

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Approved: 20 November 2025

1. OVERVIEW

This Child Protection Policy outlines Auckland Theatre Company's (ATC) commitment to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all children and young people who engage with the company. It ensures that staff, contractors, and volunteers understand their responsibilities to protect children and respond appropriately to any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of abuse.

This policy applies to all ATC employees, contractors, and volunteers who have direct or indirect contact with children or young people across ATC's work sites and programmes.

2. COMMITMENT & PURPOSE

Auckland Theatre Company is dedicated to maintaining a culture of safeguarding where the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people are always prioritised. This policy affirms ATC's legal and ethical responsibilities under New Zealand law, including the Children's Act 2014, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and related standards.

ATC commits to promoting a child-safe environment by ensuring that all staff and volunteers are trained, supported, and confident in identifying and responding to potential or confirmed child abuse or neglect.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all people engaged by ATC in a paid or voluntary capacity, including employees, contractors, teaching artists, workshop leaders, chaperones, and venue staff, who work directly or indirectly with children and young people.

4. DEFINITIONS

- **Child/Children:** Anyone under the age of 18 years.
- **Child Performer/Young Employee:** A person under 18 engaged by ATC in any paid or unpaid performing role.
- **Youth Arts Participant:** A participant aged 16–25 in ATC's youth arts or creative learning programmes.
- **Employee:** Any adult engaged by ATC in a paid capacity.
- **Volunteer:** Any adult assisting ATC in an unpaid role.
- **Designated Person:** An appointed ATC representative responsible for child protection.
- **Chaperone:** A person appointed to supervise and ensure the safety of children and young people engaged with ATC.
- **Parent/Carer:** includes any parent, legal guardian, carer or family member responsible for a child.
- **Hirer:** A company or organisation hiring the ASB Waterfront Theatre for an event or performance/s or Open House hirers of ATC Balmoral.

- **ATC Work sites:** ATC controlled work sites i.e. Balmoral offices and rehearsal studios and the ASB Waterfront Theatre.
- **Non-ATC worksites:** anywhere other than ATC worksites where we are working. ATC's Child Protection Policy and all practices and procedures applies wherever the company are working, whether at an ATC or non-ATC worksite.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

ATC ensures that all employees and volunteers understand their responsibilities to safeguard children and that they have access to the appropriate tools, support, and procedures. Designated Persons for Child Protection are the first point of contact for any concerns.

Designated Persons:

Samuel Phillips - Head of Learning & Participation sam@atc.co.nz 021 298 6253

Anna Cameron - Deputy CEO anna@atc.co.nz 021 707 065

Sharon Byrne - Director, ASB Waterfront Theatre sharon@atc.co.nz 027 586 1400

ATC designated persons and other employees as relevant, complete on-line and in-person training through *Safeguarding Children Tiakina ngā tamariki*, as required to ensure a high level of competency to operate all aspects of the child protection policy.

Designated persons are responsible for ensuring that child protection training requirements are kept current and that relevant staff complete training.

In any and every case where children or young people are employed by ATC as performers in a show, the child/ren or young person/people will be under the direct supervision of the Head of Learning & Participation who will devise the chaperone process and oversee the chaperones, determine working hours and all processes and procedures relating to the child/ren or young person/people's employment at ATC.

6. SAFER RECRUITMENT & SAFETY CHECKS

ATC follows Safer Recruitment practices to ensure that all employees and volunteers working with children are appropriately screened and vetted. Safety checks comply with the Children's Act 2014 and include Ministry of Justice Criminal Record Checks for all employees and, where applicable, Police Vetting for Core Children's Workers including but not limited to teaching artists, chaperones, youth company directors and programme leaders, mentors and venue-based employees.

7. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS OR DISCLOSURES

When a child discloses abuse or an employee suspects abuse or neglect, the child's safety and wellbeing take precedence. Employees must follow ATC's reporting procedure: Respond, Report, Record, Review, Reflect.

- **Respond:** Listen, believe, and reassure the child.
- **Report:** Inform an ATC Designated Person and, if necessary, Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) or Police (111) or other agreed external resource i.e. public health nurse, child psychologist, strengthening families.
- **Record:** Document the concern accurately, factually and confidentially.
- **Review:** Follow up to ensure action has been taken.
- **Reflect:** Consider how ATC's processes can improve.

<p>Respond: How do I respond to a disclosure?</p> <p>When a Child discloses, remember that the safety and wellbeing of the child come before the interests of any other person.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe the child or young person. • Listen to the child, provide reassurance, ask open questions such as “<i>What happened next?</i>” Don’t seek help while the child is talking to you. • If the child is visibly distressed, provide appropriate reassurance, i.e. “<i>Thank you for telling me, it’s not okay that happened to you</i>” and engage the child in a supervised activity until they can confidently resume regular activity. • If the child is NOT in immediate danger, re-involve them in ordinary activities, and inform them that you will be telling someone who can help. • If the child is in immediate danger: Stay with the child and get another adult to call the NZ Police on 111 and then Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children on 0508 326 459 and follow their directions. Then contact the ATC Designated Person.
<p>Report: Who do I tell?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No decisions are made in isolation. Consult with an ATC designated person before making any decisions. • The ATC child protection code of conduct outlines the process for reporting to or seeking advice from external agencies or organisations including Public Health Nurse, Strengthening Families, Oranga Tamariki, the Police. • Monitoring the reporting process is important, record the process in writing and keep a timeline of events and copies of any correspondence. • The decision to inform parents/whānau that you have reported a concern to an external agency or organisation will be made in consultation with an ATC designated person.
<p>Record: Collect the information</p>	<p>You have an important role as an information collector. As soon as possible, formally record the disclosure or concern.</p> <p>Record word for word what was said, in the child’s words.</p> <p>Record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dates, times, locations and names that might be relevant. • The factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (e.g. physical or behavioural concerns.) • Details of any immediate action taken. • Action taken after consulting the designated person. • Any other information that may be relevant. <p>Make certain you distinguish between what the child has actually said and the inferences you may have made. Accuracy is paramount.</p> <p>All information regarding concerns about the safety of children must be recorded in a confidential file and securely stored.</p>
<p>Review: Follow up and renotify</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees are expected to follow this procedure; however, any employee can contact Oranga Tamariki Ministry for Children or Police for advice or to make a report of concern at any time if they feel this process is not effective and there remains concern for the child. • If, despite making a report of concern, no action was taken and you are still concerned restart the process and contact your designated person or their manager.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor and record any concerns and follow process again. • Remember that reporting once does not stop this process, Employee must remain alert for child protection concerns.
Reflect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What worked? • What didn't? • Did the Child Protection Policy guide me effectively?

8. HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING

All ATC work sites are maintained as safe environments for children. ATC conducts risk assessments for productions involving child performers and ensures children are not exposed to distressing, harmful, or age-inappropriate material.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION SHARING

Information about any child protection concern must only be shared with ATC Designated Persons or relevant authorities. All records are securely stored and treated with strict confidentiality.

10. CODES OF CONDUCT

As a sub-section of this policy and consistent with this policy, Management will develop and implement codes of conduct and procedures, which will be subject to continuous review.

Policy approval

Approved by: Auckland Theatre Company Board of Directors

Signature:

Approved date: 20 November 2025

Policy to be reviewed: annually