



www.elmazproductions.com
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Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone representing Elmaz Productions in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

Elmaz Productions will assure all workers/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a team member of Elmaz Productions there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation.
- A child protection investigation.
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Action if there are concerns

- **1. Concerns about poor practice:**
- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; Elmaz Productions DSL will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Elmaz Productions DSL, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to LADO who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings

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- **2. Concerns about suspected abuse:**

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a worker or a volunteer should be reported to the Elmaz Productions Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Eleanor Lee, Tel: - 24 hours), who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- Elmaz Productions DSL will refer the allegation to the Oxfordshire LADO who may involve the police. LADO Team - Telephone number 01865 810603.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the LADO department.
- If the Elmaz Productions DSL is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Marianne Lee) or in her absence the person can refer the allegation to LADO.

Action if bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in performing arts:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (it is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Elmaz Productions DSL (or wherever the bullying is occurring).

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Concerns outside the immediate performing arts environment (e.g. a parent or carer):

- Report your concerns to the Elmaz Productions DSL, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible. (see below for the information social services or the police will need)
- If the Elmaz Productions DSL is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately.
- Social Services and the Elmaz Productions DSL will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- Maintain confidentiality on a **need to know** basis only.

Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

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- Where possible referral to the police or social services (Oxfordshire's LADO) should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse, you can contact the LADO or the police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.