

1. Purpose

ACT 2 CAM is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults participating in our drama, filmmaking, and creative programmes.

This Fitness to Practise (FtP) Policy and Procedure ensures that all staff, tutors, facilitators, volunteers, contractors, and consortium partners are suitable and capable of working safely and effectively in our activities, both on-site and off-site (including mobile units, schools, community projects, and BFI Film Academy sessions).

This policy addresses concerns about an individual's ongoing suitability to practise, arising from health, conduct, competence, character, or other factors that could impact participant safety or programme quality. It promotes a supportive, fair, and transparent approach, aligning with our person-centred, trauma-informed pedagogy.

2. Legislation & Guidance

This policy aligns with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 (effective 1 September 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- DBS referral guidance
- NSPCC, BECTU, and performing arts non-statutory safeguarding guidance
- Local procedures: North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Partnership (NTSCP) and North Tyneside Safeguarding Adults Board (NTSAB)

3. Scope

Applies to:

- All ACT 2 CAM staff, tutors, facilitators, volunteers, contractors, and consortium partners
- Any individual in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults
- Concerns from work-related or external behaviour affecting fitness to practise

This complements the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, Low-Level Concerns procedures (per KCSIE 2025), Disciplinary Policy, and Freelance Toolkit.

4. Key Principles

- Participant welfare is paramount.
- Safeguarding and fitness to practise are everyone's responsibility.

- Concerns are handled proportionately, fairly, and confidentially, with support for those involved where possible.
- All adults must remain vigilant, self-monitor, and report promptly.
- Decisions prioritise participant safety, staff wellbeing, and organisational integrity.

5. Categories of Fitness to Practise Concerns

Concerns may include:

- **Health & Wellbeing:** Physical or mental health issues affecting safe practice (for example, reliability in sessions or emotional availability).
- **Conduct & Behaviour:** Inappropriate boundaries, poor judgement, substance issues, or breaches of professional standards (for example, set etiquette).
- **Competence:** Inability to deliver trauma-informed, inclusive pedagogy or manage risks (for example, in mobile units or with disadvantaged youth).
- **Character & Integrity:** Undisclosed issues, conflicts of interest, or behaviour eroding trust.
- **Low-Level Concerns:** Patterns not meeting harm threshold but indicating risk (per KCSIE 2025).
- **Other:** Non-compliance with training, or extra-familial harm indicators.

6. Designated Leads & Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Stephen Woods 07973 869477

Deputy DSL: Tanya Card: 07525 835655

Local Authority Contacts (North Tyneside)

- Front Door Service / MASH / LADO: 0345 2000 109 (Weekdays 8:30–17:00)
- Emergency Duty Team: 0330 333 7475 (Evenings & Weekends)
- Police non-emergency: 101
- Immediate danger: 999

7. Roles & Responsibilities

Leadership Team

- Implement and monitor this policy.
- Ensure compliance with legislation and multi-agency standards.
- Oversee investigations and support arrangements.

Staff, Tutors & Volunteers

- Maintain safe and professional practice at all times.
- Self-monitor fitness to practise and report concerns promptly.
- Follow procedures in this policy and related documents.

Participants & Parents/Carers

- Encouraged to raise any concerns about staff suitability or behaviour.

8. Procedure

8.1 Stage 1: Reporting a Concern

Any person may report concerns confidentially to the DSL. Self-referral is encouraged. Immediate risk triggers suspension and referral to LADO/police if harm threshold met.

8.2 Stage 2: Initial Assessment

DSL reviews within 48 hours, gathers facts, and decides next steps. Low-level concerns may be logged and resolved informally. FtP concerns proceed to formal stage.

8.3 Stage 3: Investigation and Hearing

Independent investigator appointed if required. FtP Panel (Director + impartial members) hears case. Individual may attend with representation.

8.4 Stage 4: Decision and Outcomes

Outcomes may include:

- No action
- Support plan (training, mentoring, health adjustments)
- Restrictions (supervised sessions, role change)
- Suspension
- Referral to external bodies (DBS, LADO)
- Dismissal/termination of contract

Written decision provided within 7 days, with appeal rights.

8.5 Stage 5: Appeals

Appeal within 7 days to an independent reviewer. Final decision within 14 days.

8.6 Monitoring & Follow-Up

Support plans reviewed quarterly. Annual audit of cases.

9. Links to Other Policies & Procedures

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Disciplinary and Grievance Policies
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Freelance Toolkit

External referrals made as required (DBS, LADO, TRA if applicable).

10. Training, Communication & Responsibilities

- All staff and volunteers receive FtP induction and annual refresher training (integrated with KCSIE 25).
- Policy communicated via staff handbook, contracts, inductions, and website (youthdrama.tv/safeguarding).
- Culture of openness encouraged: “if in doubt, report”.

11. Review

Reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, guidance, or operational requirements change.

Externally Audited: January 2026

Next review: January 2027