

**GOSFORTH AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY
CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

1. General requirements

- 1.1. General Child Protection legislation (and hence these procedures) apply to all those under the age of 18.
- 1.2. The specific requirements of the “Body of Persons” approval apply to children of compulsory school age (under ~16).
- 1.3. All members and patrons (this includes parents of child members) will be given a copy of the GADS Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- 1.4. Children must not be paid for any performance.
- 1.5. Special arrangements will apply if a child is simultaneously involved in any other (non-GADS) performance (excepting school performances) and advice should be sought from any member of the Executive Committee.
- 1.6. Members of the society will not be allowed significant lone contact with children. (If this does become necessary, an enhanced DBS check is required).
- 1.7. Children will not be allowed to perform outside the hours permitted by the Regulations – see Appendix 1.
- 1.8. Children will not be allowed to rehearse or perform at any venue, premises or location unless determined suitable by the Local Authority.
- 1.9. Children will not rehearse or perform when they should be receiving education (unless the performance is part of the school curriculum).
- 1.10. Children will not be used in performances that may be dangerous.
- 1.11. Separate boys and girls changing areas will be provided for children, which will be supervised by the matron(s) / chaperone(s).
- 1.12. Cameras of any kind (including those on mobile phones) are not to be used in any of the changing facilities or toilets.

2. Registration Form for children of compulsory school age (under ~16) (see Appendix 2)

- 2.1. A registration form is required for each child participant in any GADS production or activity.
- 2.2. The registration form will last for one membership year (May to May) and be renewed at the beginning of each membership year. (Previously a new form was required for each production, and the move to an annual form is to accommodate the GADS Youth Theatre Group)
- 2.3. Parents must inform GADS if any of the information on the form needs to be amended or updated during the year.

3. At the start of any production

- 3.1. The production Director will ensure that a registration form has been completed for each child in the production. 16-17 year olds do not require a registration form, but should join as Junior Members.
- 3.2. The Executive Committee will provide a suitable number of approved chaperones for the number of children of compulsory school age involved, as required by the BoP approval.
- 3.3. The details of each relevant child involved will be provided to the Local Authority, using the LA form in Appendix 3. The Director will compile this information and pass it to the Secretary for onward transmission to the Local Authority at least 21 days before the first performance. This form need not be completed or sent to the Local Authority for a single night performance where all of the participating children are being supervised by a parent or guardian.
- 3.4. The Director must ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to get any child to or from the venue, for example by checking that parents understand the expectations on them.

4. For each rehearsal, performance or activity involving children U18

- 4.1. A register (in the form of a book, not individual sheets) will be kept of each child's attendance, in a form that will also satisfy the requirements of the Body of Persons approval and Schedule 3 of the 2014 Regulations.
- 4.2. The register will be compiled by the adult responsible for the session (e.g. the Director).
- 4.3. The register will record the name of the production / activity and the date.
- 4.4. For each child, the register will record the child's name, age, time of arrival and time of departure.
- 4.5. Since children are not present at GADS performances for more than 4 hours continuously, the times of meal and rest intervals do not need to be recorded.
- 4.6. The names of the adults present will also be recorded, with their time of arrival and departure.
- 4.7. Closed / completed registers will be held by the Secretary.

5. During a performance (involving children of compulsory school age)

- 5.1. A child must be under the care and supervision of their parent / guardian or an approved chaperone.
- 5.2. Chaperones will act in accordance with "A guide for Chaperones and Performance Licence Holders" provided by Cumbria County Council. The guide can be downloaded from <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/537/689/3608/3904613526.pdf>

6. Expectation of parents

- 6.1. The society believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the society. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the society and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- 6.2. All parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children are delivered safely to and collected from a rehearsal, performance or other GADS event. It is not the responsibility of the society to take children home.
- 6.3. Parents / guardians must inform GADS if any information in the Registration Form changes during the year.
- 6.4. For a production that runs for more than one night (e.g. a pantomime), GADS will provide chaperones to comply with our "Body of Persons" approval from the Local Authority. For a performance that runs for only one night (e.g. Youth Theatre Group show, Summer Youth Workshop show) we expect each participating child to have a parent or guardian present in the audience, to minimise or avoid the need for chaperones.

7. Suspicion of abuse

- 7.1. If any member or parent sees or suspects abuse of a child while in the care of the society, it should be reported to the society's Child Protection Officer. They will liaise with the relevant authorities and record all subsequent action taken.
- 7.2. 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.

8. Disclosure of abuse - if a child confides in you that abuse has taken place (whether at GADS or elsewhere):

- 8.1. Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- 8.2. Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and in their own words. Never put your words into their mouth. You can ask a general question like "what happened next?", but do not ask other questions, especially if they suggest a particular answer.

- 8.3. 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 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.
- 8.4. Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- 8.5. Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- 8.6. As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a record 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.
- 8.7. Speak immediately to the society's Child Protection Officer. They will liaise with the relevant authorities and record all subsequent action taken.

9. GADS Safeguarding / Child Protection Officer

- 9.1. The name and contact details for the Safeguarding / Child Protection Officer can be found on the GADS website (www.gads.org.uk) or with the current list of Committee members. If the Safeguarding / Child Protection Officer is unavailable, one of the Matrons can be contacted instead. Failing that, the NSPCC or CCC Children's Services can also be contacted.