



GARSINGTON OPERA
AT WORMSLEY

**Safeguarding Policy & Code of Conduct
for Working with Children**

2023

Safeguarding

Garsington Opera recognises that the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults is paramount and that all children, young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of ability or culture, have equal rights of Safeguarding. We have a duty of care when they are in our charge and we will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities. By law Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

The Safeguarding Policy applies to ALL personnel including freelance staff, temporary staff, artists, workshop leaders, volunteers and anyone who works with children. The procedures are most relevant for those with significant or sole responsibility for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play.

DBS: Anyone who is engaged to work with children and vulnerable adults will be subject to an Enhanced DBS clearance following an assessment of risk.

We aim to attain the standards set out on the NSPCC website, in all our activities with children, young people and vulnerable adults, their families and/or carers. We will achieve this by adhering strictly to this policy and guidance documents. This policy has also been developed with reference to the Department for Education publication *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2022):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

What you need to know

All Garsington Opera personnel must read and follow this Safeguarding policy. Personnel should be aware of the indicators detailed in this policy and the process for raising concerns. Personnel must know what to do in the event of a disclosure and must remember the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality whilst at the same time liaising with the DSL or Deputy DSL.

What you should look out for

All Personnel should be aware of the types of abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues, so that they are able to identify cases of children and vulnerable adults who may be in need of help or protection. Personnel members working with children and vulnerable adults are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the best interests of the child. Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff members are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Specific safeguarding issues

Safeguarding issues can include bullying and cyberbullying, domestic violence, drugs, fabricated or induced illness, faith abuse, gangs and youth violence, gender- based violence, hate, mental health, peer to peer relationship abuse, sexting and trafficking. There are a number of specific safeguarding issues for which there is a legal obligation to report awareness that a child is under risk:

- **Child sexual exploitation** is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online.
- **So called ‘honour based’ violence (HBV)** encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- **Radicalisation** is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation is part of the wider safeguarding duties of Personnel. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. As with other safeguarding risks, Personnel should be alert to changes in children’s behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Types of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children or vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. An adult, or another child may abuse them. It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse:

2. **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of illness in a child, or deliberately causes illness.
3. **Emotional abuse** is persistent emotional ill-treatment, which can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or vulnerable adult that s/he is worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed. These may include interactions that are beyond the child or vulnerable adult's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or prevention of participation in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children or vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or their exploitation or corruption. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of children and vulnerable adults, but it can also occur alone.
4. **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging inappropriate sexual behaviour.

5. **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health and development. Neglect may also occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once the child is born, it can include a parent or carer failing to:

- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to basic emotional needs
- Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)

Personnel should also be alert to online abuse, grooming and cyber-bullying by text, email or on social media.

Disclosure

A disclosure is the process by which a child will let someone know that abuse is taking place. This may not happen all in one go and may be a slow process that takes place over a long period of time.

Children may disclose abuse in one or more of several different methods, each of which is likely to be very difficult for them and so when working with children, it is important to know how to support a child through what is likely to be a distressing time.

- Direct disclosure: this is a specific statement made by a child about the abuse that is happening to them.
- Indirect disclosure: one or more ambiguous statements, which imply that something is wrong.
- Behavioural disclosure: deliberate or inadvertent behaviour that indicates that something is wrong.
- Non-verbal disclosure: writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in any other way than verbal to let someone know that something is wrong.

Guidance on handling a disclosure

Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief. A common reaction to news as unpleasant and shocking as child abuse is denial. However, if you display denial to a child, or show shock or disgust at what they are saying, the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down.

Accept what is being said without judgement. Take it seriously.

Reassure:

- Reassure the child, but only so far as is honest and reliable. Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g. "everything will be all right now". Reassure the child that they did nothing wrong and that you take what is said seriously.
- Don't promise confidentiality – never agree to keep secrets. You have a duty to report your concerns.
- Tell the child that you will need to tell some people, but only those whose job it is to protect children.
- Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk. It takes a lot for a child to come forward about abuse.

React:

- Listen quietly, carefully and patiently. Do not assume anything – don't speculate or jump to conclusions.
- Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the child is telling the truth. Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation. Let the child explain to you in his or her own words what happened, but don't ask leading questions.
- Do ask open questions like "Is there anything else that you want to tell me?"
- Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for children with disabilities and for children whose preferred language is not English.
- Do not ask the child to repeat what they have told you to another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.
- Refer directly to the named child protection officer or designated person in

your organisation (as set out in the organisation's child protection policy).

- Do not discuss the case with anyone outside the child protection team.

Record:

- Make some very brief notes at the time and write them up in detail as soon as possible. Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by Court.
- Record the date, time, place, words used by the child and how the child appeared to you – be specific. Record the actual words used; including any swear words or slang.
- Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual.

What you should do if a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm

If you believe that a child or vulnerable adult is **IN** immediate danger or harm.

If they are immediately available to speak to; the DSL or Deputy DSL will call the police and/or social services. If they are not available, dial 999 and the children's local social care* (see numbers at end) immediately. Anyone can make a referral phone call.

Where referrals are NOT made by the DSL or deputy DSL , they should be informed immediately that a referral has been made.

What you should do if you have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult

If a child or vulnerable adult is **NOT** in immediate harm or danger.

Any personnel member who has concerns about a child or vulnerable adult should speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL straight away or as soon as possible within 24 hours providing details of the allegation/disclosure and provide a written record using the Garsington Opera Safeguarding report form (Appendix 1) if possible.

The DSL or Deputy DSL, will deal with concerns using the following steps:

If a child or vulnerable adult is NOT in immediate harm or danger:

If you are worried about a child or vulnerable adult because:

- You have seen or heard anything that concerns you
- A child or vulnerable adult says they have been abused or is being abused
- Somebody else has told you they have concerns
- There has been an allegation against a member of staff
- There has been an anonymous allegation
- An adult has disclosed they were abusing a child

Step 1

Always keep a written record of the date, time, place, who was involved, details of everything heard.

Step 2 (as soon as possible within 24 hours)

Talk to a DSL or Deputy DSL

Step 3

The DSL or Deputy DSL should refer the concern to Children's Social Care and/or the police (in an emergency) and follow up the referral in writing within 24 hours.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing, along with dates and times of the discussions and decisions, and the details of those present. These records should be passed to the DSL or Deputy DSL and kept confidentially.

What you should do if you have concerns about the behaviour of other adults

Concerns about the behaviour of other adults should be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL at the earliest opportunity. If the concern is surrounding the behaviour of either the DSL or Deputy DSL then please either report to the other, or to the Executive Director Nicky Creed. All concerns will be treated confidentially where possible, and in the correct manner to the concern.

What you should do if you have concerns about safeguarding practices within the organisation

Any concerns about safeguarding practices should be raised with a DSL or Deputy DSL. Garsington Opera is committed to provide a safe and caring environment for the children, young people and vulnerable adults who work with us; concerns about safeguarding practices will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN

This document outlines the conduct Garsington Opera expects from all adults working with children and their responsibilities to the children and young people that they work with. This code aims to help protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made.

The company is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and clear guidance is provided on the types of practices that will meet these responsibilities and ensure that children are listened to, valued and respected as individuals.

Garsington Opera has a duty of care towards children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model and are expected to act appropriately.

Where it is necessary for one adult to be alone with a child or children, that adult must be DBS registered. This includes during the session(s), in breaks and following the session(s) until picked up by a parent/carer.

Code of Conduct

- You should recognise the position of responsibility you hold with the children you are working with; understand that you will be trusted by these children and will hold a certain amount of power over them. Treat this trust and this power with the highest responsibility.
- You must demonstrate the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour at all times, maintain a professional relationship with all children you work with, and never be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any illegal substance during project activities.
- You must work in an open and accountable manner at all times. Ensure there is more than one adult present in any session or break. When this is not possible, ensure you are working in full view of others and hold an enhanced DBS.
- You must not take children alone on car journeys unless absolutely unavoidable and only then if the full knowledge and written consent of the parents/ carers and senior manager in the organisation has been sought and given.
- Always use appropriate forms of communication and language.
- Recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.
- Be vigilant and mindful that some children may misinterpret the actions of adults, sometimes finding good intentions to be intrusive or intimidating. Sometimes children become attracted to the adults working with them. Adults should be aware of the impact of their actions and should sensitively address any misunderstanding.
- Children should only be photographed or filmed during a workshop, rehearsal or performance situation for work purposes. Written consent must be obtained in advance of any photographs/filming of children along with consent of how this footage will be shared. Ensure any footage is kept secure.

- There must be separate changing areas and toilets for children of each gender and these must not be shared with adults. If this is not possible children must be carefully chaperoned.
 - You must not meet with children outside of organised activities, unless it is work-related and with the knowledge and written consent of the parents/carers and senior manager in the organisation.
 - You must not swear or make sexual or suggestive comments to a child. Always challenge a child's (or colleague's) use of bad language or sexual or suggestive comments.
 - You must not discriminate against a child because of age, disability, gender, cultural or racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or sexual identity.
 - You must ensure that any physical contact is appropriate, justifiable, agreed by the child and approached sensitively. Physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child and the purpose of the contact should be clear.
 - You must not give children or vulnerable adults your personal contact details.
 - You must not message or engage with any children on social media that isn't work related.
 - Parents/carers should be fully informed about the nature of the work, the young person's role and the commitment required.
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CONTACT DETAILS:

1) Designated Safeguarding Lead

Tiffany Redman – Office & HR Manager tiffany@garsingtonopera.org | 07514318968

2) Deputy DSL

Judy Knowles – Head of Learning & Participation judy@garsingtonopera.org | 07743
743425 / 01865 368201

Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Partnership

Details	Who to call	Contact Details
To report or discuss concerns regarding a child	First Response Team	01296 383962 (Office Hours) 0800 999 7677 (Out of Hours) secure- cypfirstresponse@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
For concerns regarding a staff member working with children	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01296 382070 secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board

Details	Who to Call	Contact Details
To report or discuss concerns regarding a child	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	0345 050 7666 (Office Hours) 0800 833 408 (Out of Hours)
For concerns regarding a staff member working with children	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01865 815956 – Designated Officer 01865 810603 – Team Number lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [NSPCC Safeguarding in the Performing Arts](#)
- [The Continuum of Need \(Threshold Guidance\)](#)
- [Child Abuse Concerns](#)

Appendix 1:

[Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form](#)