

STAGE 22 CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

Stage 22 recognises the importance of its ministry to all children and young people and also its responsibility to protect and safeguard their welfare.

The definition of terms as used in this policy statement shall be as follows:

<i>Stage 22</i>	Stage 22 School of Arts (Network) Limited which is owned and controlled by the Aquitaine Group Limited.
<i>Staff</i>	Adults engaged by Stage 22 to assist in the running of the organisation whether voluntary or paid. It refers to adults in all Stage 22's trading regions of the United Kingdom.
<i>CPO</i>	<i>Child Protection Officer</i> being the appointed person within Stage 22 to deal with all matters relating to the implementation of this policy.
<i>CRB</i>	<i>Criminal Records Bureau</i> is a centralised government office which maintains a register of cautions and convictions registered against persons in the United Kingdom.

Stage 22 recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for Children and young people who it acknowledges can be victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse as well as neglect. The procedures adopted have been made with close reference to the Protection of Children Act. As and when necessary, our CPO will work with statutory agencies to deal with any concerns or matters arising.

All members of Stage 22 Staff are required to read a copy of this policy, the guidance issued by HM Government and Social Care for organisations such as this as well as signing a legal declaration stating that they have completed the aforementioned. Staff are also obliged under this policy to attend regular meetings with the designated CPO to be informed of any changes to this policy or the Act itself. Full details of all Staff are kept on file at the Companies Head Office in Fobbing, Essex and these details are updated regularly. The essence of this procedure is to ensure that in the first instance of Stage 22 policy, no member of Staff has any contact with children or young people unless official notification of clearance has been received through the CRB.

All members of Staff shall complete a CRB application form, a confidential disclosure form and supply names and addresses for references to be taken up. CRB clearance is required before the individual can begin working with children or young people. Portable CRB clearance or copies of CRB disclosures from alternative employers are no longer acceptable by Stage 22. Re-checking for CRB clearance will take place every thirty-six

months for full time employees and every twelve months for part time and casual Staff, unless ordered otherwise by Aquitaine Group or any relevant authority.

Stage 22 will follow the guidelines of the Protection of Children Act and other such official documents when recruiting new members of Staff or re-employing ex-Staff. 'Front line' Staff (including performance directors) are required to attend a child protection training course every two years.

Any planned activities must follow general good practice guidelines as well as health and safety guidelines. Where appropriate, parental permission must be given in written form. The adult/child ratio must be observed as follows:

AGE	STAFF	CHILDREN
5-10	one for every	8
10-12	one for every	10
12+	one for every	15

There will always be a minimum of two adults to each Stage 22 lesson or rehearsal and ideally they will be of different sexes. Anyone under the age of 18 should not be counted in the ratio as a helper and will never be left in sole charge of a group of children.

Whilst the implementation of this policy must follow particular guidelines as herein stated, persons responsible are reminded that care, sensitivity and an appropriate degree of confidentiality are necessary to ensure a proper resolution to any matters which may arise.

Responding to an Allegation of Abuse

Under no circumstances will a member of Staff carry out their own investigations into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The member of Staff in receipt of the allegation will be instructed to do the following:

- Make a written account of what has been said and by whom. This statement should be very specific using exact words and phraseology expressed by the witness.
- The statement should be written as soon as possible after the incident (or notification of it) and the statement will be highly guarded and discussed with nobody else.
- Do not ask questions to enable you to obtain more information and do not add your own thoughts or feelings.
- Sign and date the statement and hand it immediately to the designated CPO. If immediate delivery of the statement to the CPO is not possible then after having written, signed and dated it the member of Staff should refer the document directly to Social Care or the Police.

- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than the CPO or Stage 22's police advisor. Do not discuss the matter with anyone who is the subject of the allegation.

The role of the CPO or other nominated person is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass the information to Social Care or the Police. Contact details for Stage 22's CPO in each region can be found by contacting head office on 01375 361888.

These Child Protection policies were endorsed by the Executive Boards of Stage 22 School of Arts (Network) Limited and Aquitaine Group Limited on 27th November 2007 and 2nd December 2007 respectively. The policies will be reviewed annually or whenever a change/addition/deletion is required.

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GOOD WORKING PRACTICE

- Always adhere to the recommendations outlined in the Stage 22 Child Protection Policy.
- Plan to have the correct adult/child ratio.
- Respect everyone as an individual and their right to personal privacy.
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues.
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour (including the censored use of language and conversation around Children and young people).
- Be available as a listening ear and if necessary refer for more appropriate help.
- Try to ensure that your actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence and are acceptable within a relationship of trust.
- Never permit abusive behaviour; e.g. bullying, ridiculing or taunting.
- Pass any concerns or suspicions as to a Childs safety or welfare to the Child Protection Officer, Social Care or the Police.