**INTERNATIONAL GILBERT & SULLIVAN FESTIVAL**

YOUTH PRODUCTION 2024

POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR DIRECTORS, STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, CHAPERONES

Last Reviewed: 21/11/2023

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The **IGSF Youth Production** values young people and children as being a vital part of the organisation and desires to see them grow, mature and be challenged in a healthy and safe environment.

**Purposes**

The purpose of **IGSF Youth Production** is to offer the children a safe and welcoming environment for heir week of rehearsals and performance.

**IGSF Youth Production**

1. Each child and young person should be formally registered with the International Gilbert & Sullivan Youth Production. The information includes an information/consent form which their parent/guardian must complete. These forms have vital information about health and emergency contacts and should be kept securely and brought to each session.
2. Attendance register: a register should be kept for each session.

**Child Protection Representative**

The **IGSF Youth Production** has appointed a child protection representative, whose name is displayed in the rehearsal area. If any worker has any child safety concerns, they should discuss them with him/her. He/she will take on the following responsibilities:

* Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice;
* Being the first point of contact for child protection issues;
* Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;
* Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the Festival Directors and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate;
* Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
* Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representative.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims.

**Personal/Personnel Safety**

* A group of children or young people under sixteen should not be left unattended at any time.
* Avoid being alone with an individual child or young person for a long time. If there is a need to be alone with a child or young person (e.g. first aid or he/she is distressed) make sure that another worker knows where you are and why.
* At no time should a volunteer or worker from any external organisation arrange to meet a young person away from the activity without someone else being there.
* As such meetings should be planned and have the approval of a member of the Committee (this must be someone other than the organiser themselves).
* Teenage assistants/volunteers should always be supervised.

**Child Safety**

1. Make sure that the area you are using for activities is fit for the purpose, e.g. remove furniture, which could cause injury in energetic games.
2. Make sure that all workers and assistants know
   * Where the emergency phone is and how to operate it
   * Where the first aid kit is
   * Who is responsible for First Aid and how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book
   * What to do in the event of a fire or other emergency
3. Do not let children go home without an adult unless the parent has specifically said they may do so. Never let a child go with another adult unless the parent has informed you that this will happen.

**New Workers/Volunteers working with the Youth Production Team**

Volunteers are by far the most valuable resource the group has for working with young people. When recruiting and selecting paid workers and volunteers the following steps will be taken:

* Completion of an application form;
* Checking of the applicants’ identity (passport, driving license, etc);
* Ensuring criminal record checks have been carried out through relevant local agencies approved by the Criminal Records Bureau;
* Taking appropriate advice before employing someone with a criminal record;
* Allowing no unaccompanied access to children until all of the above have been completed;
* On-going supervision of paid workers and volunteers;
* Ensuring good practice is followed in working with children and young people by providing appropriate training and guidance;
* A nominated child Protection representative on the Youth Production Team.

**What is child protection**?

**Child protection is the response to the different ways in which a young person’s or child’s physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health are damaged by the actions of another person.**

**What you should do**

1. Listen to the child/young person
2. Look at them directly and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the child/young person know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone
3. Take whatever is said to you seriously and help the child/young person to trust his/her own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture.
4. It is not the role of the worker/volunteer to investigate any allegations (this would contaminate evidence if a situation went to court). Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the named child protection officer.
5. Speak immediately to the Local Authority or NSPCC for further advice and guidance.

**What you should *not* do**

1. Project workers/volunteers should not begin investigating the matter themselves.
2. Do not discuss the matter with anyone except the correct people in authority.
3. Do not form your own opinions and decide to do nothing.

**Things to say or do:**

* ‘What you are telling me is very important’
* This is not your fault’
* ‘I am sorry that this has happened/is happening’
* ‘You were right to tell someone’
* What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you’
* Make notes soon after the event. Try to write down exactly what the young person or child said. Avoid assumptions or conjecture.

**Things *not* to say or do:**

* Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What?
* Do not say ‘Are you sure?’
* Do not show your own emotions e.g. shock/disbelief
* Do not make false promises

This policy was adopted by the **IGSF Youth Production** on 22nd March 2023

Signed on behalf of the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival

Signature…………………………………………….

Name in Capitals……………………………………

**The International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival**

**The Old Vicarage, All Souls Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 6DR**

**Tel: 01422 323252**