

GTG Production Child Protection Procedure 2023-24

Preparation for the production

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their delegate, will

- Undertake a child protection risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate vetting (if necessary in consultation with the local education authority).
- Ensure that children under 16 are supervised at all times in accordance with the performance license
- That children aged 16 and 17 are protected as children and clear boundaries are kept between them and adults with regard to changing areas
- Raising awareness of safeguarding by ensuring an information sheet/poster with DSL and Childline contact details is visible at rehearsals and at the venue

Chaperones

- Chaperones will be appointed by the group for the care of children during the production process. We require all chaperones to have been trained and registered with a County Council in England. 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 (eg. passport, driving licence) and two references from individuals with knowledge of their previous work with children, unless already well known to the group.
- They will also be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the group's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones who are not registered with a County Council in England will not be allowed unsupervised access to children in their care. If

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unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a criminal record disclosure will be sought.

- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. 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 and not allow the child to continue.
- Chaperones may support children to get changed, being aware that informed consent should be sought at all time.
- 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 to cease using children in this way and should contact the local authority.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door 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 the theatre 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 group.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically

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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.

Unsupervised Contact

- The production team 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 but, if unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area, or in a designated room with a door open / clear glass panelled door

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.

Language

- All involved in a show should treat each other with dignity and respect and no form of bullying or harassment is tolerated. For details see the Dignity and Respect Policy (<https://www.gtguk.com/gtg-polices>)
- Adults should be mindful of the language they use and topics they discuss in earshot of children

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.

Please refer to the GTG Safeguarding Policy for more information <https://www.gtguk.com/gtg-polices>

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All parents will be given a copy the group's Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection procedures.

- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children in a timely fashion after rehearsals or performances. One member of the creative team will remain to supervise any children who are not collected but it is NOT the responsibility of the group to take children home.

Accidents

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety 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 countersigned 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 countersigned 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.

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 GTG Designated Safeguarding Lead. 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.
- 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 group, chaperone, venue staff etc., 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.

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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 that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services 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 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.

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GTG's Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Peter Flew**, and he can be contacted on **07798 616114** or safeguarding@godalmingtheatregroup.co.uk