

Kinver Light Operatic Society

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Everybody who participates in the Company is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. Kinver Light Operatic Society have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for children and young people, members and volunteers provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the Company and to allow members and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Kinver Light Operatic Society recognises it's duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1986, the Protection of Children Act 1999, The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 and the Child Performance and Activities Licensing Legislation (England) 2015.

In this policy -

In relation to chaperoning, "child" refers to all children of compulsory school age including all those in school year 11. All children satisfying this description will be licensed and require a licensed chaperone as stated below.

In all other cases "child/young person" refers to all children under 18.

The Company recognises that young people 16 – 18 may be treated differently and they do not need licensing or chaperoning. The Company will allow discretion on an individual basis where deemed appropriate.

Policy Statement

Kinver Light Operatic Society is committed to the following:

- The welfare of the children and young people.
- All children and young people, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and or sexual identity should be able to participate in Kinver Light Operatic Society in a fun and safe environment.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- A member of Kinver Light Operatic Society will be named as Child Protection Officer and they will receive training on the appropriate guidance in good practice and child protection procedures.
- Working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children.
- Committee members will check to ensure that there is an appropriate adult to work with children at all times.

Monitor and Review of Policy and Procedures

The implementation of procedures should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Child Protection Officer should regularly report to the committee with any issues or changes and new versions should be available to all parents and members.

Child Protection Officer

Kinver Light Operatic Society has a dedicated Child Protection Officer who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to.

That person is Philippa Hickinbottom and she can be contacted on 07429 095987.

Responsibilities of Kinver Light Operatic Society

At the outset of any production involving children or young people, the Company will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection.
- Engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate vetting.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern.

Responsibilities of Parents

- The Company believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the Company. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the Company and share responsibility for the care of the children and young persons.
- All parents will be given a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances and to sign their children in and out when required. It is NOT the responsibility of the Company to take children home.

Unsupervised Contact

- Kinver Light Operatic Society will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- There will always be 2 adults in the room when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimize risk. For example work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with the 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 at the discretion of the child protection officer.

Physical Contact

- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity or performance.
- 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

- Kinver Light Operatic Society requests parental consent for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of the children, for promotional purposes.

The Company's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.

- Kinver Light Operatic Society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of sensitive information.

Suspicion of Abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of Kinver Light Operatic Society, 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 the problem, you should make your concerns known to the Chairperson.
- Please 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.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of Kinver Light Operatic Society, chaperone, venue staff etc., that individual will be suspended immediately

until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children in 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 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.
- 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 eg. suspension of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely by the child protection officer and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of, he or she will be made aware of his rights under the Company's 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

- 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 work that will be undertaken.
- If a child is injured while in the care of Kinver Light Operatic Society, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the Company's accident book.
- This record will be countersigned by the person with responsibility for child protection.

- 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.

Criminal Record Disclosures

- If Kinver Light Operatic Society believes it is in its best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures for chaperones or other personnel, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required.
- Kinver Light Operatic Society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

Chaperones

- Chaperones will be appointed by Kinver Light Operatic Society for the care of children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should exercise the care 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.
- Potential chaperones will be required to attend the relevant training required by Staffordshire County Council and go through all the necessary checks required by the council to be issued with an official chaperone licence.
- Chaperones will be made aware of Company's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care.
- If unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a criminal record disclosure will be sought.
- Where chaperones are not satisfied 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 child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that 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 which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to cease using children in this way and should contact the local authority.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the designated area and facilitating parents/designated adults to sign them in.
- 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 or designated adult.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- 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 that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the society.
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, this should be a designated adult and be listed on the authorised collection paperwork.
- Children should be signed out when leaving by the parent or designated adult, this should be facilitated by a chaperone.

Kinver Light Operatic Society has used the NODA Model Child Protection Policy upon which to write this policy.

Declaration

On behalf of Kinver Light Operatic Society I, Philippa Hickinbottom, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to:

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Version 1.0

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