

Child Protection Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Nannerch Players (the Group) is committed to providing a safe environment for children in the Nannerch Memorial Hall and in rehearsals and other theatre activities wherever they may be held. The Group recognizes its duty of care under the following:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Children Act 2004 (and the All Wales Child Protection Procedures)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Borders Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- The Children (Performances and Activities (Wales) Regulations 2015

The Group recognizes that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The Group is committed to comply with best practice to protect children from harm. All members of the Group must accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

The Group 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 of the Group should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The Group will ensure that:

- all children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity;
- the welfare of each child will always be put first;
- a balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children 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 group will 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, Government Guidelines etc;

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- 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 group and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GROUP

At the outset of any production involving children the Group or member group will:

- undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process;
- identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection for that production;
- engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children (see below);
- ensure that children are supervised at all times;
- know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern. (see below);
- be aware of the correct reporting procedures if concerned about a child's/vulnerable adults' welfare.

3. PARENTS

- The Group believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the group. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the group and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- Copies of the Nannerch Players Child Protection Policy and procedures will be available on request and published on our website.
- Parents or an authorised chaperone should be present during all rehearsals and performances while in which the child is involved.

4. UNSUPERVISED CONTACT

- The Group 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.

5. 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 activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

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6. PHOTOGRAPHS

- The Group has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children that must be adhered to.
- Any person taking photographs of any sort may only use them for personal use. They may not be distributed or published in any form unless written permission as described below has been obtained for their publication – this includes any social media use.
- The Group may make videos or take photographs for their own rehearsal purposes, but they must take into account parents' wishes before copying and distributing such videos to other members of the Group and/or social media.
- Written permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes. A form is available for this purpose at the end of this document.

7. SUSPICION OF ABUSE

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the Group, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child protection. If you suspect that the person with responsibility is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to the Chairman or Secretary.
- A note must be made for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved. This must be done as soon as possible.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of the Group or chaperone/parent, 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.
- The committee and the person with responsibility for child protection will have the responsibility of investigating any reports in order to ensure confidentiality.

8. 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 protection. 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 protection. It is their responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.

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- 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.

9. 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 e.g., 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.

10. RIGHTS & CONFIDENTIALITY

- If a complaint is made against a member, he or she will be made aware of his rights.
- 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.

11. ACCIDENTS

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of the Groups Health and Safety Policy and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. 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 group, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the group's accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection.
- 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 child protection. 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.

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12. CHAPERONES

- A chaperone's first duty is to look after the children in their care and they must not undertake any activity that would interfere with the performance of this duty. A chaperone is 'in loco parentis' and is required to exercise the care that a good parent might reasonably be expected to give a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- A chaperone can only be authorised by the child's parents or guardians.

13. AUTHORITIES

- Children's Social Services on 01352 701000.
- or the police You can contact the police directly by dialling 101 and they will discuss with Children's Social Care what action should be taken. **In an emergency always contact the police by dialling 999.**

14. REVIEW

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Committee and will be subject to annual review. The next review will be in January 2022.

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PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

I have read the Nannerch Players Child Protection Policy and I agree that my child can become involved with the Nannerch Players and thereby promise to abide by any of the procedures adopted by the group.

I agree to allow photographs or film to be taken of my child and to be published, where reasonable.

Signed

Print name

Date