



# **Fierce Theatre Schools Child Protection Policy**

## **Protecting Children Involved with Fierce Theatre Schools**

This statement sets out a policy which requires the organisation, and all adults who seek to be involved in Fierce Theatre Schools, to accept the duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people, and to prevent physical, sexual and emotional abuses of all children with whom they come into contact.

This policy document will be made available to:

- all adults working with Fierce Theatre School
- all adults involved in activities with children and young people
- all parents and local supporters of Fierce Theatre School
- to all other interested parties

## **1. A Child Protection Policy for Fierce Theatre Schools**

- Fierce Theatre Schools recognises the need to demonstrate to parents and to the wider community the importance we give to the child protection issue. We are committed to procedures and philosophies which have been developed to protect children themselves, but which also protect adults from misunderstandings and false accusations of abuse.
- In our work with children and young people, we respect and defend their individual rights.
- This means that we do not countenance any form of physical violence or abuse, whether committed by or inflicted upon either adults or young people.
- It also means that we do not countenance verbal insults or destructive criticism. Fierce Theatre Schools encourages respect for others' background, appearance, personality, abilities, opinions or preferences. It means that adults must accept the responsibility to exercise due care in all activities, so that young people are not exposed to risk through adult negligence or incompetence.
- Child Protection requires good child-care and good group-work practice.

## **2. Vetting of Adults Working with Children**

- All adults who wish to work with children and young people during Fierce Theatre Schools activities are required to provide an existing CRB/CRBS/PVG Disclosure or to complete a CRB/CRBS/PVG Disclosure Application. It is also important that a reference is sought from a person who knows the applicant before they start working with children. If the reference causes any doubts, Fierce Theatre Schools reserve the right to make further verbal or written contact with the referees before the adult can work with children in the organisation. If a Disclosure or reference gives sufficient cause for doubt applicants will not be allowed to work with children or young persons.
- Adults who work or have contact with children will be asked to declare any criminal convictions they may have which involve abuse against children, however old these convictions may be. This is an exemption from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- All adults who have responsibilities for children must abide by this policy document.

- All Adults will be expected to sign an application form including a declaration that they have no such convictions or criminal proceedings pending which relate to alleged abuse of children.
- All materials relating to the application will be held centrally, carefully and in confidence.
- Details of Staff's Disclosure Reference Number and Expiry date will be displayed publicly for staff, students and guests to review.
- Training and preparation of adults taking responsibility
- Fierce Theatre Schools has a Leader Training Pack for newcomers.

### 3. Tutors Role in Child Protection

All adults working with Fierce Theatre Schools are provided with clear descriptions and specifications for their work, and they will complete a probationary period of 10 weeks.

### 4. Planning to Minimise Risk To Children

- Fierce Theatre Schools activities are organised to reduce to a minimum those situations within which it may be possible for children to be abused.

The following guidelines are followed during all Fierce Theatre Schools Activities

- Fierce Theatre Schools students will be appropriately supervised at all times. This may on occasion, involve parents remaining with children until this can be achieved.
- Adults should be discouraged from meeting individually with children outside Fierce Theatre Schools activities
- It is important to know who the leaders are on all activities.
- Adults should not be alone with children away from other people.
- In exceptional circumstances where an adult may be alone with a child for a short period, the adult should ensure that other adults are aware of the situation and that they support this action.
- Most activities are based on group work, but if there is the need for an adult to work with an individual child, it is better that this is organised in clear view of the rest of the group.
- Adults should ensure that the touch and physical contact they use is not exploitative and is not open to misunderstanding. Children and young people should be encouraged to say what they find acceptable and unacceptable in the way they are approached by adults or their colleagues in the group.
- Confidential data that is collected on children including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between adults only on a need-to-know basis.
- Written reports are required for any significant incidents, and any such reports on serious incidents must be sent to Fierce Theatre Schools Management.
- Tutors will ensure that workshop environments are safe.

### 5. Responding to Concern about Possible Abuse of a Child

Fierce Theatre School is not a children's counseling agency and adults working with Fierce Theatre Schools should not be required to explore issues of abuse with children. However, it is possible that children and young people will take advantage of the trusting atmosphere during Fierce Theatre School activities to disclose or describe abuse which is affecting them. Adults should be clear and honest in explaining that such information cannot be kept as a secret and that other agencies will have to be

involved. It is sensible to keep individual notes which may seem to be relevant.

- If an abuse is disclosed or alleged which identifies an adult or another young person in Fierce Theatre Schools as the alleged perpetrator, it is important that this is responded to quickly and seriously. A consultation with the local child protection services should be made in the first instance and then a report made Fierce Theatre Schools Management.
- If the abuse seems to emanate from the young person's home, it is most important that an appropriate external agency is contacted and that the matter is not dealt with internally within Fierce Theatre School.

#### **6. Resources Available to Adults Working with Fierce Theatre Schools and Activity Participants**

- The telephone number, e-mail and website addresses of Child Line and local Child Protection Officers.
- The name of a suitable person with whom they could put the child or young person in contact or to whom they could turn to for help.
- Staff who have some training and knowledge on best practice that can assist in dealing with these situations.