



## Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy & Procedure

### Policy

**This policy applies to all staff, contractees and volunteers including managers all teachers, Board of trustees and other volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Greentop Community Circus Centre. The policy relates to children, young people and vulnerable adults.**

#### Our responsibility

Greentop Community Circus Centre is committed to safeguarding all the children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in its activities and in promoting their welfare. (Please see the end of this document for a definition of terms).

It is the responsibility of each one of us at Greentop to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of children/ young people and vulnerable adults. This is not just the role of the Designated Safety Officer or their deputy.

We recognise our responsibility to make staff, volunteers and trustees aware of the issues surrounding child protection and to ensure that they understand and implement the policy and procedures outlined in this document.

#### Principles underpinning the policy

We believe that All children/young people and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender racial origin, language or religious belief.

We believe that the welfare of the child, young or vulnerable person is paramount. All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and addressed swiftly and appropriately.

The responsibilities of this policy are underpinned by Greentop's Values that inform all our work:

**Quality:** Just as we strive to hone incredible skills, we strive for quality in everything we do.

**Participants:** Circus is our passion, so we create and deliver it with care and appreciation of our participants and audience

**Sustainable:** The Green in Greentop reflects our founders' aspiration for working as part of a wider natural world. We are making a future where Greentop is financially, socially and environmentally sustainable.

**Safe:** We provide a safe space for people of all abilities take physical risks, be ambitious and innovative

**Collaborative:** We work collaboratively – reaching out across the city, across artforms, activities, cultures and sectors

**Policy aims:**

1. To ensure the safety and protection of all children, young and vulnerable people whilst in the care of Greentop
2. To enable all staff, volunteers and trustees to make informed and confident responses to issues around the protection of children, young and vulnerable people.
3. To promote a culture where all participants feel safe and respect each other's individuality.
4. To ensure that everyone has access to training, information and guidance in the area of keeping children, young and vulnerable people safe from harm.
5. To ensure that parents and students are knowledgeable about these issues so that they can better protect themselves

**Legal background**

This policy is based on the following legal background:

Guidance and Legislation Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

The Police Act 1997 – makes it a criminal offence for an employer not to check an employee working with children or vulnerable adults and/or knowingly give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Children Act 2004 – outlines the statutory duty on key people and bodies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 - superseded The Protection of Children Act 1999 and is specifically about disclosure and child protection issues.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 – specifically highlights that it is an offence for an adult – such as a teacher – to have a sexual relationship with a child when that person is in a position of trust in respect of the child.

To ensure we provide a safe environment, this policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

- Teaching handbook
- Health and safety policy
- Relevant Risk Assessments
- Principles of safe Training
- Covid Protocols

All available on the Greentop web site <https://www.greentop.org/risk-assessments>

Also:

- Role Description of Designated Safety officer
- Employees handbook
- Data protection Policy
- Code of conduct

**Names and roles of responsible people**

**Designated Safeguarding Officer:** Trudi Patient

Contacts: Office 0114 244 8828 mobile: 07967320603 email: [Trudi@greentop.org](mailto:Trudi@greentop.org)

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer:** Natalie Allistone

Contacts: Office 0114 244 8828 mobile: 07588892138 email: [youthcircus@greentop.org](mailto:youthcircus@greentop.org)

Please ring the office 0114 2448828 for advice on who is on duty as the named person. role description attached.

**Board of trustees:** Trustee representing safeguarding: Sarah Jones.

Safeguarding is a key governance priority for all charities, Trustees are responsible for safeguarding even if certain aspects of the work are delegated to staff. Will make public our clear commitment to safeguarding by publishing our safeguarding policy and we will deal with any failure to follow the policy as a very serious matter. New trustees will be inducted to this policy.

## **Code of conduct for staff, tutors and volunteers**

1. Staff and volunteers are reminded that they must be careful to not to put themselves in a situation where they might be accused of inappropriate or abusive behaviour.
2. Never meet with children/young people or vulnerable adults away from the location of sessions without a parent or other adult being present.
3. Do not invite children/young people or vulnerable adults to your home.
4. Do not connect to young people from any Greentop activity on any personal social networking or similar facility- such as becoming Facebook friends, MSN messenger etc.
5. Never offer a child/young person or vulnerable adult a lift unless it is to take them to hospital or you have demonstrable prior consent from a parent or carer.
6. Take care when touching children/young people/vulnerable adults, which is an inevitable part of teaching circus skills, that the contact is appropriate for the activity.
7. Avoid being alone with a child/young person/vulnerable adult and, if that is necessary leave the door open or keep within sight of other responsible adults.
8. Do not make sexual or other inappropriate comments.
9. If you believe a colleague is behaving inappropriately you must report your concerns. All reports, as stated before, will be treated with strict confidentiality. The safety and well being of the
10. children/young people/vulnerable adults must come before any loyalty to colleagues.
11. If you receive an allegation about yourself report this immediately and record the facts as you know them on one of the log forms.

Reviewed 4/11/2024

Approval by Board: 13/5/2025

Next review October 4/11/2025

## **Procedure for dealing with incidents**

This policy and procedure is for both on site and off site activity. Note in off site activity and incident you may have to work to additional procedures as well.

### **What to do**

Do not delay.

- If the situation is critical such that the child/young person/vulnerable adult is in immediate danger then contact the police on 999 directly.
- See the attached Safeguarding Incident Procedure flowchart for further action that is described below.
- Consult with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Trudi Patient  
Contacts: office 0114 244 8828 mobile: 07967320603 email: [Trudi@greentop.org](mailto:Trudi@greentop.org)
- Or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO): Natalie Allistone  
Contacts: Office 0114 244 8828 mobile: 07588892138 email: [youthcircus@greentop.org](mailto:youthcircus@greentop.org)

The DSO will take whatever steps are necessary to secure the safety of any child/young person/vulnerable adult who may be at risk. if necessary, contact will be made with the Sheffield Safeguarding Board, Social Services and the Police.

if for any reason you cannot contact the DSO and you are unsure how to proceed either contact the Centre Director, another member of the office staff or contact Sheffield Safeguarding Board yourself **0114 273 4855**

It is important that all concerns are logged whether social services are to be involved or not. There are Incident report forms available in locked cupboard accompanying the class register. Please complete accurately and return to the DSO/ DDSO.

## How to deal with suspected abuse

- **Disclosure**

If a child/young person or vulnerable adult wants to talk about abuse listen, do not question. Helpful things to say include:

- I believe you
- I am glad you told me
- It is OK to tell
- I will try to help

Tell the child/young person/vulnerable adult that you will need to speak to someone else, be reassuring

Make a record of what was said-if possible use the phrases/words that they use.

**Never make promises you cannot keep.**

- **Information**

If another person wants to give you information about alleged abuse then listen rather than question, accept what the person says and keep calm, ask them to make a note of what they were told or observed, let them know you need to tell someone else.

- **Observation**

Some children/young people and vulnerable adults may display one or more of the following signs. This maybe part of their behaviour eg someone with learning difficulties, but these signs can also be the keys to identifying potential abuse:

Bruising, cuts or burns particularly if the injuries are on parts of the body not normally injured in accidents such as the back of the legs.

- Changes in behaviour
- Aggressive behaviour
- Weight loss or excessive weight gain
- Inadequate or inappropriate clothing
- Sexually explicit behaviour
- The child/young person or vulnerable adult only seems happy with you
- Isolation from the group
- Lack of attachment or trust towards parents or other family members
- Having strange secrets
- Telling untruths

**Attached:**

Safeguarding Incident Procedure flowchart

## Safeguarding Incident Procedure flowchart



\*DSO Trudi Patient: 07967

320603 [trudi@greentop.org](mailto:trudi@greentop.org)

DDSO Natalie Allistone 07588 892138

[youthcircus@greentop.org](mailto:youthcircus@greentop.org)

\*\*Centre Director: Teo Greenstreet. 07939 083954 [manager@greentop.org](mailto:manager@greentop.org)

\*\*\*Safeguarding hub call 0114 273 4855 at any time

## **Further Information**

### **Training in Child Protection Disclosure and Barring Service (Formally CRB)**

Training in Child/Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults Protection will be offered to all staff, freelance tutors and volunteers at Greentop.

All jobs both paid and voluntary will be subject to a disclosure check with the Criminal Record Bureau. All jobs both paid and voluntary will be offered subject to confirmation that the applicants are not on record as being unsuitable to work with children.

<https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/scsp/training/e-learning>

### **Extra safeguards**

References will be required for all posts including volunteers and will be checked by the office. All posts will have a probationary period of 3 months.

Any concerns about this policy or its administration can be lodged through the centre's complaint procedure and appeal, copies of which are available at the office.

If the complaint is made about the named person in this document, then please contact one of the trustees of the charity.

### **DBS Checks**

DBS checks will need to be updated approximately every 2 years

DBS checks can be obtained from Youth Circus administrator [youthcircus@greentop.org](mailto:youthcircus@greentop.org) or Youth Association of South Yorkshire – 0114 2755309

### **How to recognise abuse:**

Child abuse can take a number of forms but can be identified under four general categories:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse (including exposure to domestic violence)
- Sexual abuse

It is not always easy to recognise child abuse. Significant harm includes ill-treatment and/or anything that seriously impairs a child's health, social or physical development or well being.

There are a number of different ways that abuse may be identified including:

- Disclosure by the child or young person
- Information from a third party (e.g. friend, family member, another worker)
- Observation of unexplained injury or changes in behaviour

### **Working in other locations:**

Under the Children's Act 1989 all staff paid and unpaid have a responsibility to report any suspicions or evidence of abuse which may have occurred or is occurring to a young person, whether it inside the organisation you work for or outside

It is not your responsibility to identify what form of abuse has taken place or what specifically should be done.

It is your responsibility to: Listen. Observe. Reassure

Report in relation to the location's procedure.

Make notes. Contact the police or social services directly if there is immediate danger

**Further reporting** Inform the Charity Commission of any serious safeguarding incidents, complaints or allegations which have not previously been disclosed to the charity regulator

## **Definition of Terms**

The term children and young people includes all up to 18. The term vulnerable adult includes people who are, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental instability or other disability, age or illness and who are, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

**For Trustees:** The Charity Commission have 4 clear expectations of trustees:

- provide a safe and trusted environment. Safeguarding involves a duty of care to everyone who comes into contact with your charity, not just vulnerable beneficiaries like children and young people
- set an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding, so it is safe for people to report incidents and concerns in the knowledge they will be dealt with appropriately
- have adequate safeguarding policies, procedures and measures to protect people and make sure these are made public, reviewed regularly and kept up to date
- handle incidents as they arise. Report them to the relevant authorities including the police and the Charity Commission. Learn from these mistakes and put in place the relevant mechanisms to stop them happening again

See this link for further details [annex 1: trustee safeguarding duties explained](#)

## **Appendix to Greentop Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy : Online Presence policy**

**Definition:** For the purposes of this policy, social media is any type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes online social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social Media also covers blogs, and video and image-sharing websites such as YouTube and Flickr. This policy extends to the delivery of online classes.

### **1. Standard:**

- 1.1 The use of social media is an important means of communication both to enhance the profile of Greentop Circus and the professional profile of individuals. This policy is intended to advise and assist staff, mentors and affiliates using social media either as part of their professional role at Greentop Circus or in a private capacity where boundaries between work responsibilities and home life can become blurred. It is not intended to restrict the use of the media. Neither is it intended to restrict what individuals say or do in a personal capacity, including expressing critical comments.
- 1.2 Employees should not spend an excessive amount of time while at work using social media websites. They should ensure that use of social media does not interfere with their other duties.
- 1.3 Greentop has responsibilities to maintain the security of its systems and information and to protect its reputation. Individual staff and mentors have a contractual obligation not to misuse Greentop's resources and not to take action that brings the charity into disrepute.
- 1.4 Staff and affiliates have a responsibility to ensure that they do not breach the disciplinary rules of the charity through the use of social media. Breaches of this policy, for example incidents of cyber bullying of colleagues, or social media activity causing serious damage to the organisation, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to dismissal.
- 1.5 Staff and affiliates may report any concerns in relation to the content and use of Greentop's website and social media channels to the designated safeguarding officer or deputy or to the board of trustees. This may include – Content posted on any social media channel or the website – Conduct of staff/volunteers or partner organisations on social media – Comments made in relation to Greentop on social media channels

### **2. Guidance for staff and affiliates who use social media as part of their role**

- 2.1 Those using social media as part of their role are representing Greentop, they need to ensure that their content and tone is on-topic, professional, and in line with Greentop policies (e.g. equal opportunities, safeguarding, anti-bullying etc). Best practice encourages staff and affiliates to check their post with a member of staff before posting.
- 2.2 staff and affiliates should not set up sites, groups or pages that purport to be official Greentop sites, groups or pages or use official branding without permission.
- 2.3 All statements made must be true and not misleading. If staff or affiliates speak about other providers they should ensure comments are factually correct and that they do not disparage the provider. Unnecessary or unproductive arguments should be avoided.
- 2.4 Staff and affiliates must ensure that they do not disclose any confidential information and maintain standards required in Data Protection legislation. Examples include: financial information, funder discussions, future business performance or plans, or departure of staff.
- 2.5 Posts should not contain defining information e.g. school jumpers, geographical tags/ handles
- 2.6 If a post contains an error, the mistake should be acknowledged and corrected. The post should not be taken down.
- 2.7 If content is modified after being posted, for example editing a blog, a note should be added to state when the post was edited and why.
- 2.8 Staff and affiliates must not post photographs of people unless they have their permission (any photographs of children and young people under the age of 16 should have parental permission).
- 2.9 Staff and affiliates must not tag people unless they have their permission
- 2.10 *Should image use permission be retracted then no photograph showing any element of that young person can be used. Care must be taken using old image stock as the young person maybe harder to identify.*
- 2.11 *Retraction of photographic image Permission must be logged by informing designated safeguarding officer and adding to image permissions file.*

### **3. Personal use of social media**

- 3.1 Conduct outside of work may affect employment if the conduct could be said to bring Greentop into disrepute or where the conduct outside of work compromises their ability to carry out their role effectively or affects work colleagues.
- 3.2 The same guidance applies for personal use as in points 2.4 and 2.7

3.3 Staff and affiliates should be aware of breaching data protection requirements, for example, e.g “Joe Bloggs was off sick today” is a breach of the Data Protection Act requirements about the use of sensitive data

3.4 Staff and associates are discouraged from using social media to express discontent about work. Where complaints arise, individuals are encouraged to speak to a manager, or the board of trustees. The Grievance and Whistleblowing policies should be followed. Individuals are free to express views about Greentop and will not be liable to any breach of the disciplinary rules so long as they ensure that:

- a) they make it clear that they are “speaking” from a personal perspective
- b) statements are true and can be substantiated
- c) they do not breach confidentiality or other legal requirements

3.5 Concerns regarding the use of social media and how this affects employment should be disclosed to a manager, the board of trustees, or a trade union representative

3.6 Staff and affiliates should consider their own privacy and check a site’s privacy statement to see what they are signing up to and set privacy settings appropriately. Social network pages, blogs etc are public. They should not put information on them that they do not want others to see.

3.7 ‘Checking in’ Greentop recommends individuals do not automatically check-in to places and requests you do not check-in to member offices, premises or new pitches in ‘real-time’.

3.8 Despite their professional affiliation with Greentop, personal use of social media does not represent the official position of Greentop and should be considered the product of each individual as a private citizen.

3.9 Where a personal account is used which associates itself or impacts upon Greentop and its campaigns or programmes, it must be made clear that the individual is not communicating on behalf of Greentop with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy

3.10 Any content that is uploaded to personal social media accounts, or actions on social media that do not follow these expectations may result in Greentop following its grievance policy

#### **4. Friending**

4.1 Best practice advises not to become “friends”/ follow or engage with individual vulnerable people associated with Greentop or our members on any social media account. In this instance vulnerable people includes all young people under 18 years of age. If an invite is made, mentors and staff are advised to let the vulnerable person know that it is policy to NOT friend and/or connect with participants using social media at this time.

4.2 Some of Greentop’s group teaching requires the use of social media group functions. E.g. Troupe share information regarding intensives and course participation. Where communication with course participants is necessary via social media the following guidelines should be enacted:

- Communication between staff and participants should be restricted to the group platforms: e.g. posts must be made in the group forum, not private messaging
- A minimum of two members of staff and or affiliates must be in each group platform, best practice includes a manager in the group
- Private messaging from participants should be discouraged: ask students to post in the main forum, or if a private issue arises, ask them to meet up in person in accordance with lone-working and safeguarding policies to resolve the matter
- Participants should be encouraged to create secondary circus specific social media accounts, content on that platform should remain pertinent to their circus education and avoid identifying information
- Participants should always tag the official Greentop account on any post that they wish to share with a Greentop volunteer staff member or associate.

4.3 Staff may not reshare/ repost vulnerable participants’ social media posts. Reshares may only be done through an official Greentop account with the permission of the student.

4.4 Facebook is the preferred social media platform where staff and mentors may ‘friend’ vulnerable participants, and solely for the purposes outlined in point 4.2

4.5 Any safeguarding concerns or disclosures should result in the safeguarding policies and procedures being followed. A safeguarding concern should be communicated in person, not via social media.

#### **5 Cyber bullying**

5.1 Where cyber bullying has been alleged the safeguarding policies should be followed.

5.2 Greentop reserves the right to investigate and manage any complaints where a breach of conduct is alleged.

## **6 Comments on posts/ third party posts**

6.1 The views expressed by any third parties are solely theirs and are not necessarily endorsed by Greentop

6.2 Greentop does not pre-moderate comments. Comments are published instantly

6.3 Greentop reserves the right to moderate comments and remove defamatory or discriminatory posts on their social media channels, and where appropriate enact safeguarding measures to ensure the well-being of staff, mentors, affiliates and participants

6.4 Moderation will not be used to suppress legitimate, reasoned discussion

6.5 Guidelines for posts:

Posts should:

- Remain relevant and on-topic
- Respect other people: not be malicious or offensive in nature, and should not constitute a personal attack on a person's character
- Not incite hatred on the basis of race, religion, gender, nationality or sexuality or any other personal characteristic, or attack affiliated organisations
- Not reveal personal details, such as private addresses, phone numbers, email addresses or other online contact details
- Be reasonably concise, and don't constitute spamming of the site
- Not impersonate or falsely claim to represent a person or organisation
- Not be party political in nature
- Not include swearing, hate-speech or obscenity
- Be legal – this includes libel, condoning illegal activity, and breaking copyright
- Not advertise commercial products and services

## **7. Following**

7.1 Greentop's decision to follow a particular social media user does not imply endorsement.

7.2 Greentop will follow accounts that are relevant to our work. This could include following the accounts of companies and other commercial enterprises (and/or their employees) who comment on circus arts, education and performance related issues.

## **8. Replies and direct messages**

8.1 Greentop will read all admin@ sent to us within 48 hours and, when possible, will respond to them.

8.2 Due to the volume of traffic on our social media channels, it is not always possible to respond.

Greentop encourages users to use other ways to contact us if their question or comment requires urgent attention.

8.3 Where a complaint or grievance is raised via social media we will respond to the message in the same location (e.g. post/ direct message) and, in accordance with the complaints and grievances policies and procedures, invite the resolution to move to a more appropriate means of communication ideally as follows:

- Via email
- Resulting in an in-person resolution

Greentop reserves the right to keep written records relating to complaints and grievances for up to 3 years.

## **9. Online Classes**

9.1. Best practice dictates that online classes with vulnerable people should run with two mentors in the stream. Where a second mentor or a member of staff is not available to sit in on the stream the session must be recorded and sent to a member of staff for review.

9.2 Staff and affiliates must ensure they deliver classes from a professional, neutral environment free from distractions and secure.

9.3 Staff and affiliates must ensure they are suitable attired for delivering their classes and maintain professional standards at all times.

9.4 All students are advised to wear suitable clothes for a class and to ensure that they take part in the class in a neutral environment.

9.5 Students are advised to take classes in a neutral communal area such as a living room.

9.6 Staff and affiliates must always use a secure link for online classes, secure links may not be posted in public forums, they must always be sent directly to the students.

9.7 Staff and affiliates must ensure that they have checked that all relevant security measures have been checked, for general classes best practice dictates these should be:

- Disable 'File transfer'
- Disable 'Join before host'
- Disable 'Allow removed participants to rejoin'
- Disable 'Chat'
- Disable 'Desktop/screen share'
- Enable 'Play sound when participants join or leave'

9.8 Features in 9.7 may be enabled where they enhance student learning e.g. screenshare, chat, file transfer.

9.9 Group sessions are preferred, however sessions with fewer attendees may be appropriate at times. Best practice dictates breakout sessions should include a minimum of three people.

9.10 Where 1-2-1 sessions are absolutely necessary Staff and affiliates should:

- Ensure a senior member of staff is aware of why, when, with whom and on what platform the session will be conducted
- Where the student is considered vulnerable, a guardian should also be made aware of why, when, with whom and on what platform the session will be conducted
- Where possible the session should be recorded

Greentop appreciates the assistance of Circus Central in the development of this policy