

STOCKPORT GARRICK THEATRE LIMITED
STOCKPORT GARRICK THEATRE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
REVISED JUNE 2018

INTRODUCTION

There are two aspects to our work with children:

1. The Youth Theatre.
2. Children, including Youth Theatre students, in productions involving adult members.

There are also occasions when the Theatre is hired by outside groups working with children. Our policy applies to all paid staff and volunteers working with the Youth Studio and extends to other productions and work at the theatre.

A child is defined as a young person under the age of 17 and of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June following their 16th birthday.

POLICY STATEMENT

Every member of Stockport Garrick Theatre has a responsibility to safeguard the children and young people within its membership. Stockport Garrick Child Protection Policy is based on the understanding and recognition that all children involved in the activities of Stockport Garrick have the right to be protected from abuse or harm.

Stockport Garrick Theatre fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection. Our Named Child Protection (CP) officer is Anne Kemp contactable on 07913 373726. Anne carries responsibility for child protection policies and their implementation. She is also a member of Stockport's Children's Social Care Family Support.

Stockport Garrick Theatre has a Deputy Child Protection (DCP) Co-ordinator, Nuala Finegan, who carries responsibility for child protection in the absence of the Child Protection Co-ordinator. Nuala's contact number is 07540098359.

Members of Stockport Garrick and non-members using the theatre have the responsibility to be aware of, and adhere to, the Child Protection Policy and Procedure of Stockport Garrick Theatre.

We recognise that theatre groups may attract people who wish to have access to children and young people for inappropriate purposes. Stockport Garrick Theatre Board Officers responsible for safeguarding will ensure that every member of staff, every volunteer and visitor, is informed of the importance the Garrick places upon safeguarding, a summary of action to be taken and the names of the designated members responsible for child protection via prominent notice boards, the website and annually in the newsletter.

2017 / 18 Theatre Board Officers are:

Chair:	Martin Pritchard
President:	Jonathan Higgs
Treasurer:	John Baker
Honorary General Secretary:	Joshua Holden
Deputy Hon Gen Sec:	Helen Cheetham

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE.

You must inform the CP Officer, Anne Kemp or Deputy CP Officer, Nuala Finegan, as soon as possible, within 24 hours at the very latest.

They will take responsibility for the next steps, including ringing the Multi Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) team if necessary.

The MASSH can make check if other information is available and any decision will be made on the basis of all the information known about the child.

HOWEVER: If there is a child protection issue concerning a significant, immediate risk of harm to a child, you should ring the Police WITHOUT DELAY.

Professional agencies in Stockport are expected initially to refer all cases to the Stockport Multi Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) - tel no 0161 217 6028.

The NSPCC helpline is also an avenue for support or immediate advice 08088 005 000. Safeguarding concerns will be passed to the Stockport MASSH by them in any event.

If an accusation is made about a mentor or actor the expectation in all cases is for the CP Officer or her Deputy to refer the matter to the Stockport Multi Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) Telephone number 0161 217 6028.

Any person who has knowledge or suspicion that a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse has a duty to refer their own concerns to one or more of the agencies with statutory duties and/or powers to investigate or intervene.

RECORDING A DISCLOSURE BY A CHILD: PROCEDURE

It is recommended that any early discussion with the child should adhere to the following basic principles:

- Do not ask leading questions or prompt the child in any way: it is vital that you do not influence the child.
- Listen to the child rather than directly question him or her.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make a note of the discussion taking care to write down the timing, setting and personnel present as well as what was said. You should record everything the child has said to you, following the guidelines below. Record objectively what you have seen or heard, where, when and how the incidents occurred. Record exactly what the child tells you: do not change words or attempt to interpret meaning.

Disclosure of any type of abuse by a child should always be taken seriously even where the allegation is subsequently retracted and reassurance must be given that it was right to tell.

The child should not be given an absolute guarantee of confidentiality, even if this is demanded as a precondition of disclosure. It should be explained to the child that telling certain other people may be necessary in order to protect him/her. The child should be reassured that any subsequent actions taken will be discussed with him/her at each stage of the process.

CODE OF CONDUCT: GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- Each child should be aware of who their nominated person is and that they can speak in confidence should the need arise.
- Ensure that another adult is present when working with children.

- Designated male and/or female “chaperones” will be appointed to be responsible for specific children.
- Be very aware of the tone of your voice and body language when giving instructions or advice.
- Never use physical or aggressively vocal forms of discipline.
- Be very clear about the motivation and purpose of physical contact.
- Recognise that all children have a right to privacy. Do not disturb them when washing or toileting.
- Beware of causing embarrassment in the dressing room. Do not leave your designated dressing area in a state of undress.
- Do not touch inappropriately or intrusively any young person or be sexually suggestive or provocative, even in fun.
- Members of Stockport Garrick must be aware that their actions or words, however well-intentioned, may be misinterpreted by children.
- Do not ridicule, reject or mock a young person in any way.
- Do not show favouritism to one child in particular and do not allow children to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATORS

- Ensure that all adult volunteer chaperones have cleared, up to date DBS certificates, and in addition Level 1 Safeguarding Awareness, which can be completed on line.
- Organise Body of Persons authorisation for all children involved in a production from the Stockport area from Stockport Services for Young People.
- Organise the correct number of volunteer chaperones for all productions involving children: the correct ratio is 1:12.
- Provide and update guidelines for volunteer chaperones.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer by phoning MASSH 0161 217 6028 in every case.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GARRICK CHAPERONE DURING PERFORMANCES AT THE GARRICK

- Make sure that you have read the Stockport Garrick Child Protection Policy.
- You should be with the child at all times in the stage area or dressing room and during breaks. You are the key person to whom the child looks for protection, clarification and support. Children are not “add-ons” to a production, their care and wellbeing is paramount at all times.
- The law states that the maximum number of children in your care should not exceed 12.

- You should keep records of any injuries and/or accidents to the child while they are in your care.
- At no time should a child perform when unwell, if a child falls ill while in your care, medical assistance should be gained and the parent/guardian informed immediately. Always have the contact number for parents available. Be aware of any relevant medical background and any allergies.
- Keep a record of the child's arrival and departure time to and from the theatre. In the case of matinee and subsequent evening performances a record of break times should be kept.
- At the end of each performance, make sure that appropriate collection arrangements have been set in place and do not allow any child to leave the premises alone unless sanctioned in writing by the parent/guardian. Liaise with the Stage Manager for a check in/out list.
- **If in doubt contact the Child Protection Officer, Anne Kemp – 07913 373726**
- **Deputy Child Protection Officer, Nuala Finegan - 07540098359**

In addition, records of the following information should be kept:

- Times and duration of rehearsals and performances;
- Contact numbers, more than one, names and addresses of emergency contacts for each child;
- Confidential recording of any relevant medical information regarding allergies or other health issues;
- An accident book;
- Registration and recording of time of arrival and departure of each child to and from the theatre;
- Name of adult collecting child from theatre at the end of rehearsals and performances.

The above information is to be shared only with the following:

- Child Protection Coordinator
- Deputy Child Protection Coordinator
- Stage Manager
- Director

Parents should be informed in writing of the names of the volunteer chaperones for each performance. They should be given an emergency telephone number, and that of the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

APPENDIX 1

CATEGORIES OF ABUSE

Neglect: is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, or clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical abuse: may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child they are looking after.

Emotional abuse: is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or in the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse There are 2 different types of child sexual abuse. These are termed contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not;
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus;
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity;
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet, and flashing. It includes:

- encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts;
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others;
- meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them;
- online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images;
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images;
- showing pornography to a child;
- sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

Official definitions for sexual abuse include the following:-

"Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

"The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

"Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children."

(HM Government, 2015)