

# **BUXTON OPERA HOUSE & PAVILION ARTS CENTRE**

## **SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES - CODE OF PRACTICE**

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school, digital spaces and creative or educational environments. There may be instances when Buxton Opera House (BOH) employees, freelancers or volunteers have regular contact with children and adults at risk and this could make them an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. There may also be occasions when a member of BOH witnesses child or adult abuse or bullying, or when a person discloses such information to them. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Procedures.

### **1 Good practice**

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## 1. GOOD PRACTICE:

### 1.1 Personal behaviour

All representatives of Buxton Opera House (BOH) should demonstrate behaviour that promotes the welfare of children and adults at risk (also known as “adults with care and support needs”) to reduce the likelihood of allegations being made.

All representatives of BOH should be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children when in a role of responsibility (e.g. not on school premises or when responsible for a group of children).

Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication).

Treating all people equally, with respect and dignity.

Being aware and respectful of people from different faiths and cultures.

Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and adults with care and support needs.

Always putting the welfare of each participant first, before winning or achieving goals.

Making activities fun, enjoyable and fair.

Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with participants (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child /adult at risk

### 1.2 Child Supervision

BOH will ensure we follow Chaperone guidelines for supervision in regulated activities (1) with children:

- 1 adult to 12 children aged 9 +
- 1 adult to 8 children aged 4 - 8

For non-regulated activities (2) BOH will ensure that at least one member of staff from the partner organisation is present throughout all activities involving children. No school or youth group should be left without a legally responsible member of staff present.

Unaccompanied children participating in Engagement activities must ensure parental consent is given in advance and that BOH have emergency contact details and details of permitted adults who can collect the child.

No child should leave BOH activity unaccompanied without written consent from a parent that they are permitted to do so.

If BOH are required to book a taxi for a child who will be travelling unaccompanied the staff member should use Allied Taxis (01298 72123) as all drivers are DBS checked. The name of the taxi company and where possible the registration number should be given to the parent / carer and they should be informed when the child is in the taxi and left our care.

No child under 5 years of age should be left unaccompanied at an event.

Children should not be brought into work when childcare issues arise and alternative arrangements

should be made. If an unaccompanied child visits a member of staff or freelancer they should enter the building via Stage Door and be signed in by the Stage Door staff member. The appropriate member of staff should be called and told to meet the visitor at Stage Door. No child should be allowed to progress to the offices and workspaces unaccompanied.

*1 Regulated activities could include Young Company, Summer School, work experience, Learning and Engagement projects, productions with non-professional or child actors*

*2 Non regulated activities could include one-off workshops and events, visits and tours, hires, individual and group audiences with children*

### **1.3 Health & Safety**

Risk assessments for activity with children and adults at risk will be carried out by the appropriate staff member and shared with all relevant staff and partners and saved for all staff to access on teams.

- Health and safety procedures are discussed at the beginning of any project / activity. Supervisors and volunteers should know the evacuation procedures and should tell the group before the session start.

- There must be access to a telephone / radio in the building (or mobile).

- Equipment must meet safety standards.

- There must be a first aid box which meets current Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations and a member of staff trained in First Aid on site.

- Staff should check on the Emergency Evacuation Procedures for the space/s they are working in and check for any changes or updates to evacuation procedures.

If a child / adult at risk is injured while in the building or while involved in a project, the accident/ injury must be logged on *Blue Lemon* (BOH's accident reporting system) and their parent/carer must be advised of the incident.

Parental consent is secured in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

Where project delivery and performances happen outside of the BOH, project managers should ensure there is access to first aid provision. Where there is none, it should be brought to each session / performance and checked / restocked as necessary.

Insurance certificates are obtained, or Insurance Company notified in case additional insurance cover is required for any aspect of the project / performance. The incident should be recorded in the site's accident book. If there isn't one then Blue Lemon should be used.

Where someone is taken ill or injured within their home on an online session the host should first put them into a breakout space to give them privacy accompanied by a workshop assistant or member of staff. The assistant or member of staff in the breakout space should find out if there is anyone at home that can help them. If there isn't the assistant or member of staff should support them to access help – either calling emergency services or someone who can come and help them. If the person is unable to inform the host this would be an emergency and an ambulance should be

called. The incident should be recorded.

People booking on to online workshops should be reminded to ensure contact details are correct and to let staff know if you will be zooming from a different address than on your account.

#### **1.4 Engagement**

At the start of all projects the Safe Spaces statement (Appendix A) will be discussed at the start of the project and DSOs identified to the group. A code of conduct will be created by the group.

The practitioner leading the session should always have a named contact with legal responsibility for participants under age 18 (usually a parent / carer or teacher/youth worker). They should never assume sole responsibility for a child.

When a person has been identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist expertise or support, the DSO or member of the Creative Learning and Engagement team will discuss this with main contact from a partner organisation or with the parent / carer and where appropriate the child / adult at risk , to ensure they can be supported to participate safely.

Practitioners should consider individual needs of each participant and must plan activities to ensure the whole group can participate.

It is not usually necessary to have any physical contact with participants. We recognise that in practical theatre workshops there may be a need for physical contact, for example to demonstrate a technique or exercise. In this circumstance you should employ safe touch principles and explain to the child / adult at risk what you intend to do and gain their permission. Ensure any physical contact is only made when necessary and is only made with the individual's permission.

In school, community and informal education settings teachers / group leaders / carers MUST always remain present during activities led by the BOH staff. They should maintain discipline during a workshop session in line with their guidance and protocols. (In some special cases for after school clubs there is an agreement that a teacher will be in the next room. In these cases two BOH leaders will run the activity)

It is best practice to avoid lone working situations and the BOH operates a policy of workshop assistant support and / or volunteer support for individual sessions and within projects. Workshop Assistants and volunteers are subject to the same DBS checks as freelance staff.

#### **1.5 Work Experience**

- While on work experience, students are classed as employees under Health & Safety law and are covered by the BOH's insurance.
- Students should be allocated a supervisor during their placement.
- Students should be given an induction on their first day, which includes evacuation procedures, first aid, and health and safety at work.

### **1.6 Mentoring / 1-1 support**

When lone working is unavoidable full and appropriate risk assessments must be conducted and agreed.

- Staff are advised to avoid meetings with a child or adult at risk in remote, secluded areas.
- Staff should only deliver small group or individual sessions in agreement with a DSO and always inform other colleagues and/or parents/carers about the contact beforehand.
- Avoid the use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs on doors. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy.
- Careful consideration must be given to the needs and circumstances of the child /adults at risk in 1 -1 situations.
- 1 -1 sessions must only take place in a room with an open door or window that provides a clear view into the area where the session is taking place.

### **1.7 Relationships between staff and participants, volunteers and trainees**

Staff who work for or with BOH in a professional capacity are in a position of trust towards our participants, volunteers and trainees.

In the context of this policy, staff include but are not limited to BOH employees, freelancers and trustees. Participants include anyone participating in any Engagement activity including our CYP, readers group, and community production cast.. Volunteers includes our building based FOH volunteers, parent volunteers, volunteer chaperones and volunteer assistants . Trainees include students on placement, apprenticeships, and any other work-based learning including paid positions.

The relationship between a member of staff and participants, volunteers and trainees must remain strictly professional and the ultimate responsibility for this lies with the member of staff.

A member of staff is in a position of trust and power over a participant, volunteer or trainee by virtue of the professional role that they hold. If the relationship is not bound within a professional setting, this could be an abuse of power and could create conflicts of interest.

For staff to manage and maintain professional relationships BOH prohibits the following actions:

- Sexual or romantic relationships between a member of staff and a participant, trainee or under 18 volunteer initiated during the period of engagement with the theatre.
- Grooming or coercing of a participant, volunteer or trainee
- Sexual harassment, assault or abuse of a participant, volunteer or trainee
- A member of staff inviting a participant, trainee or under 18 volunteer to their home
- A member of staff accepting an invitation to a participant, volunteer or trainee home

Any allegation of a sexual relationship with an individual under the age of 18 would be referred to the DCC Designated Officer and/or the Police and this will be treated as a case of gross misconduct which could result in dismissal from BOH.

BOH will investigate any information about a member of staff engaging in unprofessional relationships with a participant, volunteer or trainee, including consensual sexual or romantic relationships with over 18s.

Following the investigation if a member of staff is found to have engaged in grooming or coercion, sexual harassment, assault or abuse of a participant, volunteer or trainee, this will be deemed gross misconduct resulting in dismissal from BOH.

### **Requirements of staff**

Staff must disclose the following circumstances in relation to all participants, volunteers or trainees:

- A previous or longstanding sexual/romantic relationship: with a participant, volunteer or trainee where the relationship existed before they engaged with BOH or where such a relationship initiated before the publication of this policy.
- Where a member of staff is concerned that a close relationship or attraction with a participant, volunteer or trainee has the potential to develop beyond a professional boundary.
- Where a participant, volunteer or trainee has or may have developed an infatuation with a member of staff.
- Where another member of staff observes that the relationship between a participant, volunteer or trainee and a member of staff has the potential to progress, or is progressing, beyond non-professional boundaries.

Disclosures should be reported to your line-manager who will involve the Safeguarding Lead and HR in agreeing next steps.

### **1.8 Visitor Experience**

- BOH is a public space. The presence of BOH staff , freelancers and volunteers does not replace the need for parents or carers to supervise the children while on BOH premises.
- Under 14s and school/youth groups must be accompanied by an adult when watching a performance.
- All BOH staff, freelancers and volunteers wear a name badge or lanyard and are easily identifiable.
- Spektrix is used as a company wide CRM system with all Box Office staff as well as wider staff team having access to personal data and contact details of adults at risk and young people included on the system.

### **1.9 Lost Children**

If a Lost Child is encountered by a member of staff:

- Staff member will contact the Duty Manager asking to meet at Box Office, not using specific terminology. If they do not have access to a radio or telephone the child should be accompanied to the Box Office
- All parties will meet at the Box Office.
- A full briefing will be given by the Duty Manager.
- Staff begin the search with one person remaining with the lost child.
- Staff member who locates the parent/guardian will send a radio call to inform all parties.
- Parent/guardian and child are reunited.

If a Parent or Guardian reports that they have lost a child:

- Staff member will contact the Duty Manager asking to meet at Box Office, not using specific terminology. If they do not have access to a radio or telephone they should go with the parent/guardian to the Box Office
- Staff will take the name, age and description of the child from the parent/guardian, asking particularly for any distinctive features (no description to be communicated on the radio).

- All parties will meet at the Box Office.
- A full briefing will be given by the Duty Manager.
- Staff begin the search with one person remaining with the parent/guardian.
- Staff member who locates the child will send a radio call to inform all parties.
- Child and parent/guardian are reunited.
- If the child is not found within 10 minutes the additional teams will be contacted to assist with the search). If the child is not located within 15 minutes the police will be contacted by the Duty Manager. If a child is deemed to be particularly vulnerable or if the Duty Manager has immediate concerns for the child's welfare this step may be taken at any stage during the process.

School and group visits:

- All previous steps to be taken
- Duty Manager will liaise with lead teacher or group leader to ensure next of kin is informed if appropriate.

If an adult visitor is reported as lost:

- Ask if they are contactable by mobile phone. They can use a Duty Manager mobile phone if required.
- Ask how long the visitor has been missing and whether they are in any way vulnerable (i.e. disabled, has dementia, requires medication).
- Inform the Duty Manager who will attend and follow previous steps if required.

Incident reporting for Duty Managers:

All incidents should be included in the Show Report by the Duty Manager, or details emailed to the Safeguarding team if not during a performance. If an incident continues past 20 minutes and/or the police are called; an incident report form should be completed by the Duty Manager and will be added to Blue Lemon and should also be shared with the Safeguarding Lead.

### **1.10 External Hires**

It is the responsibility and condition of external hirers of the BOH facilities to ensure adequate supervision of children in their care. All hires that involve Children are required to read and sign Appendix B and provide a risk assessment before their booking can take place. However, the BOH will take all possible precautions to ensure the safety of children using our facilities.

### **1.11 Professional Productions**

For performances where participants are getting changed at the BOH, and who are under the age of 16 (compulsory school age) or 16 but still in year 11, registered Chaperones must be booked. The ratio of chaperone to children is a maximum 1:12. If children do need to get changed, either separate dressing rooms should be arranged and where this is not possible suitable arrangements must be made to cordon off for child use only and split by gender. Separate and designated toilets will also be arranged where possible.

The Producer is responsible for obtaining licences and will pass on to the CM or CSM depending on the production.

Performance licenses need to be obtained for performers under the age of 16. However, application for licence free days can be sought if the all of the following conditions apply:

- The child has not performed on more than 3 days in the past 6 months;
- The child is not having any time off / out of school;
- The child is not being paid for the performance;
- The production company and/or the parent/guardians are not being paid for the child's performance.

If a child does not meet all of the above, application for a performance licence is still required. Performance licenses obtained for individuals must be obtained from the local authority where the child lives rather than where they attend school.

Alternatively, a Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) can be obtained for groups performing where they are not getting paid. A BOPA is granted to the organisation that is responsible for the performance NOT the child and is in the organisation's name only. The approval is granted by the local authority where the performance is taking place e.g. Derbyshire County Council; the local authority can grant the approval even if the children taking part do not live within its' boundaries. A BOPA can be granted to an organisation for a single performance or for a series of performances within a specified time providing no payment is made to the child or to anyone else in respect of the child taking part in the performance. Details of each performance/rehearsal including the dates, times and location together with the name/s of chaperones and numbers, genders and ages of all the children taking part (under 16 or in year 11) must be included and the BOPA applied for at least 21 days in advance of the first performance unless otherwise agreed by the LA.

*NB. A BOPA is only supposed to be granted in situations where the children are not required to be absent from school. However, if the school can demonstrate that the children's education will not suffer from the absence required (e.g. the activity is tied to curriculum learning) then most local authorities will normally be happy to issue a BOPA rather than insisting on individual licences for all the participating children. It is always recommended that you seek advice from the relevant local authority before applying.*

## **2 PRACTICES TO BE AVOIDED**

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge, such as a teacher or the child's parents:

- Avoid spending time alone with children away from others. Avoid taking or dropping off a participant to an event or activity.
- Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained, for example physically handling disabled participants.
- Do not promise to keep secrets for a child / adult at risk as this may be at the detriment of their welfare.
- Do not give personal contact details to child or participant (e.g. personal mobile phone number/Facebook profile). Work phones and work social media profiles to be used when required.
- Do not use physical intervention to manage challenging behaviour (see section 5.5 for further details)



### **3 PRACTICES NEVER TO BE SANCTIONED**

- Physical punishment or the threat of such
- Refusal to speak to or interact with the child or participant
- Depriving participants of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation, or reducing a participant to tears as a form of control.
- Engaging in rough or sexually provocative games.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allowing participants to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a participant.
- Failing to act upon and record any concerns raised by a participant.
- Doing things of a personal nature for a participant that they can do for themselves.
- Inviting or allowing a participant to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

N.B. Please be aware that due to some of the content and language in productions and TV, children participating in activities with the company may challenge some of the above guidelines. In these instances, BOH representatives should clearly and firmly explain that such behaviour is inappropriate in an educational setting and will not be tolerated.

### **4 MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR**

When working with children and adults at risk you may, on occasions, be required to deal with challenging behaviour, such as:

- Bullying
- violence towards others
- bad language
- discrimination and racism
- venturing outside boundaries on purpose
- abuse of facilities or equipment
- disobeying staff / volunteers
- deliberately making a situation unsafe.

In responding to challenging behaviour your reaction should always be consistent, proportionate to the actions, be imposed as soon as is practical and be fully explained to the person and their teachers/parents/carers.

If you are faced with participants who display negative or challenging behaviours you should follow these guidelines:

- Immediately state that this behaviour cannot be tolerated.
- If behaviour persists request that the participant takes a Time Out (leaves the room or moves to a different area of the room, supervised by a member of staff).
- Talk to the participant about their actions, asking what happened and explaining what is wrong with this behaviour.

The lead practitioner will decide whether further action is necessary. This could include:

- Reparation - the act or process of making amends (i.e. apologising for actions).
- Restitution - the act of giving something back (i.e. returning stolen property).
- Sanctions or consequences, e.g. missing out on a trip.
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation.
- Increased supervision by staff / volunteers.
- Seeking additional/specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure a child's needs are met appropriately e.g. referral for support to Children's Social Care, discussion with the child's key worker if they have one, speaking to the child's school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be 'at risk' or 'in need of protection').
- Temporary or permanent exclusion

## 5. PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

If delivering BOH activities at a partner organisation the overall responsibility for behavioural management lies with the partner. Every organisation has its own procedures for managing challenging behaviour and therefore it is essential that you do not use any form of physical intervention at any time.

However, for activity delivered at BOH, the company has responsibility for the safety of people in its care at that time. In this instance physical intervention should be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a person from injuring themselves or others or causing serious damage to property (such as arson). All forms of physical intervention should form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of staff or volunteer should ask themselves, 'Is this the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety?' It is good practice to ensure that if you have to physically intervene in a situation it is in the least restrictive way necessary to prevent them from getting hurt and used only after all other strategies have been exhausted. Studies have shown that, where this is the case, people understand and accept the reasons for the intervention.

Where people have been identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require physical intervention the DSO will discuss this with parents / carers in advance and where necessary seek advice from NSPCC and/or Derbyshire County Council to ensure that a child can be supported to participate safely. This may include employing a suitably trained support worker or accessing training in physical intervention.

The following must always be considered:

- Physical intervention is a last resort and should be only be used if absolutely necessary to prevent a person from harm.
- Physical intervention should NOT involve inflicting pain to a person, but rather to restrain and protect them.

- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force, i.e. the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property - applied for the shortest period of time.
- Staff /volunteers should consider the circumstances, the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention.
- Staff/volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to participants or staff/volunteers.
- Staff/volunteers shall never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.
- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts.

Any physical intervention used should be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the staff/volunteers involved using the Concern Report Form and passed to the DSO immediately. A timely debrief for staff / volunteers, the person involved and parent / carer where necessary should always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used. This should include ensuring that the physical and emotional well-being of those involved has been addressed and ongoing support offered where necessary. All involved should be given an opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment. There should also be a discussion with the person and parents about their needs and continued safe participation in the group or activity.

## Appendix A: Safe Spaces Statement

As part of its Safe Spaces campaign, Equity is encouraging members to read aloud the statement below at the beginning of every new rehearsal period, read through, workshop or project

“ Every single one of us working on this project is entitled to work in a safe space: a space free of fear, a space free of bullying and harassment of any kind. We will work together honouring our differences and celebrating the gifts we each bring to the table. We will treat one another with politeness and respect at all times and, if we are subjected to or witness bullying and harassment, we will speak out knowing that our voices will be heard and we will be taken seriously. Together we can create a Safe Space. ”

Read Equity's report on sexual harassment:  
[www.equity.org.uk/agenda-for-change](http://www.equity.org.uk/agenda-for-change)



## Appendix B:

### **GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL HIRERS – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK**

The following procedures and guidelines apply to all teachers, performers and volunteers involved in events at High Peak Theatre Trust, including, but not exclusive to, school/community concerts and dance shows, speech days, achievement ceremonies, youth choirs and orchestras. You are required to undertake suitable actions to satisfy this policy. If you do not comply, or your performance practice significantly contravenes this policy, your event may be cancelled and/or future bookings may not be accepted.

Safeguarding procedures and guidelines are intended to be implemented in tandem with other High Peak Theatre Trust policies and procedures, particularly the Equal Opportunities and Health & Safety policies.

#### **In Advance:**

- It will be assumed that the contact on the Contract will be the Group Leader for the day. If this is not the case then this information should be given to the House Manager/Technical Manager in advance of the visit.
- All chaperones/leaders responsible for children and adults at risk **MUST** have a DBS check. The organisation must be able to provide High Peak Theatre Trust with confirmation that all appropriate adults have completed this process, and be able to provide us with a list of names and DBS numbers on request.
- The organisation **MUST** ensure that the performance adheres to Child Licensing Legislation. It is the promoter's responsibility to acquire child performance licences, or provide High Peak Theatre Trust with written notification that a licence is not required.
- The organisation **MUST** make parents aware of the procedures for collecting their children after the performance: i.e. they should know when, where and how they will be reunited with their children.

#### **During the rehearsal/performance:**

- For children and young people and adults at risk involved as performers, adequate supervision backstage is to be provided by the Promoter of the Event including the ratio 1 adult to 12 children in each discrete space. For children under the age of 7, this ratio would increase to 1 adult to 8 children. An appropriate number of male/female staff should be present dependent on the make-up of the group.

- The Promoter must supply Chaperone or Supervisor badges/lanyards for backstage supervisory staff, so that they are immediately identifiable to Buxton Opera House & Pavilion Arts Centre staff. Parents who are not supervisors **WILL NOT** be allowed access to the Dressing Rooms/Backstage.
- Buxton Opera House & Pavilion Arts Centre staff will be allocated to each area of the building that is in use by the visiting company. They are there solely for the purpose of safety and to assist in evacuation, and will not act in a supervisory capacity.
- **NO** members of the public (including relatives of performers) are permitted in the Dressing Rooms/Backstage **UNLESS** they can be identified as Supervisors/Chaperones/Stage Crew. This includes access before and after the show and during the interval.
- The Promoter must ensure that young people and adults at risk waiting backstage remain in their allocated areas, and do not enter any office areas or areas which are out of bounds except to trained personnel.
- When children and adults at risk are seated in the auditorium the Supervisors must make sure the children remain seated at all times during the performance unless they are being escorted in or out of the building or to use the facilities. This is particularly important when the upper levels of seats are in use.
- Access to, and egress from, the building is to be discussed with the relevant parties at a Production Meeting prior to the event. Evidence must be produced to satisfy the House Manager/Technical Manager—that this information will be passed on to the Supervisors and/or Parents.
- No food or drink will be allowed into the Auditorium without pre-arranged permission of the House Manager.
- It is the responsibility of the promoter to advise High Peak Theatre Trust of their policy on photography and filming of the event.

A copy of the High Peak Theatre Trust's Safeguarding Policy is available on request.

Please return one signed copy of this form to High Peak Theatre Trust with your contract and retain one copy for your records.

On behalf of the Promoter:

Date:

On behalf of High Peak Theatre Trust Ltd: \_

Date:

**YOUR BOOKING WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED UNTIL THIS FORM IS RETURNED**