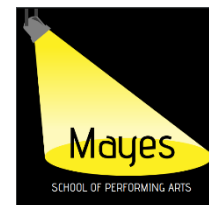


Mayes School of Performing Arts

Inspiring performing arts training for children and young adults, building confidence, forging friendships and learning to shine in the spotlight



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Mayes School of Performing Arts is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people who attend. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Mayes School of Performing Arts acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. All staff and volunteers will work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

Mayes School of Performing Arts works with children and families as part of its activities.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children and young people who receive Mayes School of Performing Arts services
- To provide parents, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a nominated Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Child Protection/Safeguarding lead.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers
- Recording and storing appropriate information professionally and securely.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

Government guidelines categorises abuse as:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

What is physical abuse?

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

What is emotional abuse?

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include verbal abuse, such as persistent criticism, belittling, or name-calling, as well as not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

What is sexual abuse?

It involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, 14 including assault by penetration (for example rape or penetration with an object) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

What is neglect?

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Child-on-child abuse

All staff are aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as child on-child abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of Mayes Performing Arts Sessions and online. By definition, it applies to abuse by one child of another child – regardless of the age, of stage of development, or any age differential between them. We understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between children that are abusive in nature. Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying), abuse in intimate personal relationships between children, 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 harassment such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of

abuse, consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, 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.

Mental Health

All staff are aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This could include self-harm, suicidal ideation or risk of suicide.

Disclosure of abuse

Children and young people may disclose abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- Directly— making specific verbal statements about what's happened to them
- Indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- Behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate)
- Non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

If a child confides in a member of staff that abuse has taken place, they will:

- Remain calm and in control, but do not delay in taking action
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the Child Protection/Safeguarding lead. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share the information with others and that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help
- Reassure the child that they 'did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child what you will do next
- Speak immediately to the designated Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually Children's Social Care or the Police (if relevant).
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child makes a disclosure
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, record a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, the child's wishes and feelings, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome and a record of any discussion/communication with parents, other agencies etc. It is important you use the child's own words on the Mayes School of Performing Arts disclosure/concern document. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Mayes School of Performing Arts have a duty of care to pass on any information that may be disclosed or observed to cause concern to us during contact with our children to the local authority, LADO, police and MASH (The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, which is made up of a range of organisations in Suffolk who are responsible for safeguarding adults and children) for possible investigation.

Discussion with the parent/carers would take place in regards to this referral following conversation with appropriate departments in the local authority (Social Care) after seeking advice to ensure children remain safe at all times.

Concerns will be recorded in writing, signed and dated by the Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead for Mayes School of Performing Arts. These will be kept securely for the period of time that is required whilst investigations are happening by other authorities as these may assist with their investigations. These will be destroyed appropriately following advice.

Any report of concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or allegation of abuse against a member of staff must immediately be reported to the to Megan Mayes (Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead) or Lee Mayes (Deputy Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead). In the event of a concern/allegation about the Director / Safeguarding Lead, this should be reported directly to the LADO.

If families wish to raise a safeguarding concern, they need to contact the Safeguarding lead immediately in person at a session, by phone or email address (see below).

The data protection laws do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Suitability of staff and volunteers

All staff undertake an enhanced DBS check to ensure they are suitable for the role. All staff show proof of identity and right to work in the UK.

No staff member or volunteer should ever inflict physical or psychological harm on a child.

Online Safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable and ever evolving, but can be categorised into four areas of risk: content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories, contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users or generative AI applications that simulate this; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes, conduct: online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images, including those generated using AI and online bullying, and commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

- Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers. They are a source of fun, entertainment and education. However, we know that some men, women and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and e-mails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face to face meetings.
- All staff/ volunteers aged 18 or above must not communicate with children via their phone or on social media. Communication should just be with the parent/carer
- Staff/volunteers aged 18 or above should not be 'friends' on social media with any pupil
- Cyber bullying by children via texts and e-mail will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying
- Mobile phones with cameras should not be permitted in the changing rooms at performances except for emergency communication with the designated members of staff. No photos are to be taken by anyone on any device backstage.

In implementing this policy Mayes School of Performing Arts will:

Ensure that all workers/members understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Ensure that all workers/members and volunteers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a workers conduct towards a child or young person to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead.

The Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead will refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies (i.e. Police and/or Children's Social Care).

Children, young people and parents will be informed of who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy are and be able to raise any safeguarding concerns and know that these will be taken seriously and acted upon.

Students will not be allowed to use mobile phones during sessions.

The Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead will attend annual Safeguarding training.

Nominated Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead: Megan Mayes 07934 069230

Deputy Child Protection/Safeguarding Lead: Lee Mayes 07934 069230

Mayesperformingarts@hotmail.com

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Written 11th May 2019

Latest Review August 2026