

TISBURY ARTS GROUP CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Tisbury Arts Group (TAG) recognises that it has a duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 and the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014.

TAG recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. TAG is committed to practice which protects children from harm. All members of TAG accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm (for the avoidance of doubt, reference to the word 'child' or 'children' in this policy includes 'young people and vulnerable adults'). All members of TAG are expected to inform themselves of the Child Protection Policy which is available on the TAG website.

TAG 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 a right to protection from abuse.
- Suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

TAG aims to ensure that:

- All children are treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The duty of care to children will always be put first.
- Bullying will not be condoned or accepted
- Adult members of Tisbury Arts Group provide a positive role model of behaviour
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- All members of the society are aware of their responsibility to ensure the safety of any children in the group
- Constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.

Tisbury Arts Group has a dedicated Child Protection Officer, who is responsible for ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to. The appointment of the Child Protection Officer is reviewed annually at the AGM and contact details are posted on the TAG website. A register is held of every child involved with Tisbury Arts Group, including a contact name and number in case of emergencies.

Child protection procedures accompany this policy.

This policy will be monitored by the Executive Committee of the Tisbury Arts Group and will be subject to regular review.

TISBURY ARTS GROUP CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of Tisbury Arts Group (TAG)

At the outset of any production involving children the appointed producer or director will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with responsibility for child protection during that production.
- Ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times.
- Know how to get in touch with the Child Protection Officer, in case of the need to report any concerns.

Parents and Guardians

- TAG believes it is important that there should be a partnership between parents/guardians and TAG
- Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of TAG and to share responsibility for the wellbeing of the children.
- All parents will be provided with access to TAG's Child Protection Policy and procedures. All parents have responsibility to collect (or following prior notification, arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances.
- It is NOT the responsibility of TAG to take children home.
- Know how to get in touch with the Child Protection Officer, in case of the need to report any concerns.
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Unsupervised Access

- TAG will endeavour to ensure that no adult has unsupervised access to children.
- Whenever possible there will always be a minimum of two adults in the room when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimize risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area, or in a designated room with the door left open.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she may be required to obtain clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

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 (which may include assisting children to dress and undress for costume changes during rehearsals and performances)
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear. Parents must understand that acting is, by its very nature, an activity which may well involve close physical contact between participants.

Managing sensitive information

- Parents and guardians of children in TAG must realise that inevitably their children may be featured in press photographs or other promotional articles, including TAG's own Facebook pages Children's surnames will not be given in official publicity.
- TAG has no control over and cannot be held responsible for photographs and information which may be posted on social media by friends and relations.
- The use of cameras and camera-phones for photographs is not permitted in changing rooms.
- In official records, TAG will maintain confidentiality, in accordance with GDPR policy , to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child whilst in the care of TAG, please 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 TAG Chairman. The Chairman and executive committee are appointed each year at the AGM. Contact details are posted on the TAG website.
- Make a note for your own records of what you witnessed, the date and time, 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 TAG, venue staff etc, the Child Protection officer will take responsibility for assessing the situation and determining what action should be taken, which may include asking an individual to leave the organisation.

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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- As soon as possible, inform the person with responsibility for child protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services and/or the police.
- 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 to whom you gave the information. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Recording of information

- 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, 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.
- All information should be treated as confidential and not disclosed to a third party without proper authority. 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 and subsequent Acts. Remember also that any potential criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.

Accidents and Health and Safety

- To avoid accidents, children will be advised of “house rules” regarding health and safety and will be notified of any areas that are out of bounds.
- Children will be advised of appropriate clothing and footwear
- In the first instance, if a child is injured or unwell while in the care of TAG, every effort will be made to contact the parents, unless it is clearly an emergency, in which case the responsible adult will dial 999.
- If a child attends a production with an obvious physical injury, a record of this will be made on the enrolment form and countersigned by the child's parent or guardian (or an independent adult if the parent is not present). This will be a record to confirm that the child did not sustain the injury whilst participating in the production.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act, no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb eg working on wires or heavy lifting.
- Parents are requested to instruct their children not to leave the premises unless in the company of an appointed adult.

Criminal Record Disclosures

- If TAG's Child Protection Officer believes it is in best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures, s/he will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required. Individuals are expected to pay for their own disclosure(s).

Chaperones

- Chaperones will be appointed by TAG for the care of children during the production process, unless the child is accompanied by their parent or guardian who will take on that role. 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.
- Potential chaperones will be required to supply photographic proof of identity and two references from individuals with knowledge of their previous work with children, unless already well known to TAG.
- Chaperones will be made aware of TAG's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care. If unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a criminal record disclosure will be sought.

- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children should not leave the venue unsupervised by a chaperone unless in the company of their parent or other authorized adult.
- Children should not be allowed to enter adult dressing rooms.
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, the parents must inform the chaperone in advance.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a child has not been collected, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with the child until collected, but not to take the child home.