

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough PE2 7UH

Tel: 01733 374790 Fax: 01733 237286 Email: info@noda.org.uk Web: www.noda.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING (CHILD PROTECTION) POLICY

Bradford Youth 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, the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, the Children Act 2004 and the Statutory Guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, July 2018.

The society does not work with, or employ, vulnerable adults and therefore this policy relates predominantly to child protection. If, however, an adult member of staff (paid or voluntary) becomes vulnerable and is at risk, the policy will also apply to them.

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 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 is paramount.
- All children, 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, volunteers and workers of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The society will ensure that:

- All children 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 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.

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- It will undertake relevant development and training.
- It will hold a register of every child involved with the society and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

The society has child protection procedures which accompany this policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the society's Equality and Diversity Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

The society has a dedicated Child Protection Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to. That person's name is:

Jenny Horton - 01274 830571, 07940858986, jenny.horton@bradfordyouthplayers.co.uk

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Executive Committee of the society and will be subject to annual review. **This policy was written in October 2019.**

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of the Society

At the outset of any production involving children 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 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.

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

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Unsupervised Contact

- The society will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children.
- 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, he or she may be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure.

Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

If abuse is **suspected**:

Observations, conversations or concerns will be recorded, signed and dated.

- **The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than the Safeguarding Officer or Club Leader.**
- **The Chairperson of the Management Committee/Club Leader/Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and, within 48 hours, contact NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000 and/or the appropriate local statutory services, if necessary.**
- If you see or suspect abuse of a child 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 in the production.

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If abuse is **reported/ alleged**:

- The young person will be listened to and encouraged to speak without interruption, comment or judgment.
- It will be explained that in terms of the club's Confidentiality Policy, information may need to be shared in certain circumstances.
- **The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than the Safeguarding Officer.**
- A written account of the report or allegation will be made, signed and dated and the information passed to the Safeguarding Officer or Club Leader.
- The Chairperson of the Management Committee/Club Leader/Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and, within 48 hours, contact **NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000** and the relevant statutory services, if necessary.

If the matter is regarded as critical it should be referred immediately and directly to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer and details of the referral passed to the Safeguarding Officer/Club Leader as soon as possible.

Disclosure of abuse

If a child 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 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 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 that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child 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.

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Managing sensitive information

- The society has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children.
- 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.

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 who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) as espoused in our Privacy Policy 2019. 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.

Protecting Leaders

The Trustees recognise the importance of protecting its leaders from possible allegations of abuse and recommends the following guidelines:

Leaders should not:

- Be alone with young people
- Lock and unlock premises without another adult present
- Transport young people in a car or mini bus without another adult being present
- Take young people to their homes
- Make inappropriate contact with young people i.e. develop relationships outside the club setting
- Leave young people unattended
- Leave young people in the presence of adults who are not suitably trained
- Leave young people in the presence of adults not known to leaders
- Leave young people in the presence of adults who have not had relevant DBS checks
- Show favouritism to young people within the club

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Accidents

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of “house rules” regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.
- If a child 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 countersigned by the person with responsibility for child protection.
- If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be countersigned 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 did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

Criminal Record Disclosures

- If the society believes it is in its best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures 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 have a written code of practice for the handling of disclosure information.
- The society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

Recruitment

All volunteers should complete an application form supplying the following information: personal details, names of 2 independent referees, previous experience, any criminal convictions, competencies and areas of interest and signature and date.

All leaders and helpers should complete a Disclosure Form (DBS) at enhanced level, these clearances will be renewed every 3 years. All new volunteers will be closely supervised until references have been received and DBS checks completed.

In accordance with guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service a record will be kept of the disclosure number, completion date and whether or not the check is satisfactory.

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Code of Conduct

Bradford Youth Players adheres to the following guidelines as to how young people and adults interact with each other.

- Abusive behaviour and language, violence, aggression, bullying or discrimination will not be tolerated. Leaders will respond quickly and effectively to any such reports which if necessary will result in the offender(s) being suspended from the club
- No alcohol will be consumed on the premises. Leaders will refrain from consuming alcohol prior to assuming responsibility for young people.
- Young people are free to leave the club activity when they wish.
- Requirement for parents or carers involved in sessions to be DBS checked.
- Consider consequences if anyone behaves inappropriately in accordance with the Code of Conduct

Training Provision

The contents of this policy (and other club policies) will be included in the induction process for all members of Bradford Youth Players and volunteer leaders who will also be given the opportunity to attend Safeguarding (Child Protection) training courses offered at regular intervals by Yorkshire Clubs for Young People.

The Trustees will encourage attendance at these sessions which will help Leaders and volunteer leaders understand their responsibilities and provide information on identification and appropriate response to child protection issues.

Chaperones

- 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 (eg. 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 Safeguarding (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 criminal record disclosure will be sought.

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- 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.
- 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.



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If you feel any of the information in this policy needs up-dating please contact:

Bradford Youth Players' Safeguarding Officer:

Jenny Horton

C/o Little Lane Church

Little Lane

Bradford

BD9 5HD

E-mail: jenny.horton@bradfordyouthplayers.co.uk

Contact Numbers:

NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000

Social Services: Bradford 01274 434361

This policy was adopted at the Management Committee Meeting on:

On behalf of the Management Committee:J A Horton Signed

.....13 November 2019... Date

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Management Committee.