

POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

DEFINITIONS

(Child/Children)/(Young Person/Young People)

- Refers to all children/young people under the age of 18 years for the purposes of this Policy.

(Vulnerable Adult) – Is any person aged 18 or over

- ‘A vulnerable adult may be elderly, physically and/or mentally disabled or have learning difficulties. A person who is, or may be in need of community care services by reason of their disability, age or illness’.

(Parents)

- Those that have parental rights and responsibilities in relation to children and young people. For the purposes of these guidelines it also covers carers, legal guardians and others who have the primary responsibility for the care of children and young people.

ASSENT

All members involved in Bampton Players at every level must agree to abide by the Policy for Safeguarding Children/vulnerable adults.

A copy of the policy is available to all members of the Players including, children/vulnerable adults, young people, vulnerable adults and parents

A copy of the policy is also available on the Bampton Players website.

POLICY

The Bampton Players recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, The Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

The society recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The society is committed to practice which protects children/vulnerable adults from harm. All members of the society accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

The society believes that:

- the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult is paramount;
- all children/vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or
- sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;

- all members and employees of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The society will ensure that:

- all children/vulnerable adults will be treated equally and with respect and dignity;
- the duty of care to children will always be put first;
- a balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children/vulnerable adults to share in the decision-making process;
- enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism;
- bullying will not be accepted or condoned;
- all adult members of the society provide a positive role model for dealing with other people;
- action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour;
- it will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation;
- it will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children/vulnerable adults;
- it will undertake relevant development and training;
- it will hold a register of every child/vulnerable adult involved with the society and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

The society has child/vulnerable adult protection procedures which accompany this policy.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety Policy.

The society has A dedicated Child Protection Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the child/vulnerable adult protection policy and procedures are adhered to. The person is Cara Dunne (phone number 01398 331756)

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Management Committee of the Players and will be subject to annual review

Date: 01 June 2015

PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of the Society

At the outset of any production involving children/vulnerable adults the society will:

- undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process;
- identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child/vulnerable adult protection;
- engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including
- appropriate vetting (if necessary in consultation with the local education authority);
- ensure that children are supervised at all times;
- know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern
- Prior to a production involving under 18s or/and vulnerable adults a briefing will be held for all adults concerned with the production regarding safeguarding.

Culture

The society will engender a safeguarding culture. During rehearsals/productions/social events where under 18s and/or vulnerable adults are present members of the society will ensure adult conversation is appropriate i.e. innuendo, humour etc is not sexually explicit or risqué

Parents

The society believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the society. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the society and to share responsibility for the care of children. All parents will be given a copy the society's Child Protection Policy and procedures.

Adult members are welcome to bring their children to any suitable activity connected with the Society providing they take full responsibility for them and their safety.

If a member of the Players is involved a production their children must not be left backstage and they must make a private arrangement for their children to be left with a trusted and responsible adult.

All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of the Players to take children home.

Unsupervised Contact

The society will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children/vulnerable adults. If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children/vulnerable adults.

If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open.

If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children/vulnerable adults he or she may be required to undergo a DBS check.

Physical Contact

All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children/vulnerable adults

Adults will only touch children/vulnerable adults when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.

Adults will seek the consent of the child/vulnerable adult prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Managing sensitive information

No photos can be taken of children in the backstage area.

All children/vulnerable adults will only be photographed fully clothed and in uncompromising positions.

The Society will minimize personal information about children on the website, in programmes and on the website in order to guard against inappropriate use.

Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.

The society's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.

The society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe

handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

Suspicion of abuse

If you see or suspect abuse of a child/vulnerable adult while in the care of the society, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child protection. If you suspect that the person with responsibility for child protection is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to the Chairman.

Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.

If a serious allegation is made against any member of the society, chaperone, venue staff etc., that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children/vulnerable adults in the production.

Disclosure of abuse

If a child/vulnerable adult confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child/vulnerable adult to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification.
- Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child protection. Make it clear to the child/vulnerable adult that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child/vulnerable adult that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child/vulnerable adult what you are going to do next.
- Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to.
- Make sure you sign and date your record.

Recording

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken ego suspension of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of the society he or she will be made aware of his rights under the society's disciplinary procedures.
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the child/vulnerable adult who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.
- In criminal law the Crown or other prosecuting authority has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Accidents

To avoid accidents, chaperones and children/vulnerable adults will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children/vulnerable adults will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.

If a child/vulnerable adult is injured while in the care of the society, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the society's accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection.

If a child/vulnerable adult joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection.

This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later, and will also be a record that the child/vulnerable adult did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

If the society believes it is in its best interests to request a DBS check for chaperones or other personnel it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required. A Standard disclosure will apply for anyone with supervised access to children. An Enhanced disclosure will be required for anyone with unsupervised access.

The Society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused and is stored securely.

Chaperones

When a parent cannot be with their child at all times chaperones will be appointed by the society for the care of children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.

Potential chaperones will be required to supply photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport, driving licence) and two references from individuals with knowledge of their previous work with children, unless already well known to the society. They will also be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children.

Chaperones will be made aware of the society's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care. If unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a DBS check will be sought.

At each rehearsal the chaperone(s) will be identified to the child(ren).

Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue. If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the producer and not allow the child to continue.

Under the Dangerous Performances Act no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to cease using children in this way, and should contact the local authority.

During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.

Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.

Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.

Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.

Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets. Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms whilst adults are changing.

Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.

Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the society.

Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).

Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.

Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.

If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child or make arrangements to take them home.

Contact - Safeguarding, Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) tel: 0345 155 1071

Out of hours: 0845 6000 388

Police Central Referral Unit - 0845 605 1166

Vulnerable Adults - 0845 1551 007

Out of hours - 0845 6000 388

Child Protection Policy, June 2015

Review date Jan 2018