



## **MORGAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

The Morgan Academy of Performing Arts recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

We recognise that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. We are committed to practice that which protects children from harm. All our members accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

We believe that:

- The welfare, safety, health and development of the child is paramount.
- All children, 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 will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All members and employees of the Morgan Academy of Performing Arts must be clear on how to respond appropriately.

We will ensure that:

- All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The welfare of each child will always be put first.
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children to share in the decision making process.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- All adult members of the Morgan Academy of Performing Arts provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- We will keep up-to-date with health and safety legislation.
- We will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- We will undertake relevant development and training.

For more detailed information please see our Child Protection Procedures which accompany this Policy.

We have a dedicated Child Protection Officer who is in charge of ensuring that the Child Protection Policy and Procedures are adhered to.

That person's name is Suzy Jackson and she can be contacted on 07952 999263.



## **MORGAN ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

### **Responsibilities**

At the outset of any production involving children our dedicated Child Protection Officer will:

- Ensure that there is sufficient number of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for the children and that they have a copy of our Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Ensure that the children are supervised at all times.
- Ensure that the children do not exceed their permitted hours of performance and that the correct breaks are adhered to.
- Ensure that adequate meal and rest intervals are taken.
- Keep a record of any special dietary requirements and/or medical conditions the children may have.
- Engage a qualified First Aider to give any medical assistance that may be required.
- Hold a register of every child involved with the production and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern.

### **Chaperones**

- Chaperones will be appointed by the organisation for the care of children during the production process. All chaperones must be licensed.
- 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.
- Chaperones should always arrive at the premises before the children to ensure that the children are not left without the appropriate recognised adult.
- Chaperones should know the names of the children they are responsible for and be aware of any specific medical conditions or food allergies they may have. If medicines need to be administered to a child this will be done by the designated First Aider, who will record the child's name, date, time and dosage given. This record will be countersigned by the Child Protection Officer.
- The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care. Where possible there will always be two chaperones in the room when working with children.
- A Chaperone will be responsible for registering the children as being on site and for recording when they leave the building.
- The children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones are expected to supervise the children at all times, including going to and from the toilets, escorting them to and from the stage, going for a mic check, make-up or quick change, etc.
- Chaperones must ensure that appropriate behaviour is maintained and if this is not the case, they must report it to the Child Protection Officer at the first opportunity.
- Chaperones will ensure that children do not leave the location without their parent(s) or a nominated adult.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until alternative arrangements have been made to take them home.
- Chaperones and children will be advised at the dress rehearsal at the theatre of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. They should familiarise themselves with fire alarms and exits and make sure that these are kept clear at all times, where the fire assembly point is and who the designated First Aider is.

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- Chaperones must ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger. They should be particularly careful when in areas around the premises that are dimly lit and always look out for hazards that may cause the children to trip.
- If a chaperone is not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the Child Protection Officer, who in turn will advise the Director. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily, the Child Protection Officer should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to the Child Protection Officer and recorded in the Accident Book.
- If a child is injured, a designated First-Aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the Accident Book. This record will be countersigned by the Child Protection Officer.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or is being overworked, the chaperone has a duty to inform the Child Protection Officer that they are not prepared to allow the child to continue for that day.

### **Child Protection**

- All chaperones must have a general knowledge of our policy on child protection and an understanding of the practice issues involved in implementing the policy.
- All chaperones must have read the 'Good Practice' guidelines published by the Child Employment Team and NODA, Section 7 - Recognising Child Abuse, available from the Child Protection Officer.

### **Suspicion of Abuse**

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child please make this known immediately to the Child Protection Officer, who in turn will advise the Director.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is a follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of the Morgan Academy of Performing Arts, 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 Child Protection Officer. 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 Child Protection Officer, who in turn will advise the Director. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, either 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.