

**GOSFORTH AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY
CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES – JUNE 2011**

General requirements

- All members and patrons (this includes parents of child members) will be given a copy of the GADS Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Children must not be paid for any performance.
- Special arrangements will apply if any child is simultaneously involved in any other (non-GADS) performance and advice should be sought from any member of the Executive Committee.
- Members of the society will not be allowed significant lone contact with children. (If this does become necessary, an enhanced CRB check is required).
- Children will not be allowed to perform outside the hours permitted by the Regulations – see Appendix 1.
- Children will not be allowed to rehearse or perform at any venue, premises or location unless determined suitable by the Local Authority.
- Children will not rehearse or perform when they should be receiving education (unless the performance is part of the school curriculum).
- Children will not be used in performances that may be dangerous.
- Separate boys and girls changing areas will be provided for children, which will be supervised by the matron(s) / chaperone(s).
- Cameras of any kind (including those on mobile phones) are not to be used in any of the changing facilities or toilets.

At the start of a production (involving children of compulsory school age)

- The production Director will ensure that a registration form is completed for each child in the production – see Appendix 2.
- The Executive Committee will provide a suitable number of approved matrons / chaperones for the number of children involved.
- The details of each child involved will be provided to the Local Authority, using the LA form in Appendix 3. The Director will compile this information and pass it to the Secretary for onward transmission to the Local Authority at least 21 days before the first performance.
- The Director must ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to get any child to or from the venue, for example by checking that parents understand the expectations on them.

During a performance (involving children of compulsory school age)

- A child must be under the care and supervision of their parent / guardian or an approved matron / chaperone.
- A record will be kept of each child's performance, as required by the Body of Persons approval and Schedule 3 of the 1968 Regulations. These records (see Appendix 4) will be compiled by the matrons / chaperones (or another designated by the Executive Committee if no matron is necessary) and passed to and held by the Secretary.
- Matrons / chaperones will act in accordance with "A Guide for Matrons and Performance Licence Holders" provided by Cumbria County Council. The guide can be downloaded from <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/537/689/3608/3904613526.pdf>

Expectation of parents

- The society believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the society. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the society and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- All parents have a responsibility to ensure that their children are delivered safely to and collected from a rehearsal or performance. It is NOT the responsibility of the society to take children home.

Suspicion of abuse

- If any member or parent sees or suspects abuse of a child while in the care of the society, it should be reported to the society's Child Protection Officer. They will liaise with the relevant authorities and record all subsequent action taken.
- 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.

Disclosure of abuse - if a child confides in you that abuse has taken place (whether at GADS or elsewhere):

- 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 in their own words. Never put your words into their mouth. You can ask a general question like "what happened next?", but do not ask other questions, especially if they 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 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 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.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a record 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.
- Speak immediately to the society's Child Protection Officer. They will liaise with the relevant authorities and record all subsequent action taken.

GADS Child Protection Officer

The name and contact details for the Child Protection Officer can be found on the GADS website (www.gads.org.uk) or with the current list of Committee members. If the Child Protection Officer is unavailable, one of the Matrons can be contacted instead. Failing that, the NSPCC or CCC Children's Services can also be contacted.