



Safeguarding Children - Policy and Guidance for SAOS members

Introduction

The principles of safeguarding children are:

- protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to health and development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have good outcomes

Legal framework

The Children Act 1989

Working Together to Safeguard Children (Published in 26 March 2015 Updated 1 July 2022)

The Context

The Society invites anyone who will be at least 16 years old at the time of the production to join. Although the legal requirements on performance relate to young people under the statutory school leaving age, the legal duty to safeguard children and young people applies until they reach their 18th birthday (and in some circumstances for longer). The Society will:

- encourage young people to have fun and develop talents and skills in a safe, respectful and supportive environment
- act to prevent harm and promote development whilst having a robust system for dealing with any concerns
- ensure appropriate supervision and a clear pathway to share concerns with the nominated safeguarding officer

General principles for SAOS members

- 1) Arranging transport to and from rehearsals and performances is the responsibility of the parent
- 2) Avoid one to one contact without others present (including giving lifts)
- 3) Avoid physical contact even when initiated by the young person. Consider carefully any contact on stage
- 4) Avoid bad language and derogatory and bullying comments
- 5) Model respectful behaviour and language
- 6) Be aware that comments and actions could be misinterpreted
- 7) Do not contact the young person by phone, email or on personal social media account. Information on rehearsals etc. should be sent by the secretary via the parent (adult with Parental Responsibility)



- 8) Be aware that the young person may be less aware of the consequences of physical dangers especially in a new environment e.g. on the stage and its surroundings
- 9) Be aware that a young person may be less able to recognise or be willing to say when they are asked to do something in a performance which is beyond their capabilities or makes them feel uncomfortable
- 10) Ensure that the young person has sufficient privacy when changing.
- 11) Avoid taking photographs of young people where possible and ensure that you have consent from the young person and parent (adult with Parental Responsibility) before using for publicity etc.
- 12) Be aware that a young person may disclose to you circumstances where they are or may have been at risk of harm (this includes physical, emotional, and sexual harm, exploitation and cyber bullying)

If this happens:

-Listen to the young person, take their concerns seriously and tell them that you need to talk to someone else to try to help. Do not agree to speak in confidence.

-If a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police.

-Discuss with a SAOS designated safeguarding officer (details held on a separate document to be circulated with this policy).

While the young person will be involved in the process, neither they, nor their parents, have the right to prevent further discussion and, if necessary, investigation, taking place.

Safeguarding officer

The AGM will nominate the designated safeguarding officer. This person will, preferably, have training and experience in safeguarding and, ideally, be in a role outside the Society, which requires them to participate in ongoing training. Appropriate training can be arranged by the Society. DBS screening will be required.

The safeguarding officer will be aware of how concerns can be discussed with the local Children's Social Care, the agency holding the responsibility for investigation of safeguarding concerns. A regular report will be given to the committee who will also consider the appointment of a deputy.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Adults may be vulnerable and require safeguarding due to limitations on their abilities to protect themselves as a result of some health conditions, (including mental ill health) or as a result of some disabling conditions. SAOS will follow the principles of safeguarding as they apply to vulnerable adults as outlined in the Care Act 2014.

NODA

SAOS, as a member of NODA, will follow the guidance on the NODA members website in respect of Safeguarding.