



# **BRAMLEY PARISH THEATRE PLAYERS SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

## **Part 1 General for all**

Bramley Parish Theatre 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 and Protecting All God's Children (safeguarding policy for children and young people, 4th edition, 2010). We also recognise our duty of care to all adults, including those who may be deemed vulnerable, whether temporary or long-term.

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 all our members, adult or child is paramount;
- ❖ all adults and 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 in accordance with the Bramley Parish Theatre Players Guidelines;
- ❖ all members of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The society will ensure that:

- ❖ all our members, adult or child will be treated equally and with respect and dignity;
- ❖ the welfare of our members, adult or child will always be put first;
- ❖ a balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers our members, adult or child 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 will be expected to provide a positive role model for dealing with other people;
- ❖ action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour;
- ❖ it keeps up-to-date with health & safety legislation;
- ❖ it keeps informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and vulnerable adults;
- ❖ it undertakes relevant development and training;
- ❖ it holds a register of every child involved with the society and will retain a parent or guardian contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.
- ❖ it makes a confidential note of the school that each child attends in case any concerns need to be shared
- ❖ During rehearsals and productions a team of LCC licenced chaperones will look after the wellbeing of the children

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.

The society has a dedicated Safeguarding Co-ordinator, who is in charge of ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are adhered to. That person's name is **Janice Whitehead** and can be contacted on [janice@bptp.co.uk](mailto:janice@bptp.co.uk)

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Executive Committee of the society and will be subject to annual review.

Dated: 21 January 2023 revised and ratified by the committee

## **Part 2 Children**

### **CHILD SAFEGUARDING 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 safeguarding;
- ❖ engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate DBS checks (if necessary in consultation with the local education authority);
- ❖ ensure that children are supervised and safe at all times;
- ❖ know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern.

#### **Parents and Carers**

- The society believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents or carers and the society. They are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the society and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- All parents or carers will be given a copy the society's Safeguarding Policy and procedures.
- All parents or carers 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 minimize risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open.

### **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 on stage 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 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.

### **Suspicion of abuse**

- If anyone sees or suspects abuse of a child while in the care of the society, they **must** make this known to the person with responsibility for child safeguarding. If the person suspected of abuse or misconduct with a child is the person with responsibility for child safeguarding they should make their concerns known to the Chairman.
- When reporting concerns it is essential to make a note of what was witnessed as well as any response made as well as an accurate record of the exact words spoke.
- 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 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 safeguarding.
- ❖ 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 safeguarding. 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. BPTP have cause for concern forms for you to complete.
- ❖ 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 eg. 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 task 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 counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child safeguarding.
- 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 counter-signed by the person with responsibility for safeguarding. 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**

- Potential chaperones will need to be approved by Leeds City Council and included on their register of authorised chaperones.
- The society has a code of practice for the handling of disclosure information.
- The society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.
- Chaperones will be selected by the society for the care of children during the production process and performances from the Leeds City Council Register of authorised chaperones.

### **Changing**

- Changing rooms will be divided using screens to separate children of different ages and sex
- Adults and children do not need to be separated once they have changed and are in costume, provided all children are within sight of their chaperones.

Bramley Parish Theatre Players

Revised, updated and ratified on 21/01/2023