



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Effective from: September 2017

Date of next review: August 2018

1 Context

- 1.1 The People's Theatre Company (PTC) recognizes its duty of care under the
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
 - Child (Performances) Regulations 1968
 - Protection of Children Act 1999
 - Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
- 1.2 The NSPCC has noted the following characteristics as being common in organisations where abuse is most likely to exist. These provide a useful first step in considering the work of PTC:
- Minimal supervision of children
 - Inadequate guidelines or procedures for dealing with concerns about children
 - Lack of specialist skills or knowledge about child protection
 - Minimal staff support
 - Children left to their own devices
 - Discouragement of parental involvement (eg. as observers or as accompanying adults)
 - Lack of resources
 - Gaps between policy and practice
 - Poor co-ordination and lack of consistency in supervision
- 1.3 It is good practice to have a written protection policy and set of procedures in place that members should:
- Be fully aware of
 - Understand their responsibilities
 - Adopt the policy and procedures

2 Scope of Policy

- 1.1 The People's Theatre Company (PTC), in pursuant of its objectives, seeks to uphold the highest standard of protection of children and vulnerable adults that gives due regard to current legislation and best practice.
- 2.1 A child is defined as anyone up to the age of 18 years. Additional regulations relating to children in theatrical performances apply only to those children up to the age of 16.
- 2.2 The policy is considered alongside PTC's child protection procedures.
- 2.3 It is NOT the role of the society to decide whether a child has been abused or not. This is the task of Social Services. It is, however, everybody's responsibility to ensure that concerns are shared and appropriate action taken.
- 2.4 This policy is adapted from the National Operatic and Dramatic Association's (NODA) Child Protection Policy which has been accepted by the Charity Commission as being appropriate for amateur theatre groups.
- 2.5 This policy will be regularly monitored by the Executive Committee of the society and will be subject to annual review.

- 2.6 PTC has child protection procedures which accompany this policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the PTC's Equal Opportunities Policy and Complaints Policy.

3 Child Protection Officer

- 3.1 PTC's Executive Committee appoints a dedicated Child Protection Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to.

- 3.2 PTC's Child Protection Officer is:

Name: **Vernon Lloyd**

Contact: **Telephone: 07916302374 Email: Vernon.Lloyd@gmail.com**

4 Aims

- 4.1 This policy seeks to:

- Promote an understanding across PTC of its role in the protection of children in its care.
- Provide practical objectives for ensuring the protection of children.
- Provide reasons why the society needs formal procedures, including the recruitment and training of relevant personnel, responding to allegations of abuse, and who it is that takes lead responsibility within the society for the protection of children.
- Summarise basic information on current legislation and issues.
- Provide access to further information and advice.

5 Principles and commitments

- 5.1 PTC recognizes that abuse can take many forms, whether it is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. PTC is committed to practice which protects children from harm. All members of the society accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

- 5.2 PTC 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 and employees of PTC should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

- 5.3 PTC 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- It will appoint Licensed Chaperones and/or Competent Adults to be present during productions involving children.

6 Photographs and images of children

- 6.1 Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information, particularly in programmes and publicity articles.
- 6.2 This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to 'groom' that child for abuse.
- 6.3 Secondly, the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of this adapted material finding its way on to child pornography sites.
- 6.4 The PTC Executive Committee will make decisions about the type of images they consider suitable and which appropriately represent the society, without putting children at increased risk.
- 6.5 PTC will ensure that parents support this policy. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of children, the most important factor is the potential for inappropriate use.
- 6.6 PTC will ensure that parental consent is sought at audition for photographs to be taken and used solely in pursuant of its objectives.
- 6.7 The use of cameras or mobile phones with camera or video capability, in dressing rooms and other inappropriate environments where children are present is expressly forbidden.

Further advice

For further advice contact the NSPCC (020 7825 2775 or visit www.nspcc.org.uk).

Further reading

- Keeping Arts Safe, Protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults *involved in arts activities*, Arts Council of England. Available from Marston Book Services on 01235 465500.
- FIRST CHECK, a step by step guide for organizations to safeguard children, NSPCC. This excellent and detailed guide also contains templates for recording allegations or suspicions.