

1. Introduction

The Woodchurch Players Safeguarding Policy document will be available to anybody wishing to see it. It will also be posted on our Website.

This Policy applies to all permanent, temporary, casual and voluntary workers undertaking duties with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

2. Definition

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

In this document the words 'child' or 'children' or young people' refer to a person(s) under the age of eighteen.

Categories of abuse for children and young people are: -

Sexual abuse
Physical abuse
Emotional abuse
Neglect.

Vulnerable adults are as follows:-

“Any adult aged eighteen or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”

Some factors, which increase vulnerability, include:

- A sensory or physical disability or impairment
- A learning disability
- A physical illness
- A mental illness, chronic or acute
- Dementia
- An addiction to alcohol or drugs
- Failing faculties due to the ageing process.
- Domestic abuse.
- Permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought on by life events such as bereavement, abuse or trauma.
- Trafficking.

3. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Any person acting as a chaperone will have undergone training with Kent County Council. KCC will have completed a DBS check.

Chaperones will be expected to confirm that they have read the Policy document by signing and dating a confirmation slip.

Any allegations made against a chaperone or any person involved in any production will be taken seriously and the person concerned will be removed from the production with immediate effect pending further enquiries.

All disclosures will be taken seriously and reported to the Safeguarding Lead who will seek advice from the department for Children in Entertainment and Employment at Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent.

4. PROCEDURES

Only authorized chaperones will be with the children at all times to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Chaperones will ensure the children never leave the building unaccompanied.

When necessary two Chaperones will accompany the children to the toilet. This is for the protection of the child and the adults in charge.

Children and young people involved in a production will be expected to be in the building no sooner than half an hour before a performance and must be out of the building by 10.30pm. They will have a twenty-minute break (interval) during every performance.

Separate dressing room facilities will be made available so that the children do not change in the same area as the adults. Boys will be separated from the girls. Only named chaperones and make up artists will be in the same room as the children while they are in the building. **No other person will be allowed into the dressing room this includes parents.**

A Fire drill and risk assessment will be carried out before each performance.

There will be a first aider on the premises at all times and for all performances where children/ young people are present. It is expected that all chaperones are first aid trained.

Refreshments will be available in the dressing room. Children should bring their own water bottles. Sweets are not encouraged and will be confiscated if there is a risk of costume damage.

Parents will be asked to sign a consent form for production photographs to be published. Any child who should not be photographed must be reported to the Safeguarding lead so that appropriate action can be taken to ensure their safety.

Parents will be requested not to post photographs on the Web.

Every child/young person will have a contract for the duration of the performances and this should be signed and returned by a parent or carer. This contract will include times of performances, safety issues, special health needs and rules around phones and I pads.

The players take full responsibility of adhering to GDPR regulations as set out by KCC.

Parents will sign their children in and out. No child/young person will be allowed to leave the building without a parent/carer collecting them in person.

If a parent cannot collect their child one of the chaperones should be given the name and address of the person who is going to take the child home.

DISCLOSURE

In the event of a child/young person or vulnerable adult disclosing any form of abuse a record of the conversation will be written up as soon as is feasible to do so. The person recording should remember to give an accurate account, sign and date it. Opinion is not acceptable. The record book will be kept by the safeguarding officer in a place of safety. The person receiving any such allegations **MUST NOT ASK LEADING QUESTIONS**. Neither should a promise of keeping a secret be given. It might be necessary to pass information on to KCC Children's Services or the Police. The safeguarding officer will then seek their advice and hand the issue over to them.

NOBODY IS TO MAKE A DECISION ON HIS OR HER OWN. THEY MUST REFER TO THE SAFEGUARDING OFFICER.

5. E-POLICY

Children will want to use electronic devices. The advice from KCC is that phones should be kept safe by chaperones during performances. The children might need a phone in order to contact a parent/carer in an emergency e.g. if they are late picking them up. However they do not need to use them at any other time.

Therefore, phones will be put into a safe box and collected after a performance. The same applies to I pads. This is to prevent photographs being shared online. Dressing rooms must be a safe place for children and young people to change. Chaperones will have their phones, fully charged in case of an emergency situation.

6.CONCLUSION

It is essential that the children/young people concentrate on what is going on so that they do not miss their cue. We will, however, provide them with activities to keep them occupied.

If any vulnerable adult takes part in one of our plays, they will be treated with the same respect as anybody else. An assessment of need will be carried out before they perform so that their needs and welfare are paramount to their wellbeing.

Inappropriate use of language will be challenged as will any form of discrimination.

Woodchurch Players will ensure that children/young people and vulnerable adults will be safe and cared for during the run of a performance. We want everybody involved in the Players to have a good experience and enjoy being part of Amateur Drama and Pantomimes.

This Policy has been updated on 17th August 2022