

BROS Musical Productions

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Children and Adults

BROS Musical Productions recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protections of Children Act 1999, the Criminal and Justice and Court Services Act 2000, Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, The Human Rights Act 1998 and the Care Act 2014.

In developing safeguarding policy and procedures guidance has been sought from The National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA), West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board, West Sussex County Council Safeguarding adults Board and the NSPCC.

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 and adults from harm. All members of the society accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children and adults harm.

Members of BROS Musical Production must be 16 years old and over however, some productions will involve children. When children participate in BROS productions this policy and procedures applies. Chaperones will be appointed to manage the children during rehearsal and performances, the use of chaperones is outlined below in the societies safeguarding procedures.

Definitions:

Within the law **Children** are defined as being under 18. The term 'young people' is the generally accepted term for those in their teens. Employment legislation which includes regulations concerning children in performances focusses on children of compulsory school age and below, a child is required to attend school unless he/she is over the age of 16 on 31st August or until the last Friday in June after his/her 16th birthday.

An **Adult at risk** is any person aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support (regardless of whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs). As a result of those care and support needs they are unable to protect themselves from either risk of, or experience of abuse or neglect. Everyone could be regarded at risk or vulnerable at certain times in their lives, for example when undergoing medical treatment or experiencing a period of mental ill-health. Equally not all people with a disability would identify themselves as being vulnerable or at risk at all times.

The Society recognises that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.

- All children, young people and adults at risk whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, adults at risk and their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children, young people and vulnerable adult's welfare.
- 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 purpose of the policy is:

- To provide protection for the children, young people and adults at risk who receive BROS musical productions services, including the children of adult members or users.
- To provide all members with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
- This policy applies to all performing and non-performing members, volunteers, paid staff or anyone working on behalf of BROS musical productions.

The society will seek to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk by:

- Valuing them, listening to them, treating them equally and with respect and dignity.
- The duty of care to children and adults at risk will always be put first.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- It will be kept up-to-date with health and safety legislation.
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and adults.
- It will undertake relevant development and training.
- It will hold a register of every child and adult involved in the society and retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

The society has safeguarding procedures which accompany this policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the society's Equal Opportunities Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

Contact Details

Nominated Safeguarding lead

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Chairperson

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This policy statement came into force on.....13/09/2021.....(date)

The committee will review the policy and procedures **annually**.

Signed.....  Caroline Field13/09/2021.....(date)

Safeguarding Procedures

Responsibilities of the society

At the outset of any production the society will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for safeguarding.
- Engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals for safeguarding.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.
- Produce a rehearsal schedule with dates and times and will notify parents/carers of any changes to this.
- 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/carers and the society. Parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the society and to share responsibility for the care of children and/or vulnerable adults. All parents/carers will be given a copy of the society's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults procedures.
- All parents carers/ have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children/vulnerable adults after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of the society to take children/ vulnerable adults home.

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 minimize risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area, or in a designated room with an open door.
- 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 consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Managing Sensitive Information

- The society has 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.

Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child or adult while in the care of the society, please make this known to the person with responsibility for safeguarding. If you suspect that the person with responsibility is the cause of concern please contact the chairperson.
- 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, paid contractors etc. that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre dressing rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children/young people or adults at risk in the production.

Disclosure of abuse

If a child/young person or adult confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and do not delay in taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the person to tell you in 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 safeguarding. Make it clear to the person disclosing 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.
- Tell the person who has disclosed 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 person'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 the 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 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 actions taken eg. Suspensions of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to 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 and confidentiality

- If the 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 abuser and the child 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 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 anyone 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. The record will be countersigned by the person with responsibility for a child.
- 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 formal allegation is made later and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.
- If an adult participating in a production has a physical injury it is their responsibility to manage their injury during the course of the production, rehearsal and show period. The adults should not engage in any activity which may aggravate the injury and it is their responsibility to make a decision about what they are capable of undertaking.

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.

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 a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperon's care shall not exceed 12.
- Potential chaperones will be required to supply photographic proof of identity (eg. Passport, driving license) 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 criminal record disclosure will be sought.
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the production team. 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 production team 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 production team 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 parents.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult's 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 production team is not allowed to use that child until medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or the 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 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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