

GOSFORTH AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Legislation

Gosforth Amateur Dramatic Society (GADS) recognises and will act in accordance with its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, all subsequent amendments and all other relevant legislation and statutory guidance including Working Together to Safeguard Children.

GADS will comply with all relevant legislation and maintain its approval as a “Body of Persons” (BoP) by the Local Authority (Cumberland Council) under Section 37(3)(b) the 1963 Act. GADS will comply with all conditions attached to the BoP approval.

GADS will be proactive in making its members aware of, and enforcing, this policy and its associated procedures. All members are encouraged to read the Child Protection Policy and Procedures and to be familiar with them.

Principles and Application

A child is abused when somebody inflicts harm or fails to prevent harm. The society recognises that abuse can take many forms, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. Further definition is provided in Appendix 1. The society is committed to practices which protect children from harm. All members of the society must recognise and accept their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

The society believes that:

- The welfare and safety of the child are paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, 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 adults directly involved with children should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

Through its Executive Committee, the society will ensure that:

- All children are treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The needs of the individual child are recognised.
- An ethos is established where children feel welcome and comfortable with their environment and able to raise any concerns
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust is built.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback is given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying is not accepted or condoned.
- All adult members of the society provide a positive role model.
- Children are supervised appropriately.
- It undertakes relevant development and appropriate training for those who have significant contact with children and for those who have responsibility for the safeguarding of children.
- It nominates a Safeguarding Officer, who is responsible for ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to.
- It keeps up-to-date and complies with relevant legislation and associated statutory guidance (see legislation above)
- It maintains its “Body of Persons” approval and complies with all of the conditions attached.
- It regularly monitors child protection matters.

- All children and adults are informed who to speak to if they have any questions, problems or concerns.

On the advice of the Safeguarding Officer, the Chairman of the Executive Committee will immediately suspend any individual member as necessary, but also ensure that they are treated fairly, with respect and in confidence.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant GADS policy statements and procedures.

This policy will be reviewed by the Executive Committee at least annually and will be updated as necessary to ensure that it remains up-to-date and in line with legislation.

The current Safeguarding Officers are Benita Blacklock (benita.bf@gmail.com) and Karen Polmear (karen.polmear@gmail.com).

Signed: _____ (Committee Chairperson) Date: Nov 2024

APPENDIX 1

Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection.

- Physical Abuse - May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.
- Sexual Abuse - Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, may involve: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts; non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities; or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Neglect - Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- Emotional Abuse - The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children.