



Safeguarding Policy

If Something Isn't Right

You should speak with the Safeguarding Officer. If they are unavailable, or the concern is about them, then you should speak with a committee officer that you trust. You should also read our **[grievance policy](#)** and **[whistleblowing policy](#)**.

Further Reading

Documents: **[Child Protection Policy](#)**

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Introduction

It is the duty of every member to ensure the safety of our members. This policy outlines how the society protects adults at risk from abuse, harm, and neglect. It applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, and contractors working on behalf of our society.

An adult is anyone who has reached their 18th birthday. For those under 18 years old, please see our Child Protection Policy.

General Statements

The society believes that:

- The welfare of our members is paramount.
- Everyone, whatever their age, culture, disability, 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 members of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The society will ensure that:

- Everyone is treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- All adult members of the society provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- It will keep up to date with health & safety legislation.
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- It will undertake relevant development and training.
- It will hold a register of members and retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies where the member provides one.

The Safeguarding Officer

The society has a dedicated Safeguarding Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are adhered to.

They can be contacted by email – safeguarding@bishopaucklandtheatresociety.co.uk – their name and appropriate contact information, or that of a suitable deputy, will be provided in writing to members before the first day of rehearsal.

Information will also be provided on who to contact should the concern be with the safeguarding officer or the management of the society as a whole.

Responsibilities of the Society

At the outset of any production the society will undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process and identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility.

Physical Contact

All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from other members.

Adults will only touch other members when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity and will seek prior consent to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Managing Sensitive Information

The society has a policy and procedures for the taking, using, and storage of photographs or images.

The society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

Suspicion of Abuse

If you see or suspect abuse while acting in the proper business of the society, please make this known to the person with responsibility. If you suspect that the person with responsibility is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to a member of the committee that you trust. 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 the society then that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded.

Disclosure of abuse

If you are being abused or if someone 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 person 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. Make it clear 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 person that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the person what you are going to do next.
- Speak immediately to the person with responsibility. 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 persons 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 Alleged Situations

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 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 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 the society, he or she will be made aware of his rights under the society's disciplinary procedures. No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the person who is thought to have been abused has 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.

Criminal Record Disclosures

If the society believes it is in its best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures, it will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required. A Standard disclosure will apply for anyone with supervised access to children or vulnerable adults. An Enhanced disclosure will be required for anyone with unsupervised access.

The society will have a written code of practice for the handling of disclosure information.

The society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.