



Talisman Theatre and Arts Centre

Child Safeguarding Procedures

Responsibilities of the Society (Talisman Theatre Company CIO)

At the outset of any production involving children the society will:

- Identify the person with designated responsibility for child safeguarding:- Corrina Jacob Tel: 01926 511922 Mobile: 07913 667504 Email: secretary@talismantheatre.net
- Identify whether any Children will be involved in any capacity – including Performing, working Backstage, in Props or Wardrobe, in Lighting or Sound or Front of House.
- Hold a register of all children involved, with a contact telephone number for use in case of emergency, in compliance with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Ensure that the Stage Manager or relevant Head of Department undertakes a risk assessment relevant to the activities that the child will be involved in and will continually monitor risks.
- Ensure that the 'Child Safeguarding Adult Volunteer Briefing' (Appendix 1) is delivered to all Adults who will be involved in a Production, including Front of House staff when children are working in that area.
- Ensure that the Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and their whereabouts, are brought to the attention of all adults who will supervise children.
- Ensure that these Procedures and associated Policy are available on the notice board at the foot of the Studio Stairs.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times when in the society's care.
- Engage in effective recruitment of Chaperones and other adults with responsibility for supervising children.
- Ensure that Criminal Record Disclosures (DBS) are obtained for Chaperones and any other adults as deemed necessary in these procedures.
- Maintain a register of Chaperones and any other adults for whom a Criminal Record Disclosures (DBS) has been deemed necessary in these Procedures, in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Know how to get in touch with the Local Authority Social Services and the Police, in case it needs to report a concern.

Unsupervised Contact

- Wherever possible there will always be two adults in a room or space 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 and in view of other people/adults.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she will be required to obtain a Criminal Record Disclosure – see DBS Section below.

Physical Contact

- Adults must not have physical contact with children ie: touching, unless absolutely essential to the activity eg: applying makeup or first aid - and the purpose of any such contact will be explained to, and agreed by, the child beforehand.
- Physical contact must only take place when a second adult is present. The only exception is in the very rare case where intervention is required to protect a child from immediate danger of harm. Remember that this is for the protection of adults too.

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Reg. Charity 1164913 Barrow Road, Kenilworth. CV8 1EG 01926 856548

Updated April 2021



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Managing sensitive information

- Permission will be sought from parents for the taking and use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.
- The Society has a “Data Protection Policy and Procedures” which provides further information and the necessary forms for declaration of consent.
- The society’s web-based and social media materials and activities will be carefully monitored by the designated ‘owners’. EG: Talisman Website - Kerrie McCann; Facebook Talisman Theatre Group Chat – Rod Wilkinson; Talisman Theatre Twitter – Dik Thacker. In addition, anyone with a concern about potentially inappropriate or unauthorised content should report this to the society’s Child Safeguarding Officer who will review and take action as deemed necessary.
- 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 (DBS).

Parents/Guardians

- The society believes it is important that there is a partnership between parents/guardians and the society. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the society and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- All parents/guardians will be provided with a copy the society’s Child Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Procedures.
- Permission will be sought from parents/guardians for the taking and use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to feedback their views and ideas for improvement of these Procedures to the society.
- Collection of children from the Theatre is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and it is also their responsibility to ensure that the child gets home safely.
- Where a parent or guardian is not present to supervise their child, the society will maintain a record of the arrangements made by the parent/guardian for the child’s return to their home. A form for this purpose is at Appendix 2.

Technology – E-Safety

- Mobile phones are not permitted in childrens’ changing rooms or backstage when children are involved.
- Adults/Chaperones will communicate via childrens’ parents/guardians and not directly with children via email, telephone or social media.

Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child safeguarding. Corrina Jacob Tel: 01926 511922 Mobile: 07913 667504
Email: secretary@talismantheatre.net
- 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, Nigel Elliott Tel: 01926 859061 Mobile: 07795 672880
Email: nigel.w.elliott@bopenworld.com
- 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, volunteer or staff member, that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre and any other spaces being used.

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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.
- Do not ask the child to repeat themselves over and over, they may think that you don't believe them.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only if essential for clarification. Do not ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Do not 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. 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 safeguarding 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 in accordance with our Data Protection Policy 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/her 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, adults supervising children, and children will be advised of "house rules" regarding Health and Safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds in a Health and Safety briefing. 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 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 countersigned by the person with responsibility for child

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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.

- **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosures**
- DBS Check requirements for Chaperones are detailed below under “Chaperones”. If the society believes it is in its best interests to obtain (DBS) criminal record disclosures for other personnel, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required.
- The society will ensure that information contained in the Disclosure is held and used in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- The society will ensure that Criminal Record Disclosures are made transportable and that individuals are subscribed to the update service.
- The society will ensure that checks of current DBS Status are made by the person with responsibility for child safeguarding, before rehearsals commence, for every show in which children are involved. As a minimum this will be 6-monthly in November and May of each year.
- In the event that any concerns are raised from DBS Checks, the person with responsibility must advise the chairman of the Trustees, Nigel Elliott, Tel: 01926 859061 Mobile: 07795 672880 Email: nigel.w.elliott@btopenworld.com

Chaperones

- Chaperones will be appointed by the society for the care of Child Performers during the production process. By law the Chaperone is acting ‘in loco parentis’ and should exercise the care which a good parent/guardian might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the Chaperone’s care shall not exceed 12.
- All Chaperones are DBS checked via Warwickshire County Council, Child Employment and Performance Licensing Officer (CEPCO). This requires the Chaperone to provide three forms of ID and one photo to complete their DBS application. There is also an application form and interview with the WCC CEPCO concerning their suitability to become an official Chaperone. All information is confidential. In the first instance, all Chaperone applications must be made via the Talisman Theatre’s Child Safeguarding Officer.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the society’s Child Safeguarding Policy and Child Safeguarding Procedures and a Briefing will be given before each production in order to reinforce and refresh.
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care.
- Where Chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the Director. 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 Director or Stage Manager 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 Director 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 whilst in the Theatre’s care.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets. A child’s privacy will not be invaded whilst toileting or washing.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms unless unavoidable for crossing to the other side of the stage. In this circumstance a prior check will be made that adults are not in a state of undress.

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- 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.
- If an accident involving a child occurs, the Chaperone must take immediate action in the best interests of the health of the child. This may range from reassurance, simple first aid to calling NHS 111 or an ambulance. The Parent/Guardian must then be contacted in order to advise them and to determine whether it is appropriate for the child to continue rehearsing/ performing or whether they should be collected to return home.
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children to be collected/travel home after rehearsals and performances. If there is to be any change to the written arrangements the Chaperone in charge should be notified in advance.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the parent/adult (18+ years) collecting.
- If a parent/adult has not collected the child it is the duty of the Chaperone to stay with that child, to phone the parent/adult collecting and/or to make arrangements to ensure that they get home safely.
- If the Parent/ Guardian of a child determines that their child will make their own way home, this must be recorded at Appendix 2, with the signature of the Parent/ Guardian.

Additional information

Warwickshire CC now has a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

For more information visit ...

www.warwickshireMASH.org.uk

If there is a safeguarding concern about a child or young person and you want to speak to someone please contact Warwickshire MASH on: **01926 414144**.

MASH operating times are:

8.30am – 5.30pm Monday to Thursday.

8.30am – 5pm Friday.

Outside office hours for immediate concern about a child in danger dial 999 and contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01926 886922.

Notified by Brenda Finn, Warwickshire County Council on 14 July 2016.

Policy Reviewed: Nov 2016, Nov 2017, Nov 2018, Feb 2020, April 2021

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Child Safeguarding – Adult Volunteer Briefing

Appendix 2 Emergency Contact / Medical / Collection Arrangements Form for Child Performers and Volunteers

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Key Points for Everyone ...

- Respect all children, as befits their age
- Do watch speech, tone of voice and body language
- Do control and maintain discipline WITHOUT physical punishment, i.e. NO Smacking
- Do make sure another adult/chaperone is around during workshop or rehearsal sessions
- Do not invade a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting
- Each child should be aware of who the leaders are with whom they can speak in confidence
- Do not play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- Do not be sexually suggestive about or to a young person even in fun
- Do not touch inappropriately or intrusively
- Do not scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person
- Do not show favouritism to any one child
- Do not allow children to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature
- Never give a lift to a young person or child when alone. In an emergency, when this is not avoidable, ask the child to sit in the back of the car
- Supervise the children carefully, and do not permit bullying or ridiculing
- Do not allow unknown adults access to children

Information for Parents/ Guardians of young people performing at the theatre ...

Under 13 year olds....	13-16 year olds...	ALL Under 16 year olds....
Cannot be present at the place of performance after 22:00 hours.	Cannot be present at the place of performance after 22:30 hours.	
Cannot take part in a performance or rehearsal if the duration of his/her appearance is more than two and a half hours.	Cannot take part in a rehearsal or performance which lasts more than 3 and a half hours.	The local authority is notified of all young people appearing in any performance at the theatre.
Cannot be licensed if they have performed on more than 39 days in the preceding 12 months.	Cannot be licensed if they have performed on more than 79 days in the preceding 12 months.	

Related Documents

Talisman Theatre Child Safeguarding Policy

Talisman Theatre Data Protection Policy

This Policy is reviewed at least annually.

Last reviewed April 2021

Approved by the Executive Committee 13/04/2021

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