

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy statement and aims

The Fellowship, an amateur dramatic society, is committed to providing a safe and secure environment in which everyone can come together voluntarily to create drama, and to promoting a climate where everyone will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

This policy applies to all official activities which are organised and approved by the committee. Such activities can easily be identified as they will be promoted through The Fellowship Players mailing list by our membership secretary or posted on The Fellowship Players Drama Group on Facebook. This policy also applies to activities that are organised by any Director of upcoming shows, usually arranged via WhatsApp group chats. Permission from both the child/vulnerable adult and the Parent/Carer will be required for this. (See Appendix 3)

Definitions:

The Fellowship Players: An amateur dramatic society which meets to prepare, rehearse, produce and perform productions. The Players also meet and organise social events for its members, potential members and friends and family.

Child: Any person of school leavers age and under.

Vulnerable Adult: The Department of health defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 years old or over who may need community care services because of a disability (mental or other), age, or illness. A person is also considered vulnerable if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or unable to report abuse.

We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults by working with their parents, guardians or support workers:

- protect them from discrimination or maltreatment;
- ensure they can engage in enjoyable, creative and collaborative activity in an environment consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;

All members of the society known as The Fellowship Players should make it a priority to safeguard any children and vulnerable adults involved in our productions.

There is a legislative requirement in certain circumstances for children and young people to have a licence to perform if cast in a Fellowship Players production. The requirement is set out in Appendix 2. If you are directing a play where children are to be performing you should speak to the committee's safeguarding officer immediately before casting (contact details can be obtained from any committee member).

Guidance when working with children and young people

The guidance given here is of particular relevance for all directors, production managers and organisers of The Fellowship Players' events, although each and every member of the society should make themselves aware of what the following guidance includes and report any concerns to the safeguarding officer.

We should ensure that:

- A minimum of two adults are present, ideally the Director and the Safeguarding Officer, during sessions with children or vulnerable adults.
- Wherever possible, a parent or guardian or support worker is present.
- Work takes place in an open environment (e.g. a hall, rather than a smaller room or someone's home)
- We treat all children, and vulnerable adults with equal respect as any other member of The Fellowship Players.
- We give positive feedback and constructive criticism rather than negative criticism
- We model appropriate conduct, excluding any bullying, shouting, racism, sexism, sectarianism, sexuality, Gender identity, Ageism and Disability.

Things not to do include:

- Working with any child or vulnerable adult in a one-on-one situation
- Using any physical chastisement (except if there is risk of imminent harm to anyone present)
- Driving one child or young person home on your own

Safeguarding Officer

The current safeguarding officer designated annually by the committee will be the first contact point for the children and young people, parents/carers or any other adults who have questions, concerns. The Safeguarding Officer cannot be a parent, guardian or carer of any child or vulnerable adult to whom this policy relates.

It is this officer's responsibility, not to make a judgement, but always to take action following any concerns reported in good faith by, in the first instance, contacting the appropriate authorities for advice as necessary. (A concern regarding a child must be reported to the Children's Services Department of the borough in which he/she lives.)

It is also this officer's responsibility to inform the parents/carers of the child or young person, unless that will increase the risk of harm to the child or young person, or unless advised not to by Children's Services personnel.

Police Checks

As a non-profit organisation, there isn't any law in place to state that we must be DBS checked for the position of Safeguarding Officer. That being said, it would be better if enhanced DBS checks are obtained. These can be ones that have been done by an employer or paid for by The Fellowship Players committee.

Photography and the Internet

There have been increasing concerns about the risks posed by the Internet to children and young people through the use of social media and photographs on websites. To reduce this risk, we ensure:

- If someone is named, avoid using their photograph
- If a photograph is used, avoid using the full name of the actor
- Written parent/carers and personal consent is always obtained prior to use or publication of images

Advice to adults on the appropriate response to a child or young person making a disclosure of possible abuse

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen to what is said.
3. Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared – do not promise to keep secrets.
4. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid questions that suggest a particular answer.
5. Give reassurance and encouragement that the right thing has been done by speaking to them.
6. Explain what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
7. Record in writing what was said as soon as possible, in the exact words used, – note the date and time, to whom the information was given – and ensure the record is signed and dated.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of possible abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional Safeguarding agencies (Children's Social Care), following a referral from the Designated Safeguarding (child protection) Officer.

Government guidance on this subject can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-performance-and-activities-licensing-legislation>

APPENDIX 1

Consent form for the use of photographs or video (Parents/carers of children or vulnerable adults)

The Fellowship Players recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all children and vulnerable adults in theatre.

In accordance with our safeguarding policy, we will not permit photographs, video or other images of children or vulnerable adults to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and the children or vulnerable adults themselves. We discourage them from doing so but we cannot guarantee that during our performances, photos will not be taken by audience members.

The Fellowship Players will follow the guidance for the use of photographs contained in this policy; a copy of which is available from the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Fellowship Players will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you must inform the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

I, (parent/carer) consent to The Fellowship Players photographing or videoing in the

production of /in all productions. Date:

I, (child/vulnerable adult) consent to The Fellowship Players photographing or videoing my involvement in the production of

...../all productions. Date:

NOTE:

All written records, will be stored securely, with limited access, by the Safeguarding officer, Chair and Secretary of The Fellowship Players.

Any photograph or video will be used purely to publicise The Fellowship Players' productions and events and not shared with other organisations without further consent of the parent/carer and subject of the material.

APPENDIX 2

Performance licences and supervision for children

A child may need a licence if they're under [school leaving age](#) and taking part in:

- films, plays, concerts or other public performances that the audience pays to see, or that take place on [licensed premises](#)
- any sporting events or modelling assignments where the child is paid

The person in charge of running the event must apply to the child's local council for a [child performance licence](#). Ask the council if you're not sure you need one.

Supervision for the child

If the child will not be with their parent, school teacher or home tutor, they must be supervised by a chaperone approved by the council. Chaperones can [apply for approval](#) from the council.

APPENDIX 3.

Consent form for the phone number for the sole use of Director WhatsApp groups. (Parents/Carers of children/vulnerable adults)

The Fellowship Players recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all children and vulnerable adults in theatre.

In accordance with our safeguarding policy, we will never get the phone number of children or vulnerable adults without the consent of both the child or vulnerable adult themselves and the Parent/carer for them.

The Fellowship Players will follow the guidance laid in GDPR rules in relation to the use of phone numbers for the purpose of safeguarding, a copy of this will be available on request from the Safeguarding Officer.

The fellowship Players will take all steps to ensure that the phone numbers are used solely for the purposes they are intended for. If you become aware that this is not the case you must inform the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

I, (parent/carer) consent to, (Director for The Fellowship Players) having the phone number of, (child/vulnerable adult) for the sole use of WhatsApp group chats for the purpose of the production of Date:

I, (child/vulnerable adult) consent to, (Director for The Fellowship Players) having my phone number for the sole use of WhatsApp group chats for the purpose of the production of Date:

Note:

All written records will be stored securely, with limited access, by the Safeguarding Officer, Chair and Secretary of The Fellowship Players.

Any phone numbers will only be used for the purpose set out above and will never be shared with any other organisations without further consent of the Parent/Carer.