

## **Gatton Community Theatre**

Charity no 1080313



### **Policy for the protection and safeguarding of children, young people and members of vulnerable groups, whatever their age. Procedures to follow for staff & volunteers**

The aim of the policy is to protect children, young people and vulnerable persons from harm, to aid their development and to provide support for those working with them during workshops, rehearsals and performances remembering that:

- The child, young person or vulnerable person's welfare is paramount.
- All children, young and vulnerable people of whatever age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- As defined in the Children Act 1989, a child remains subject to child protection regulations until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they attain the age of 16 years. The academic year runs from the 1st September until 31st August inclusive.

This policy will be implemented by a set of processes, procedures and guidelines to ensure compliance.

The Trustees of Gatton Community Theatre (GCT) will appoint a Safeguarding Officer whose role is:

- to ensure that this policy and associated procedures are kept under periodic review
- to ensure that the associated processes and procedures and guidelines are appropriate
- to ensure that the procedures are understood and put into practice
- to receive reports of any concerns or allegations
- in conjunction with the person in charge (e.g. Chairman/Trustee/Artistic Director/senior member of the organisation) to decide on the appropriate action to be taken following any such report.
- In the event of further action to notify the LA Child Employment Office and/or police of any allegations
- to notify the Chairman of Trustees of the outcome of complaints or allegations.

#### **Policy and procedures**

1. In accordance with the Children Act 1989 and subsequent directions from the Home Office and Surrey County Council, the Trustees of GCT recognise the need for ensuring the safe environment of children, young and vulnerable people involved with productions of the company and for the observation of best practice in working with children, young and vulnerable people. Further information is available from the Child Protection Representative. Training is available.

2. The Trustees and Management Committee of GCT have appointed Joyce Standing (Tel: 07512 501150) as Safeguarding Officer for the company. In consultation with the Trustees, she will keep a record of any concern or allegations involving children that may arise while they are the responsibility of the staff and volunteers.
3. It is to be noted that the health and safety of children, young and vulnerable people are the responsibility of the whole Theatre Company. A copy of the Safeguarding Policy will be given to all adults involved.
4. All Trustees, Management Committee and Artistic Director of GCT will have full enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.
5. A list of the Chaperones who have full enhanced DBS clearance and local authority training in accordance with requirements will be maintained.
6. A list of all paid workers and volunteers who have regular direct contact with children will be maintained.
7. No child will be left alone with one adult except with a registered chaperone or DBS checked adult. There will always be registered chaperones in attendance at performances as per local authority requirements. In other situations, no child or young person should be left unattended and should always be in the presence of at least two responsible adults.
8. A register of all children and young people attending should be kept at all activities. This should include their names, dates of birth, addresses, telephone numbers and the names of parents or the persons with parental responsibility.
9. A Risk Assessment will be undertaken regarding rehearsal and performance spaces from a safeguarding perspective.
10. Photographs, films or web-based materials of children or young adults participating in any GCT project will only be taken with the consent of the parents/guardians/carers and in consultation with the children, young or vulnerable people involved. Where permission is sought, the GCT permissions form will follow data protection guidelines.
11. GCT will not pass on details of children or members of vulnerable groups, bearing in mind the provisions of the GDPR 2018, the Children Act 2004 and The Safety of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, and will follow the requirements and guidelines of these Acts when employing staff or volunteers who will have access to children's records.
13. Parents/guardians/ will be required to inform the duty chaperone of the identity of the person who will be escorting their child(ren) from GCT activities on each occasion. Where parents/guardians/carers wish to allow their child(ren) to travel home from GCT activities without adult supervision, GCT will require that authorisation in writing before the event.

## **Accidents and injuries**

GCT will maintain an accident/incident report and will require chaperones to enter a record of the accident when a child or young adult is injured whilst under GCT's supervision. The record will be countersigned by the person responsible for the child or in the absence of that person, by a responsible member of GCT. The accident/incident report will be kept for 3 years.

If a child or member of a vulnerable group arrives at a GCT group with an obvious physical injury, a record will be made on the previous injury report form and the person with responsibility for that individual will be required to counter-sign. This record will be used if a formal allegation is made later as a record that the individual did not sustain the injury whilst working with GCT.

The procedures for reporting suspected abuse are, except in an emergency:

- Do not “interview” the child or vulnerable person since undue pressure might affect subsequent legal proceedings.
- Take the child or vulnerable person seriously and make notes immediately after listening to the complaint.
- Report the matter immediately to the appointed Safeguarding Officer (or where this is not appropriate, or Officer unavailable, a different senior member of the organisation or person in charge.) They will be responsible for contacting the Social Services and the Police.

If urgent attention is needed, the emergency services should be called before following the above procedures.

**Reviewed and agreed by trustees April 2023**

## Reporting procedure *Advice to children, parents, chaperones & volunteers*

For information only: Chart shows how an incident might be reported to chaperones / volunteers, and how you then deal with the incident.

