

Safeguarding Policy, including Prevent, and Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

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Approved by:	Exec Committee		
Relevant to:	✓ Hartlepool Stage Society	✓ Hartlepool Junior Stage Society	
Signed:	Peter Rowlands	Date:	30/06/2026
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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the safeguarding policy is to provide a clear set of guidelines to adult members, junior members, their parents/carers, instructors and others who are involved in the running of Hartlepool Stage Society, together with wider stakeholders, regarding how the society will discharge its safeguarding responsibilities, including with respect to the Prevent duty.

Please note that the term '**society**' is used throughout this document and appendices, as a generic term that encompasses all elements of Hartlepool Stage Society, including Hartlepool Junior Stage Society and the Hartlepool Stage Society (Adult Group). The term '**members**' refers to any person who has any type of membership within the society, i.e. adult members, junior members, VP members, committee members, etc.

2 DEFINITIONS

A child is, any person under the age of 18 years old.

Any person up to the age of 25 with a current Educational Health Care Plan (EHP) is also treated as a child for the purposes of safeguarding and child protection legislation for this policy and appendices. Members over the age of 18 years old are supported by adult services when making a safeguarding referral.

A vulnerable adult is deemed to be 'a person who is or may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation (**Care Act 2014**).

3 LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy will be based on the following legislation:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 1989

- Children Act 2004
- General Data Protection Act 2018
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Serious Crimes Act 2015
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000

4 SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

In relation to children, the society has a statutory duty, as set out in the Education Act 2002 and the Children Act 2004, to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State at all times. Safeguarding and promoting children and young people's welfare is:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

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

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Vulnerable Adults – the adult safeguarding duties under the Care Act 2014 apply to an adult, aged 18 or over, who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

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Safeguarding adults – In relation to those 18 years and over, and classed as an adult in law, the Society has a statutory safeguarding duty, as set out in the Care Act 2014, which must be seen in conjunction with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Human Rights Act 1998. The Society must have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State at all times.

While a concern may not meet the threshold for a referral to and/or support of these external agencies, the Society is committed to the safeguarding and supporting of all of its members as appropriate.

5 EQUALITY STATEMENT

Some members have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some members with respect to recognising or disclosing it. At the Society, we are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise learner's diverse circumstances. We give special consideration to members who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities;
- Are young carers;
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality;
- Have English as an additional language;
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence;
- Are at risk of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation;
- Are asylum seekers, refugees or migrants;
- Are children in the care of the local authority or are Care Experienced Learners;
- Have a Child Protection Plan, or Child in Need Plan; and
- May benefit from Early Help support.

6 STATEMENT OF INTENT

The society will ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote member welfare;
- All instructors and committee members are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding;
- Instructors and committee members are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues;
- The committee, trustees and instructors take as our first priority the responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of our members, to minimise risk and to work together with other agencies to ensure rigorous arrangements are in place within our Society to identify, assess and support those children and/or vulnerable adults who are suffering harm and to keep them safe and secure whilst in our care.

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The responsibilities set out in this policy apply (as appropriate) to all members of the Society community including members, committee members, instructors, trustees, volunteers and trainees operating within the Society.

Safeguarding is fully incorporated into the whole of the society ethos and is underpinned throughout the delivery of training, rehearsals and performances, and within the safety of the physical environment provided for its members.

Safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as, but not limited to:

- Neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.
- Contextualised abuse.
- Homelessness
- Bullying, including online bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, and prejudice-based bullying).
- Racist, disability- based, homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic abuse.
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls.
- Extremist behaviour and/or radicalisation.
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE), human trafficking, modern slavery or other forms of exploitation.
- Online abuse
- Child on Child Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment (defined in KCSiE 2023 Part Five).
- Issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example knife crime, youth violence, criminal child exploitation (CCE) and County Lines.
- Parental vulnerabilities such as substance /alcohol misuse, mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- Risk of or from serious violence and violent crime
- Particular issues affecting learners including domestic abuse and violence within their own relationships, female genital mutilation, so called honour-based abuse and forced marriage.
- 'Upskirting'- The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as Upskirting Act, came into force on 12th April 2019. Upskirting is a criminal offence and reportable by all staff.

See **Appendix A** for definitions and indicators of abuse.

The Society recognises its responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young adults and adults, including the responsibilities of its trustees, committee members, instructors, volunteers and visitors regarding the protection of young people and adults from abuse; and to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into radicalised behaviour and potential acts of terrorism.

The Society believes that:

- Everyone should be safe, and feel safe, and we want everyone who attends, or has contact with the Society, to enjoy what the Society has to offer in safety.

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- Our members are aware of our commitment and that they are empowered to tell us if they have suffered, or are suffering, from any form of harm or abuse, if they feel at risk of being drawn into terrorism or extremism, or if they have concerns about other Society users in respect of these matters.
- Members who may be LGBT+ should have a trusted person who they can be open with, within the Society.

The Society wants:

- Organisations who work with, or commission work from, the Society to have confidence and recognise that we are a safe organisation.
- All members of the Society to see themselves as a valued part of the Society community and to understand how the Society operates within the wider UK community, including the importance of promoting, and abiding by, the **Fundamental British Values** of:
 - Democracy;
 - Rule of Law;
 - Individual Liberty; and
 - Mutual Respect and Tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

The Society will maintain an effective Safeguarding Policy that brings together all aspects of safeguarding and child protection, which includes the Society's Prevent duty. The policy, and all appendices, will be updated annually, or inline with change in legislation and guidance, to make sure it is current and effective.

The Society has clear objectives:

- To provide a safe environment for children, young people and adults in which to work, learn and take part in social and recreational activity.
- To identify people who are experiencing, or likely to experience significant harm, providing support and taking appropriate action with the objective of producing positive outcomes for those people.
- To foster, promote and maintain a genuine feeling of safety throughout the Society via the training, rehearsing and performance processes through the promotion of a Society ethos where everyone feels safe, secure, valued and listened to.
- To act where appropriate to safeguard the person through working in partnership with other agencies.
- To educate all members, instructors, committee members and trustees in safeguarding and child protection issues so that they become more aware and confident in dealing with issues relating to those matters.

The Society has processes which:

- Identify children, young people and adults at risk of significant harm, or where there are concerns for a person's welfare, and provide procedures for reporting and addressing such concerns.
- Prevent unsuitable people from working with children, young people and adults.

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- Identify procedures for reporting unsuitable people to the DBS and other relevant agencies where appropriate.
- Maintain channels for reporting and dealing with all allegations of abuse.
- Work in partnership with local agencies including the sharing of information.
- Provide a safe environment for children, young people and adults within the Society.
- Appropriately monitor member internet and social media usage.
- Identify low level concerns.

The Society will ensure that:

- There is a named Senior Committee Member Lead who is responsible for Society safeguarding arrangements, together with a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead leads on all matters pertaining to safeguarding and child protection, and will ensure that appropriate and robust systems are in place to coordinate reporting, monitoring, referral and support procedures. Name, role and contact details will be available to all instructors, committee members, members and parents/carers on the Society website.
- All instructors, committee members and trustees are trained to Recognise, Respond, Record, Report and Refer in regard to Safeguarding procedures with training updates provided on an annual basis.
- Accurate and secure records of concerns about individuals are made, even when there is no need for immediate referral to outside agencies.
- There is a systematic means of monitoring children, young people and adults known, or thought to be, at risk of harm, and the Society contributes to assessments/support plans with other agencies.
- Sources of help and support are accessible for anyone who may experience abuse.
- There are effective working relationships with other agencies, and in particular the Hartlepool & Stockton Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- Instructors, committee members and trustees are trained in safe practices to protect children, young people and adults in the learning environment, and also to protect themselves from false allegations of abuse, including raising awareness of sexual violence and sexual harassment in college, by peers.
- Safe recruitment practices are in place by implementing enhanced checks on all new and existing instructors in accordance with DBS.
- Effective induction opportunities are provided for members. Activities delivered within the Society will be used to help children, young people and adults to develop their self-esteem, assertiveness, problem-solving skills, raise awareness of risk, including sexual violence and sexual harassment from peers, and local threats. This to promote their resilience, confidence, self-esteem and self-awareness and to be able to ask for help if it is needed.

7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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The Society committee are responsible for:

- Ensuring policies, procedures and training are effective and comply with the law at all times.
- Ensuring that a senior member of the committee (or equivalent) holds overall responsibility for the Society's safeguarding arrangements.
- Strategic leadership of the Society's safeguarding arrangements and ensuring that they comply with their duties under legislation.
- Ensuring that all committee members and instructors receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and that this training is kept up to date.

The Society committee should:

- Appoint a lead member of the committee to have responsibility for safeguarding, child and adult protection.
- Be aware of their obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and their multi-agency safeguarding arrangements with Hartlepool & Stockton Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- Be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulations place duties on the Society and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.
- Ensure they facilitate a whole Society approach to safeguarding – with systems, processes and policies operating with the best interests of the child and vulnerable adult at their heart.
- Ensure that all committee members and instructors undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including prevent.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, the Society committee should ensure that the child's wishes and feelings are accounted for when determining what action to take and what services to provide wherever possible.
- Ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- These policies should include the Society having:
 - An effective child protection policy, a behaviour policy and appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place to respond to children who are absent from sessions, particularly on repeat occasions and/or for prolonged periods.
- Systems should be in place, and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible for children, young adults and adults to confidently report, any form of abuse or neglect, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously, and knowing they can safely express their views and give feedback.

In addition, the Society committee should ensure:

- Child protection files are maintained

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- Appropriate safer recruitment policies in accordance with Part three of this guidance are in place, embedded and effective and,
- Where reasonably possible, Society's hold more than one emergency contact number for each member.

The chairperson of the Society's committee should ensure through committee members that:

- There is a consistent and high-profile lead on all safeguarding issues.
- Promote the Society's approach to safeguarding inside and outside the Society.
- All instructors undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training and are informed of this policy at the start of the academic year or at induction into the role.
- The safeguarding policy and supporting policies and procedures are understood and fully implemented and followed by all instructors and committee members.
- This policy is communicated to parents and carers via the Society's website.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated so that the DSL and Deputy DSL's can attend strategy discussions, interagency meetings, contribute to assessments, etc.
- Make referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer where allegations of abuse by instructors and members are brought forward, or delegate that responsibility to the DSL or Deputy DSL where required.
- Instructors/volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor/unsafe practices by addressing these sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with relevant policies.
- There must be procedures in place to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if a person in regulated activity has been dismissed or removed due to safeguarding concerns or would have been had they not resigned – this is a legal duty and failure to refer when the criteria are met is a criminal offence.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:

- Take lead responsibility in all safeguarding and child/ adult protection matters, including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems that are processes in place.
- Provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare, safeguarding and child and adult protection matters.
- Take part in meetings with relevant agencies when required.
- Be available to discuss any safeguarding concerns alongside the Deputy DSLs.
- Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies including Multi-agency Children's Hubs, Adult Social Care, Channel, Police.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the Society and a point of contact with safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the Society's Chairperson to inform of any issues/ongoing investigations.
- Act as the Society's delegate with Local Authority Designated Officer in reporting and managing cases of alleged instructor and member abuse as appropriate and when required.

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- Promote supportive engagement with parents/ carers.
- Train instructors, volunteers and committee members in how to recognise signs of abuse, including sexual violence & sexual harassment between peers, and when it is appropriate to make a referral – training should be updated on a regular basis.
- Liaise with the Society's committee chairperson to inform them of issues – especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This should include being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult. Further information can be found in the Statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.
- Ensure all instructors, committee members and volunteers have access to and understand the Society's Safeguarding policy, and to make it available in a range of formats.
- Ensure that child protection and all other safeguarding written records of referrals/concerns are kept up to date, are kept confidential and stored securely.
- Raise awareness ensuring that all instructors, committee members and volunteers have access to and understand the safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Provide support and advise instructors, committee members and volunteers and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters.
- Ensure learners/parents/carers have access to copies of the Society Safeguarding policy, which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the Society in this.
- Contact details for the Safeguarding Team, and the role of the establishment are available on the Society website.
- Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to understand the views of children.

Responding to a concern

- All instructors, volunteers and committee members are responsible for safeguarding one another and our members.
- All instructors, volunteers and committee members must have an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- All instructors, volunteers and committee members must remain vigilant to concerns rather than waiting for a disclosure, recognising that learners may not always make a direct disclosure and information may come from overhearing conversations or observing behaviour changes.
- All instructors, volunteers and committee members must act immediately on any concerns they have and always in the best interests of the learner by sharing concerns with a member of the Safeguarding Team.

Where a member makes a disclosure to an instructor, volunteer or committee member they should do the following:

- Stay calm, do not express shock or embarrassment.

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- **Listen carefully to what they say and how they say it.**
- **Allow the member to explain in their own words and do not ask leading questions.**
- **DO NOT** offer confidentiality, but be clear that you will explain what will happen next.
- **Explain that you will need to share this information with a member of the Safeguarding Team.**
- **GIVE REASSURANCE** that you are taking the information seriously.
- **DO NOT** examine any physical injuries.
- **If sexualised images are included in the disclosure, do not ask to view them or ask the learner to send them. Report this to the safeguarding team member when you share the disclosure.**
- **DO NOT** attempt to investigate the allegations yourself.
- **NEVER JUDGE** – even if the allegation is against a colleague.
- **RECORD** what was said, also time, date and place.
- **CONTACT** a member of the Safeguarding Team as soon as is reasonably possible.
- **Once the Safeguarding Team are informed, do not discuss the issue any further with the member or any other member, instructor, committee member or volunteer.**

8 KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Nominate Committee Member Responsible for Safeguarding.	Jill Jackson
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Charlton
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Peter Rowlands Jordan Grylls

9 SOCIAL MEDIA

The Society recognises that the use of social media by young people has grown exponentially, and that social media has become a focus of a number of issues including cyber-bullying, sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, sharing of inappropriate images, the promotion of radical and extreme viewpoints, grooming, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). All committee members, instructors and volunteers will be trained to be vigilant of and sensitive to this area of activity and the Society will ensure that suitable procedures are in place to address access and monitoring of social media activity.

Adult members, instructors, volunteers committee members and trustees should not share their personal contact information on any social media platform with child members under the age of 18 years of age. This includes the sharing of personal mobile telephone details, personal e-mail addresses and any personal contact information.

Where there is a communication need for information to be shared with children under the age of 18, this will need to be communicated to the parent/carer of that child.

10 PREVENT STRATEGY

The Society is subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This is known as the Prevent duty.

Children and adults may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children and adults from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting them from this risk is a part of the Society’s safeguarding duty.

- **Radicalisation:** refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups
- **Extremism:** is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces in the UK or abroad.
- **Terrorism:** is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.
- **Channel:** A programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by:
 - Identifying individuals at risk;
 - Assessing the nature and extent of that risk;
 - Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

If anyone is concerned about a change in the behaviour of an individual or see something that concerns them (this could be a colleague too) they should seek advice appropriately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- To ensure that the Society effectively safeguards all its members and volunteers, manages risks and is able to deal appropriately with issues around radicalisation and extremism, the Society will:
- Understand the nature of the threat from extremism and how this may impact directly or indirectly on the Society.

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- Ensure that all members understand the nature of the local threats.
- Encourage all members to respect and adhere to fundamental British values.
- Ensure instructors, volunteers and committee members receive awareness training in recognising and preventing extremism and radicalisation.
- Understand and manage potential risks within the Society and from external influences including the display of extremist materials and the hiring of Society premises.
- Respond rapidly and appropriately to events in local, national or international news that may impact on the Society community.
- Ensure measures are in place to minimise the potential for acts of extremism within the Society.
- Ensure plans are in place to respond appropriately to a threat or incident within the Society.

11 PROCEDURES FOR REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES – CHILD PROTECTION

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 have access to the society's Safeguarding 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.

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.

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- 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.

Managing sensitive information

- The society has 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 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- 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.

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 leading questions that suggest a particular answer.

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- 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 (see above). 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 and pass immediately to the safeguarding/child protection lead.

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 e.g. 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 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.

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- 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.

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 managed via Hartlepool Borough Council who issue the licences for 3 years. This involves DBS check, safeguarding training and the provision of references.
- 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 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 signing children in and out.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.

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- 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/carers or nominated adult.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms and adults will not be able to enter the child's dressing room unless they are an allocated chaperone.
- 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 incidents are reported to and recorded by the society. If it requires medical attention then confirmation from the designated first aider that the child is ok to continue performing is needed before they will be allowed back on stage. If hospital attendance is required this confirmation should be given by a medical professional.
- NOTE 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).
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child or decide on how to get them home. If this occurs, it will need to be recorded as an incident.

Dress during productions

During dress rehearsals and performances children will be required to wear leotards (for girls) and trousers or shorts (for boys) at all times under or as part of their costumes to protect their dignity.

Teachers/coaches/ directors/ choreographers

DBS checks, safeguarding training and references are managed via Hartlepool Borough council and licenses are issued on a 3-yearly basis. In addition, teachers/coaches need to be aware of the societies Health and Safety, Child Protection and Data Privacy policies. Junior teachers are expected to have a first aid first responder certificate.

12 REVIEW

This policy statement will be reviewed annually or sooner, in response to changes in legislation or Society organisation. This will be initiated by the DSL.

Next Date of Review: 23/01/2016