

## Child Protection Policy

Starmaker Theatre Company is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its participants. All paid & unpaid volunteers should be fully aware of the organisation's Child Protection Policy. They should also show respect and understanding for their own rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of Starmaker. The process of implementing this policy is the responsibility of the management committee.

All staff, volunteers, members and their parents should be provided with a copy of the Child Protection Policy.

### Behaviour Statement:

#### Always

- Treat others as you would expect them to treat you
- Provide an example you wish others to follow
- Ensure that another adult is present when you are in the company of young people (ideally mixed genders) including situations where a person is waiting to be collected
- Respect a young person's right to privacy
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like
- Remember someone might misinterpret your actions and your comments no matter how well intentioned
- Recognise when caution is required, particularly in sensitive moments, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement, grief or abuse
- Be aware of the possible implications of physical contact with young people
- Avoid situations that compromise your relationship and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust (e.g inappropriate relationships regardless of whether the young person is over the age of consent)
- Be aware that if a child is in your family or social group, the way you relate to them outside Starmaker may not be appropriate when working with them in the company

#### Never

- Conduct rehearsals away from the normal rehearsal venue or theatre
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Make suggestive remarks or gestures
- Do things of a personal nature for a child that they could do for themselves
- Allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g bullying, ridiculing)
- Jump to conclusions
- Allow yourself to be drawn into any inappropriate attention seeking behaviour by young people (e.g tantrums, bullying)
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Rely upon just your good name to protect you
- Believe it could "never happen to me", both dealing with abuse or being accused of committing abuse

#### If one-to-one contact is unavoidable

- Make sure it is for as short a time as possible
- Ensure you remain accessible to others
- Tell someone where you are going, what you are doing and why
- Try to move with the young person to areas where there are more people
- Obtain permission from the young person before any physical contact is made, for instance if you need to administer first aid. (Except where young person may be unconscious through injury / fit etc)
- Try to avoid unnecessary physical contact especially if it may be misconstrued by the child or other people
- Avoid giving young people a lift alone, however short the journey. When this is unavoidable, you are required to get consent from the young person's parent or guardian. Ideally, the young person should sit in the back of the car. Staff and volunteers should be aware that their car insurance may not cover them for this.

## Child Protection Policy

### Stage School Requirements

- All stage school staff are required to have an enhanced DBS certificate and to be registered on the government's update service. The original certificate should be presented and a copy of the certificate and the update service reference number should be supplied to the Welfare Officer upon commencement of employment. If these are not available this staff member must not conduct lessons unless relevant paperwork has been supplied. In case of emergency where it has not been possible to get a Chaperone Licence / DBS check in time, a Starmaker Child Protection Pro-forma will be an acceptable interim measure if it can be shown either of the above have been applied for.
- Children under school leaving age should be delivered into the premises and collected at the end of each session.
- Children under school leaving age are not allowed to leave the premises in breaks.
- All personnel working backstage during a show for the Stage School who are above school leaving age (technical crew, dressers, make-up etc), should have as a minimum completed a Starmaker Child Protection Pro-forma
- All personnel working backstage as Chaperones during a Stage School show should have a current chaperone licence issued by their local authority.

### Role of the Management Committee

- To sanction a robust Child Protection Policy, review it annually, monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and be satisfied that it is being complied with.
- To ensure a designated person or persons are allocated with the responsibility of Child Protection Co-ordination
- To ensure an annual item is placed on Committee Meeting agenda's, detailing changes affecting policy and procedure, numbers of cases / incidents (without names or details)

Starmaker's Designated Persons are the Stage School Company Manager, Chair, Business Manager and Welfare Officer(s).

### The Role of the Designated Person(s)

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the organisation and be responsible for co-ordinating action regarding referrals, liaising with Social Services and other relevant agencies in cases of abuse or allegations of abuse, regarding both young people and members of staff / volunteers
- Ensure each member of staff has access to, and is aware of Starmaker's Child Protection Policy
- Ensure the Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually.
- Be able to keep accurate, detailed and secure records
- Ensure parents / carers see copies of the Child Protection Policy

### Procedures

If you suspect or are told that a young person is being abused:

- You **must** always refer to the designated persons at Starmaker. Don't investigate yourself
- Write down the details as you know them on the Child Protection report form.
- Ensure that the young person is given the opportunity to talk to you or an independent person.
- Listen to the young person without interruption, and do not ask questions about what you may suspect.
- Do not approach a suspected abuser yourself. Provide support to the young person.
- Accept at face value what the young person says
- Do not pass judgement on what is said, but try to alleviate any fears or guilt which the young person may have.
- Make it clear that you can offer support but that you **must** pass on the information – you must never offer confidentiality.

Please follow the Procedures for reporting guidelines, and utilise the contact sheet and report provided.

### Monitoring & Record Keeping

- Copies of Matron's licences / DBS checks / Starmaker Child Protection Pro-formas will be held on behalf of the company by the Welfare officer. The welfare officer is responsible for gathering new copies when certificates expire / when new teachers / production / technical staff are appointed.
- All incidents should, ideally, be written up within the hour. Legally they must be recorded within 24 hours.
- Written notes should be attached if made separately from the attached report sheets
- Reports should be signed by the staff member / volunteer, with the name printed and designation.
- Reports and records should be passed to the Welfare Officer who in turn will take responsibility for the safe storage and processing of this information
- All information gathered should be treated with strict confidentiality.

## Child Protection Policy

### Procedure for Reporting

Staff member / Participant Representative / Volunteer

Complete Child Protection report form  
And pass to

Designated person(s)  
**Company Manager**

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- Chair
- Business Manager
- Welfare officer(s)

Designated persons investigate and refer to:

Social Services / NSPCC / Police as necessary

Please sign and return one copy of this page to the **Company Manager**, keeping the rest of the document for your records.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Child Protection Policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_