



Child Protection Policy

Prepared by: Selina Read

Approved by Gantry Youth Theatre Committee: Date: 13/9/2024

Effective from: 22nd Sept 2024

Review date: Sept 25

Gantry Youth Theatre recognises its duty of care under the Children's Act (1989), Children and Families Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

As stated in Kcsie (Keeping children safe in education) 2024. The organisation recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

The Gantry Youth Theatre is committed to practice which protects children from harm. Tutors, assistants, committee members and staff all accept and recognise their responsibilities to safeguarding.

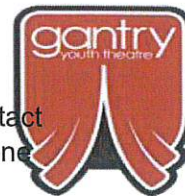
All tutors, assistants, committee members and staff should be clear on how to respond appropriately to any concern raised. This should be supported by regular safeguarding training and clear procedures.

Gantry Youth Theatre believes that:

- The welfare of all children and young people is vitally important.
- All children, no matter their age, culture, disability, gender, first language, ethnic origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse. (From adults and child on child abuse).
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

The Gantry Youth Theatre will ensure that:

- The duty of care to children will always be put first. All staff have current DBS certificates.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- All Tutors, Assistants, Staff and Committee members provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- It will follow current 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 organisation and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies. It will also have a mobile phone that is to be used to make contact with parents.

The Gantry Youth Theatre has a dedicated Child Protection Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to. That person's name is Selina Read and she can be contacted at safeguarding.gantry@gmail.com

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Committee and will be subject to annual review.

Signed: Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Elaine Grant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

(on behalf of the Committee)

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of the Organisation

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

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times with appropriate ratios of staff and students.
- Ensure adults that are supporting students backstage have chaperone licences and/or up to DBS certificates.

Parents

All parents will have access to a copy of the organisation's Child Protection Policy and procedures.

All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances.

All parents are responsible for ensuring up to date contact details and medical information.

Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is 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.



Managing sensitive information

- Contact details should not be stored on personal mobile phones.

Photographs should only be taken for the purpose of performances and rehearsals, and not shared. All material should be deleted when no longer required.

- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.
- Gantry Youth theatre's social medial platforms and web page will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- The confidentiality of information is important in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as DBS checks. This is in accordance to GDPR.

Suspicion of abuse

- If you witness or suspect abuse of a child (by an adult or child) while in the care of Gantry Youth Theatre, you must make this known to the person with responsibility for child protection. 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 Chair of the committee.
- 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 organisation, then this individual may be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded.

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 leading questions.
- 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.
- 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 that person's responsibility to liaise with relevant people.
- 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 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.

Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of the organisation, he or she will be made aware of his/her rights under the organisation'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, everyone involved will be advised of rules regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds/unsafe. 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 organisation, a first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the accident book.
- If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury this information will be shared amongst staff.

Disclosure and Barring Service

- All paid staff to have current DBC certificates



Chaperones (for productions in Hampshire)

- Chaperones will be appointed by the organisation for the care of children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- Chaperones need to complete the relevant Southampton or Hampshire application process.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the organisation's Child Protection Policy.
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer/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 producer/director 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 producer/director to cease using children in this way and should contact the local authority.
- During performances outside of a school building, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children 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 buildings unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- 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 organisation
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child or make arrangements to take them home.

Signed: Chair

Chene Grant

