



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

*(Updated 01/11/22)*

This document is the Child Protection Policy for Get Your Wigle On Theatre Company and is made available to all staff, parents, children, and young people. It will be followed by all members of the organisation and followed and promoted by those in the position of leadership within the organisation.

These guidelines are intended to reduce situations where abuse of children may occur and help to protect staff by promoting good working practice. General Guidelines should be observed at all times in any situation, other guidelines should be referred to for specific places of work.

We at Get Your Wigle On are committed to practice which protects children from harm. All Staff in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm. We aim to create a safe environment where children can enjoy rewarding and stimulating experiences.

If any parent or young person/child has any concerns about the conduct of any member of the organisation, this should be raised in the first instance with:

**James Broxton** | Tel no: **01743 272217** | Email: [james@wigles.co.uk](mailto:james@wigles.co.uk)

**Shropshire Safeguarding team** | Tel no: **0345 678 9021** (*Out of hours Emergency Duty Team* | Tel no: **0345 6789040**).

## Principles upon which the Child Protection Policy is based:

- The welfare of a child or young person will always be paramount.
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be respected and listened to.
- All staff (paid and voluntary) and contractors will work in accordance with the interests of children and young people, and follow the policy outlined below.
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the organisation will ensure the same opportunities are available to everyone and that all differences between individuals will be treated with respect.

We recognise that children should be:

- ✓ Listened to and heard
- ✓ Valued and respected as individuals
- ✓ Respected for their identity and uniqueness
- ✓ Encouraged and praised
- ✓ Involved in decisions as appropriate
- ✓ Regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**



Get Your Wigle On Theatre Company recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, the Child (Performances) Regulations 2014, the Protection of Children Act 1999, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

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

### **Get Your Wigle On believes that:**

- The welfare 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 should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All members and volunteers of Get Your Wigle On should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

### **Get Your Wigle On will ensure that:**

- All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The duty of care to children 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 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 every child involved with the company and will retain a contact name and number nearby in case of emergencies.

Get Your Wigle On follows National Child Protection guidelines, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety guidelines.

Get Your Wigle On has a dedicated Child Protection Officer, who oversees ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to.

That person's name is **James Broxton**, and he can be contacted on **01743 272217**.

This policy will be regularly monitored by James Broxton (company partner) of Get Your Wigle On and will be subject to annual reviews.

Next review date: **November 2023**

## **MODEL CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

### **Responsibilities of Get Your Wigle On**

At the outset of any session / production involving children Get Your Wigle On 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 (if necessary, in consultation with the local education authority).
- Ensure that children are always supervised.
- Know how to contact the local authority social services in case it needs to report a concern.

### **Parents**

- Get Your Wigle On 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 to share responsibility for the care of children. All parents will be notified as to where they can view the Get Your Wigle on Child Protection Policy ([www.getyourwigleon.co.uk](http://www.getyourwigleon.co.uk)).
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of Get Your Wigle On to take children home.

### **Unsupervised Contact**

- Get Your Wigle On will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible, there will always be at least two 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 a 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 disclosure barring service check (DBS).

### **Physical Contact**

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is necessary in relation to the activity.
- 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**

- Get Your Wigle On has requested parental consent for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of their children, for promotional purposes.

- Get Your Wigle On's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- Get Your Wigle On will ensure confidentiality to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage, and disposal of any sensitive information such as disclosures and barring documentation.

### **Suspicion of abuse**

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of, Get Your Wigle On, 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 Shropshire Safeguarding.
- 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 Get Your Wigle On, chaperone, venue staff etc., that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, studio, 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 acting.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Do not ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you must 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 needs 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 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 e.g., 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 Get Your Wigle On, he or she will be made aware of his/her rights under the society'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, must 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 Get Your Wigle On, 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. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production/session.

## **Criminal Record Disclosures**

- Get Your Wigle On believes it is in its best interests to obtain a disclosure and barring service check (DBS) for chaperones or other personnel, 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. An Enhanced disclosure will be required for anyone with unsupervised access.
- Get Your Wigle On will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

## **Chaperones**

- Chaperones will be appointed by Get Your Wigle On 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 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 supply photographic proof of identity (e.g., passport, driving licence) and two references from individuals with knowledge of their previous work with children, unless already well known to the company. They will also be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason they would be considered unsuitable to work with children.
- Chaperones will be made aware of Get Your Wigle On's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- 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 stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children will be always kept together except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are always.
- Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.
- Children will be supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- 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 Get Your Wigle On.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child or decide to take them home.

Get Your Wigle On has used the NODA Model Child Protection Policy, July 2009, upon which to write this policy.

Last reviewed November 2022

## Resources

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**Protection of Child Act 1999** | www.legislation.gov.uk. 2022. Protection of Child Act 1999. [ONLINE] Available at: [https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/14/pdfs/ukpga\\_19990014\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/14/pdfs/ukpga_19990014_en.pdf). [Accessed 01 November 2022].

**Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018** | assets.publishing.service.gov.uk. 2022. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. [ONLINE] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/942454/Working\\_together\\_to\\_safeguard\\_children\\_inter\\_agency\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf). [Accessed 02 November 2022].

**Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England 2014** | Advice template. 2022. Advice template. [ONLINE] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/401345/Child\\_performance\\_and\\_activities\\_licensing\\_legislation\\_in\\_England\\_-\\_departmental\\_advice\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401345/Child_performance_and_activities_licensing_legislation_in_England_-_departmental_advice_-_final.pdf). [Accessed 02 November 2022].

**Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000** | www.legislation.gov.uk. 2022. Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. [ONLINE] Available at:

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**NODA Model Child Protection Policy 2016** | [www.noda.org.uk](http://www.noda.org.uk). 2022. No page title. [ONLINE] Available at:

[https://www.noda.org.uk/assets/ckfinder\\_library/files/Factsheets/Child%20protection%20policy%20\(model\)%20V3.5%20June%202016.pdf](https://www.noda.org.uk/assets/ckfinder_library/files/Factsheets/Child%20protection%20policy%20(model)%20V3.5%20June%202016.pdf). [Accessed 02 November 2022].



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