);
 - (4) value the contribution of all who are involved in the delivery of the activities of the Charity;
 - (5) aim to give all those who they come into contact with in connection with the work of the Charity a positive experience; and
 - (6) ensure that Students are provided with a high quality artistic and professional experience of the performing arts in a positive and safe environment, in which they can express themselves with confidence.

Inclusivity Policy

14. In recognition that attending the competitions run by the Charity can have a significant and positive impact on the lives of children and young people, all prospective Students will be welcomed to apply regardless of social, political, religious and cultural background, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity and have a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
15. The Charity is an inclusive organisation where children and young people from all backgrounds are offered the same opportunity and support, needed to attend and participate whether for education, personal development, pleasure or vocation/ career.
16. It must also be recognised that children and young people can be vulnerable and not all will be able to cope with the high pressure of a competition. The Charity will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the physical, behavioural and learning needs of each Student.

Bullying

17. The Charity has a zero tolerance in respect of bullying. Students should feel safe and assured that if there were any signs of bullying, that they could speak to a member of staff.

Designated responsibility

18. All Trustees of the Charity are collectively responsible for ensuring that the Charity meets its safeguarding obligations. However, responsibility for taking the lead on safeguarding issues and reporting accordingly to the board shall be delegated to a Designated Safeguarding Trustee and a Designated Safeguarding Officer.
19. Alex James Ellison (Founder and Chief Executive Officer (“CEO)) shall be the Charity’s Designated Safeguarding Officer and Charlotte Levy shall be the Charity’s Designated Safeguarding Trustee. Alex shall be responsible for reporting any concerns, queries or reports relating to safeguarding to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee, or if considered more appropriate in the circumstances to the Chair of Trustees.

Assessing risks

20. The Charity’s safeguarding risks shall be assessed in the light of its activities.
21. All risks should be identified in a risk register which is reviewed and updated accordingly (a) if a safeguarding incident occurs and (b) each time this policy is reviewed (as per the section below).

Recruitment of Trustees and other Charity Personnel

General

22. The Trustees will ensure that robust procedures are in place when recruiting and selecting new Trustees (and also other Charity Personnel) to ensure that they are suitable and legally able to act in their positions. These include:-
- Obtaining references, as deemed necessary appropriate;
 - Checking, as deemed necessary/appropriate, any gaps in work history;
 - Ensuring that any prospective new Trustee is eligible to act as a charity trustee by asking him/her to complete and sign the Charity Commission Trustee eligibility declaration (“Eligibility Declaration”)– see the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/820778/Trustee_Declaration_Form.pdf
 - Asking existing Trustees to complete and sign the Eligibility Declaration each year (or at such other intervals as the Trustee board considers appropriate) to ensure that they are still eligible to act as charity trustees; and

- Ensuring that any staff from overseas have a right to work in the UK – see the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work>

Disclosure and Barring Service (“DBS”) checks

23. Basic DBS checks will be obtained for all Trustees and the Charity’s Founder/CEO (and for all future CEOs) - link below. The Trustees will review on a case by case basis whether or not it would be appropriate to obtain a basic DBS check in relation to other Charity Personnel.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/basic-dbs-checks-guidance>

24. All event co-ordinators and additional chaperones are teachers and consequently they will each have an enhanced DBS certificate which they will be required to produce to the Charity before they are engaged by the Charity.
25. Enquiries have been made of the DBS as to whether DBS checks would be required for competition judges and the pianist. The DBS has confirmed that such checks would not be required. However, the position will be kept under review.

Contact with Students

General

26. The Charity Personnel are aware that they have a duty of care and responsibility to act and behave appropriately in respect of all contact with Students.
27. At all Charity events, there will be a coordinator in charge of ensuring that this Safeguarding Policy is followed. Whilst the coaching and feedback is delivered by our judges, the coordinator can oversee all activities and will be available for all Students.
28. Once a Student who is under the age of 16 has signed in at an event, they may not leave the premises without a member of our staff or their parents/guardians and our team must know their whereabouts at all times.

First Aid

29. If administering first aid that requires physical contact, a member of Charity staff will (where possible) ask the permission of the Student before initiating any treatment. Where possible, all first aid treatment will take place in the presence of two Charity staff members.
30. It is the responsibility of the Charity to inform a Student’s parent or guardian immediately if the Student is taken ill while at a Charity event.

Taking and use of photographs and recorded images

31. The Charity has adopted a strict policy in relation to the taking and use of photographs and recorded images of its Students. This is set out at appendices A.

Venue Hire

32. The Trustees shall ensure that all venues at which events are held have in place:-
- a health and safety policy;
 - a safeguarding policy (this might be included in the health and safety policy or comprise a separate policy);
 - public liability insurance; and
 - any such other insurances as the Trustees may from time to time consider appropriate.
33. Prior to entering into a contract for the hire of a venue the Charity will assess whether a potential venue has in place the policies and insurance/s are referred to above.

Handling and reporting safeguarding incidents and concerns

34. All Charity Personnel should take seriously and respond quickly to any suspected, disclosed or observed incidents of harm or abuse to any individuals connected with the Charity including other Charity Personnel and vulnerable Students (and Students in general).
35. All concerns, queries or reports of potential or actual harm or abuse to individuals must be reported as soon as is reasonably practical to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will, in turn, report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee, or such other Trustee if appropriate in the circumstances. The report should include as much information as possible regarding the incident(s).
36. Upon receipt of an incident report as referred to above, the Trustees will then:
- assess the concern, allegation or incident;
 - notify, as necessary appropriate, the relevant authorities as appropriate, for example Social Services, the Police and the Charity Commission (see the Commission's guidance referred to on page 8 "*How to report a serious incident in your charity*" which specifically refers to reporting requirements in relation to safeguarding incidents);
 - subject to, as relevant/appropriate, (a) the law, (b) the terms of the Charity's governing document, (c) any relevant grievance or disciplinary procedures; (d) the terms of any agreement or other arrangement in place with a third party and/or (g) the consideration of any expert advice obtained take such other action as deemed necessary/appropriate including, but not limited to:-
 - terminating trusteeship; terminating a contract of employment or consultancy agreement;
 - terminating a secondment arrangement;

- terminating a person's membership of a sub-committee or of an advisory board;
- terminating an arrangement with a volunteer; and/or
- terminating such other agreement or other arrangement with a third party;
- fully document the incident and make a record of the Charity's actions in response; and
- put in place any new measures required to prevent similar instances in the future.

Reviewing this policy

37. This policy must be reviewed by the Trustee board at least once per year. In reviewing the policy the Trustees shall consider, amongst other things:-
- (1) assessed risks and whether the risks have changed since the policy was last reviewed;
 - (2) any actual or alleged safeguarding incidents that have occurred since this policy was last reviewed;
 - (3) whether this policy and the safeguarding procedures set out herein should be amended in any way in the light of (i) Charity Commission safeguarding guidance in place at the date of review, (ii) any other relevant sector safeguarding guidance, (iii) identified risks and (iv) any actual or alleged safeguarding incidents referred to in the above bullet point; and
 - (4) any specific guidance given or action required by the Charity Commission or any other regulator or body.

Training

38. Awareness and update training will be arranged and provided as necessary/ appropriate to ensure that all Charity Personnel are clear about their safeguarding duties and responsibilities.

Publication of this policy

39. This policy shall be posted on the Charity's website (if any) and a hard copy shall be provided free of charge as requested by any individual or organisation.

Declaration

40. This policy shall be brought to the attention of all Charity Personnel and each will be asked to sign the declaration at the end of this policy by way of indicating that he/she has read and understood this policy and the Charity Commission guidance referred to herein.

Charity Commission guidance

41. Links to the Charity Commission guidance that is relevant in the context of this policy are set out below.

Safeguarding Guidance (also referred to at paragraph 7 above):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

How to report a serious incident in your charity:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

Charity Commission guidance CC30 entitled *Finding new trustees*:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/finding-new-trustees-cc30>

Useful further reading resources

Charity Governance Code:

<https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en/front-page>

NCVO Charity Ethical Principles:

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research/ethics/ethical-principles>

Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF) Safeguarding Framework:

ACF's new framework to help Charities think through their approach to safeguarding.

<https://www.acf.org.uk/news/acf-launches-new-framework-on-safeguarding-for-Charitys>

Policy on the taking and use of photographs and recorded images

Introduction

It is important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have photographs and films of their special moments. Family and friends also want to be able to share the successes of their children when they have been part of a special event or activity.

However, it is also important to be aware of safeguarding issues when people are taking photos or filming at Charity events. The potential for misuse of images can be reduced if the Charity is aware of the potential risks and dangers and puts appropriate measures in place.

Risk factors

Some of the potential risks of photography and filming at events include:

- children and young people may be identifiable when a photograph is shared with personal information;
- direct and indirect risks to children and young people when photographs are shared on websites and in publications with personal information;
- inappropriate photographs or recorded images of children and young people;
- inappropriate use, adaptation or copying images.

Our photography and videoing policy

Our policy on the taking and use of photographs and films of our Students is set out below:-

1. parental/carer and student permission must be obtained to consent for a child to be photographed or videoed
2. If a parent/carer/student requests a picture or video to be removed from social media, the charity will do so where possible
3. the Charity will only use images of Students in suitable clothing to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. It is acknowledged that in the fields of music and drama there is a greater risk of potential abuse and Trustees, staff and volunteers must be alive to this;
4. photographers (including professional photographers and amateur photographers such as parents, carers, family friends and others) and any press who are invited to an event must not have unsupervised access to Students;

5. images or video recordings of Students must be kept securely. Hard copies of images should be kept in a locked drawer and electronic images should be in a protected folder with restricted access;