

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

1.0 Policy Statement

Burton Amateur Stage Entertainers (BASE) recognises its duty of care to safeguard all children from harm and will ensure the safety and protection of all children through adherence to the Child Protection Procedures adopted within this policy, a child being defined as a person under the age of 18. The welfare and safety of children is paramount and all, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse. This Child Protection Policy will be adhered to by all members of BASE and its volunteers, allowing them to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues. A copy of this Policy is available on our website and will be regularly monitored by the BASE Committee and will be subject to annual review. In doing this we will look toward Staffordshire County Council for support and advice and to the National Operatic and Dramatic Association for policy guidance.

2.0 What constitutes abuse?

BASE recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. All members of BASE/volunteers will accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm. We believe that:

- *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/volunteers of BASE should be clear on how to respond appropriately.*

3.0 Responsibilities of BASE

We think of BASE as a family and want everyone in our family to stay safe. All our committee members and everyone involved with BASE recognise the particular importance of keeping children safe and as such, we will ensure that:

- *All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.*
- *The duty of care to children will always be put first.*
- *Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.*
- *Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.*
- *Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.*
- *We will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation.*
- *We will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.*
- *We 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 ([Appendix A](#)).*

3.1 Good Practice

All members should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

- *Working (whenever possible) in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.*
- *Treating all young people equally with respect and dignity*

- *Always putting the welfare of each young person first*
- *Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children*
- *Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust*
- *Making drama and performing, fun, enjoyable and promoting fairness.*
- *Involving parents/carers wherever possible, e.g. encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing areas. Where groups are to be supervised in the changing areas, always ensure parents/chaperones are present.*
- *Securing parental consent in writing to act in 'loco parentis' if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment (Appendix C).*
- *Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given (Appendix F)*

3.2 Practices Never To Be Sanctioned

- *Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.*
- *Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.*
- *Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.*
- *Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.*
- *Allow allegations made by a child to be unrecorded or not acted upon (Appendix B).*
- *Do things of a personal nature for children, which they can do for themselves.*

BASE has a dedicated Person Responsible for Child Protection and Safeguarding (PRCPS) to ensure that this Child Protection Policy and Procedures are adhered to (see page 5).

4.0 Child Protection Procedures

At the outset of any production involving children, BASE will:

- *Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.*
- *Engage in effective recruitment of a chaperone(s)*
- *Ensure that children are supervised at all times.*
- *Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services/police, in case it needs to report a concern (Appendix D).*

4.1 Parents

- *We believe it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and BASE. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of BASE and to share responsibility for the care of children wherever possible. All parents/members/volunteers will be given a copy of this Child Protection Policy and Procedures.*
- *All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances.*

4.2 Unsupervised Contact

- *BASE will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.*
- *If 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 minimise risk. e.g. work will be carried out in a public area, or in a designated room with the door open.*

4.3 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.*

4.4 Managing sensitive information

- *Permission will be sought from parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes ([Appendix C](#)).*
- *BASE will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information.*

4.5 Suspicion of abuse

- *If a member/volunteer sees or suspects abuse of a child while in the care of BASE, they should make this known to the PRCPS.*
- *The PRCPS will refer the allegation to the Children and Young People's Services (Social Services) and/or the police ([Appendix D](#)).*
- *The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible, following advice from the Children and Young People's Services.*
- *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 BASE, chaperone, volunteer 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.*
- *If you suspect that the PRCPS is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to the Chairman (see page 5).*

4.6 Disclosure of abuse

If a child confides in a BASE member/volunteer that abuse has taken place they should:

- *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 PRCPS. 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 PRCPS; it is their responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the Police ([Appendix D](#)).*
- *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.*

4.7 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.*

4.8 Rights & Confidentiality

- *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.*

4.9 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.*
- *If a child is injured while in the care of BASE, a trained first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded ([Appendix F](#)).*
- *This record will be countersigned by the PRCPS.*
- *If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury, a record of this will be made and countersigned by the PRCPS. 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.*

4.10 Criminal Record Disclosures

- *If BASE believes it is in its best interests to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service check for chaperones or other personnel, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required.*

5.0 Chaperones

- *A chaperone will be appointed by BASE for the care of children during performances. The chaperone will act 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.*
- *If a child's parent is a member of BASE and in attendance, they will have responsibility for the safe care of their child and adherence to this policy in place of a chaperone.*

- *Chaperones will be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children ([Appendix E](#)).*
- *Chaperones will be given a copy of this Child Protection Policy and Procedures.*
- *If at any point, chaperones/parents are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer.*
- *If a chaperone/parent considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, they must inform the producer 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.*
- *During performances, chaperones/parents will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.*
- *Chaperones/parents 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.*
- *Chaperones/parents should make themselves aware of the first aider's names and availability and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.*
- *Chaperones/parents should ensure that any accidents are reported to the PRCPS and recorded ([Appendix F](#)).*
- *Children should be signed out when leaving the theatre.*
- *It is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until they are collected by their parent, or third party approved by their parent, to take them home.*

6.0 Declaration

On behalf of BASE, we the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of this Child Protection Policy and Procedures and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Person Responsible for Child Protection and Safeguarding (PRCPS)

Sarah Goodall - Welfare Officer and (PRCPS)

Email – safeguarding@base-panto.com

BASE Chairman

.....Lynda Freeman

BASE Child Protection Policy, September 2017

Appendix A

Details of Young Persons Taking Part in the Performance

| | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|----------|
| Full Name | | Date of Birth | |
| Address | | | Postcode |
| School | | Any known allergies: | |
| Dates of Performance | | Total Time of each Performance | |
| Parents contact number | | Alternative contact number | |
| Responsible for child's wellbeing during the performance – Parent/Chaperone (delete as necessary) | | Name: | |

Appendix B

Information required for Children and Young People's Services or the Police about Suspected Abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

1. *The child's name, age and date of birth.*
2. *The child's home address and telephone number.*
3. *Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.*
4. *The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.*
5. *Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.*
6. *A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.*
7. *Details of witnesses to the incident.*
8. *The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred. DO NOT QUESTION A CHILD IN DETAIL ABOUT SUSPECTED ABUSE.*

9. *Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?*
10. *Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.*
11. *If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?*
12. *Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.*
13. *Where possible, referral to Children and Young People's Services or the police should be confirmed in writing and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.*

Appendix C

Parental Consent Form

Burton Amateur Stage Entertainers (BASE) recognises its duty of care to safeguard all children from harm and will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved with our group through adherence to our Child Protection Policy and Procedures. Could you please read the following statements and sign the form if you are in agreement with all three items.

1. As part of promotional material for the pantomime Sleeping Beauty, photographs are taken of all cast members for insertion in the show's programme and for display in the Brewhouse foyer during the week of the show. Although names of the cast are included in the programme, they are not connected to the individual photos of children to minimise any direct identification of the young person. We also have two performances of the show videotaped and put onto a DVD for purchase by BASE members only. This is a high quality video and is very popular with members as a keepsake of their performance.
2. In the unlikely event of any injury sustained, we have several First Aiders within the group who are responsible for administering any first aid that might be required. A record is kept of this and parents will be notified using the contact numbers provided.
3. You believe your child to be in good health and are not aware of any health issues that will impact on them being able to participate in the shows. If anything subsequently becomes apparent before or during the show week you will contact BASE with the relevant information.

Please complete and sign below to confirm your consent to all of the above.

Childs name

Parents name

Parents signature

Date

Appendix D

Referral Contacts

- First Response (Staffordshire County Council) on 0800 131 3126.
- Staffordshire Police Central Referrals Unit on 101 and ask for the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)
- If a child or young person is in immediate danger or in need of medical attention ring 999.

- (Families First, Staffordshire County Council) on 01785 278927

Appendix E

Chaperone Declaration

I have received and read a copy of the BASE Child Protection Policy and Procedures and agree to adhere to this in my role as chaperone for the children indicated above. I know of no reason why I would be considered unsuitable to work with children.

Signed

Record of Injury

| | | | |
|---|-------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Child's name | | | Date and time of incident |
| Injury sustained and how | | | |
| If required, what first aid was administered | | | Name of first aider: |
| Was any further action required? | | | |
| How and when has the parent been informed? | | | |
| Person completing this record | Name | Signature | Date and time |
| Signature of the PRCPS – | | | |