



CAVE PLAYERS' CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Cave Players Drama Group recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1962 and the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968.

The Group recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect. The Group is committed to a practice, which protects children from any harm. All members of the Group accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

Cave Players believes that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever 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 of Cave Players should be clear on how to respond accordingly.

Cave Players will ensure that:

- All children will be treated equally with respect and dignity
- The duty of care to all children will always be put first.
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children to share in the decision making process.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- All adult members of Cave Players provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- It will keep up to date with Health and Safety legislation.
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children
- It will hold a register of every child involved with Cave Players and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

Cave Players has child protection procedures in place which accompany this policy.

Cave Players have a dedicated Child Protection Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to.

That person is **NEIL HARKER** and he can be contacted on **07581431678**

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Committee of Cave Players.

Date: 2nd November 2012



Child Protection Procedures

Cave Players responsibilities.

At the outset of any production involving children Cave Players will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection.
- Recruit chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate CRB checks.
- Ensure the children are supervised at all times
- Know how to get in touch with parents/guardians in an emergency
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern

Parental responsibilities

Cave Players believes it is important that there is a partnership between parents and the Group.

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of Cave Players and to share the responsibility for the care of children
- All parents will be given a copy of the Cave Players' Child Protection Policy and procedures
- All parents have the responsibility to deliver and collect (or arrange such) their children to and from rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of Cave Players to collect or take children home.
- It is their responsibility to ensure that their children are well behaved during rehearsal and performances
- Parents will ensure that the Producer or Secretary is informed if a child is unable to attend rehearsal or performance due to illness, holiday or previously arranged engagement.

Unsupervised contact

Cave Players will always 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
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. eg, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she may be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure.

Physical contact

Cave Players will ensure that contact with children is kept to an absolute minimum.

- 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.

Managing sensitive information

Cave Players will ensure that all sensitive information, photographs and images of children are monitored appropriately.

- Permission will be sought from parents/guardians for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purpose.
- Cave Players web based material and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- Cave Players will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of all of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as medical and criminal record disclosures.

Suspicion of abuse

Cave Players takes very seriously any suspicion of abuse and will act quickly and accordingly if such a suspicion arises.

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the Group 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 any abuse, please make your concerns known to the Chairman.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is a follow up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of Cave Players, chaperones, venue staff etc. that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre and rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children involved with the production.

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 the information with others. Make it clear you will only tell the people who need to know and who will 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, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, the names of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported to.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights and Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of Cave Players, he or she will be made aware of his rights under Cave Players' disciplinary procedures
- 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.
- In criminal law the Crown, or other prosecuting authority, has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Accidents

Cave Players will ensure at all times that safety of all its members is the utmost priority.

- 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 activity undertaken.
- If a child is injured while in the care of Cave Players, 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 responsible for child protection or the Chairman.
- 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 or the chairman. 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.

Criminal record disclosures

- If Cave Players believes it is the best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures for chaperones or other persons, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures required.
- Cave Players will have a code of practice for the handling of disclosure information.
- Cave Players will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

Chaperones

To ensure the well-being of children Cave Players will appoint chaperones to take care of the children during productions.

- The chaperone should exercise the care with 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
- Chaperones will be required to supply photographic proof of identity and two references from individuals with knowledge of them, in order to obtain a criminal record disclosure.
- Chaperones will be made aware of Cave Player's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Where chaperones are not happy 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 children to continue.
- If a chaperone considers a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone 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 that shall endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should inform the producer that the child is not allowed to continue.
- During performances chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the theatre and signing them into and out of 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 when going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adults' dressing room during changing of costumes.
- 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 any accidents are reported to and recorded by Cave Players. If an accident has taken place the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child)
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after the performances if someone other than a parent is to collect the child. A telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- If a parent has not collected the child it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with the child, contact the parent or make arrangements to take them home.



Children's behaviour policy

Cave Players takes very seriously the safety of children during rehearsals and performances.

Children should always be aware of those around them and

- Take notice of any instruction given as stage direction or safety
- Whenever possible remain quiet when not involved on stage
- Not run around on stage, back stage, in changing rooms or hall during rehearsal or performance
- During a performance bring a drink and a light snack to eat along with something to occupy them when not required on stage.
- Turn mobile phones off when attending rehearsal or performances.
- Report any abuse either verbally or physical to the chaperone, producer or chairman
- Be dropped off and collected from rehearsals and performances by a parent/guardian or give written permission for someone else to collect.

It is the Producer's decision, if a child continually misbehaves, to remove them from the production after adequate warning.