

HOLBEACH AMATEUR THEATRICAL SOCIETY (HATS)

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Holbeach Amateur Theatrical Society (HATS) recognizes 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.
- The Group recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.
- The society is committed to a practice which protects children from harm.
- All members of the society accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.
- This policy applies to all members and volunteers or anyone working on behalf of HATS.
- We believe that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe.
- We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.
- It is NOT the role of the Group to decide whether a child has been abused or not. It is, however, everybody's responsibility to ensure that concerns are shared only with the dedicated Child Protection Officer so that appropriate action is taken.
- In the context of this policy, a child is anybody under the age of 18.
- The purpose of this policy:
 - to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults, who are involved, in any way with HATS. This includes children of members, who may be present, at times, during a production or rehearsals.
 - to provide members with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- The society 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 of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.
 - we all show respect for one another and behave accordingly.
- The Group 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 will provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.

- action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- it is up to date with health & safety legislation.
- it is up to date with changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- members will undertake relevant development and training.
- it will hold a register of every child involved with the society and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.
- GDPR guidance will be followed.
- This policy should also be read in conjunction with the society's Equal Opportunities Policy and Health & Safety Policy.
- The society has 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 Susan McLaughlin and she can be contacted by email: seasend1@gmail.com
- This policy will be regularly monitored by the Executive Committee of the Group and will be subject to annual review.
- Date: 01/11/2023