



Chester Mystery Plays

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Policy ref      CMP001

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Re - Approved      February 2023

# Child Protection Policy

Taken from *Firstcheck*, NSPCC 2006

## Our child protection policy

This policy applies to all those working with the company including senior managers, the board of trustees, paid staff<sup>1</sup>, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of Chester Mystery Plays.

### The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect children, young people and vulnerable adults<sup>2</sup> who receive Chester Mystery Plays' services. This includes the children of adults who use our services
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection

Chester Mystery Plays believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

### We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

### We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

**We will ensure that all relevant<sup>3</sup> members of the staff team (including fee paid/freelance artists) and volunteers will have had an advance CRB check within the last 5 years**

### Key officers with responsibilities for Child Protection

The company member with lead responsibility for Child Protection is the Children's Officer, Julie Elston.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes fee paid artists

<sup>2</sup> All child protection policies and procedures apply equally to all those that may be described as children young people or vulnerable adults, even where not specified

<sup>3</sup> ie those who are likely to find themselves working directly with, or supervising, children, young people and/or vulnerable adults

The board member with overall responsibility for Child Protection is Ian Sanderson, Chairman.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the following accompanying documents.

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## Procedure for children at possible risk of abuse

This procedure applies to any paid member of staff or volunteer who may be concerned about the safety and protection of a child.

### Purpose and aim of this procedure

We aim to ensure those children who attend Chester Mystery Plays and any other children who may come to our attention receive the protection and support they need if they are at risk of abuse.

This procedure provides clear direction to staff and volunteers at Chester Mystery Plays if they have concerns that a child is in need of protection.

### Different types of abuse

**Physical abuse** is violence causing injury or occurring regularly during childhood. It happens when:

- a child is hurt or injured by being hit, shaken, squeezed, thrown, burned, scalded, bitten or cut
- someone tries to drown or suffocate a child
- someone gives a child poison, alcohol or inappropriate drugs
- someone fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

In some cases the injuries will be caused deliberately. In others they may be accidental but caused by the child being knowingly put at risk.

**Sexual abuse** occurs when someone uses power or control to involve a child in sexual activity in order to gratify the abuser's own sexual, emotional or financial needs or desires. It may include:

- forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening
- encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- showing children pornographic material or involving them in the production of such material
- involving children in watching other people's sexual activity or in inappropriate discussions about sexual matters

**Emotional abuse** is persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment of a child that is likely to cause serious harm to his/her development. It may include:

- persistently denying the child love and affection
- regularly making the child feel frightened by shouts, threats or any other means
- hurting another person or a pet in order to distress a child
- being so over-protective towards the child that he/she is unable to develop or lead a normal life
- exploiting or corrupting a child, eg by involving him/her in illegal behaviour
- conveying to a child the message that he/she is worthless, unlovable, inadequate, or his/her only value is to meet the needs of another person. This may or may not include racist, homophobic or other forms of abuse

**Neglect** involves persistently failing to meet a child's physical, psychological or emotional needs. It may include:

- failing to ensure that a child's basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, health care, hygiene and education are met
- failing to provide appropriate supervision to keep a child out of danger. This includes lack of supervision of particular activities or leaving a child alone in the house

**Ways that abuse might be brought to your attention**

- a child might make a direct disclosure about him or herself
- a child might make a direct disclosure about another child
- a child might offer information that is worrying but not a direct disclosure
- a member of staff might be concerned about a child's appearance or behaviour or about the behaviour of a parent or carer towards a child
- a parent or carer might make a disclosure about abuse that a child is suffering or at risk of suffering
- a parent might offer information about a child that is worrying but not a direct disclosure

**Talking to a child who has told you that he/she or another child is being abused**

- reassure the child that telling someone about it was the right thing to do
- tell him/her that you now have to do what you can to keep him/her (or the child who is the subject of the allegation) safe
- let the child know what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it
- let the child tell his or her whole story. Don't try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure that you are clear as to what he/she is saying
- ask the child what he/she would like to happen as a result of what he/she has said, but don't make or infer promises you can't keep
- give the child the ChildLine phone number: 0800 1111

**Helping a child in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention**

- if the child is in immediate danger and is with you, remain with him/her and call the police
- if the child is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them
- if he/she needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and, while you are waiting for it to arrive, get help from your first aider
- if the first aider is not available, use any first aid knowledge that you may have yourself to help the child
- you also need to contact your supervisor/manager or named person for child protection to let them know what is happening.

A decision will need to be made about who should inform the child's family and the local authority designated officer, and when they should be informed. If you have involved the police and/or the health services, they should be part of this decision. Consider the welfare of the child in your decision making as the highest priority

Issues that will need to be taken into account are:

- the child's wishes and feelings
- the parent's right to know (unless this would place the child or someone else in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation)
- the impact of telling or not telling the parent
- the current assessment of the risk to the child and the source of that risk

- . any risk management plans that currently exist

Once any immediate danger or emergency medical need has been dealt with, follow the steps set out in the flowchart that follows.

#### Keeping a record of your concerns.

Use the example reporting form to record the concern and how it is dealt with. The relevant sections of the form should be completed and signed at each stage of the procedure. It can be used to forward information to the statutory child protection authorities, if a referral to them is required. The form should be signed and dated by all those involved in its completion and kept confidentially on the child's file. The name of the person making the notes should be written alongside each entry.

#### Useful contact details.

The Board member with responsibility for Child Protection is Ian Sanderson – 07802 888131 and [iansanderson@btinternet.com](mailto:iansanderson@btinternet.com)

The named person for child protection is Julie Elston, Children's officer – 07747 110933 and [julieelston09@aol.com](mailto:julieelston09@aol.com)

Her deputy and children's chaperone is Elaine Delaney.

Local police: 0845 458 0000

Local authority designated officer: 01606 275099 or out of hours 01606 76611

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 or [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Childline 0800 11111 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

#### Reporting child protection concerns

If a child is in need of emergency medical attention or in immediate danger, follow the procedure set out in the section on helping a child in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention and then take steps to follow the flowchart to ensure that the concern is dealt with.

Member of staff has concerns about a child's safety or welfare



Member of staff makes notes of their concerns using the reporting form, and discusses them with supervisor/manager. The named person for child protection should also be involved in discussion.



If the child's family does not already know about the concern, the member of staff or manager discusses it with them **unless**:

- a family member might be responsible for abusing the child
- someone may be put in danger by the family being informed
- informing the family might interfere with a criminal investigation

If any of these circumstances apply, discussions with the family should only take place after this has been agreed with the local authority designated officer (LADO).



If there is still uncertainty about the concerns, the named person (or supervisor/manager if named person not available) can discuss with LADO or with NSPCC Helpline without disclosing the identity of the child/family



**Concerned**

Named person refers to local authority designated officer and confirms in writing within 48 hours



**No longer concerned**

No further child protection action needed. Staff member and supervisor/manager decide whether to discuss the initial concern with other services (eg school) to ensure that the child's needs are being met elsewhere



## Form for reporting concerns about a child

### Details of child and parents/carers

Name of child:	
Gender:	Age:
Ethnicity:	Date of birth:
Additional needs:	
Name(s) of parent(s)/carer(s):	
Child's home address and address(es) of parents (if different from child's):	

### Your details

Your name:	Your position:	Date and time of incident:
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### Report

Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else? (delete as appropriate):	
Reporting own concerns	Responding to concerns raised by someone else
If you are responding to concerns raised by someone else, please provide their name and position within the organisation:	
Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have, including times, dates, description of any injuries, whether information is first hand or the accounts of others, including any other relevant details:	
The child's account/perspective:	



<p>Please provide details of anyone alleged to have caused the incident or to be the source of any concerns:</p>
<p>Provide details of anyone who has witnessed the incident or who shares the concerns:</p>
<p>Please note: concerns should be discussed with the family <b>unless</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the view is that a family member might be responsible for abusing the child</li> <li>• someone may be put in danger by the parents being informed</li> <li>• informing the family might interfere with a criminal investigation</li> </ul> <p>If any of these circumstances apply, consult with the local authority designated officer to decide whether or not discussions with the family should take place.</p> <p>Have you spoken to the child's parents/carers? If so, please provide details of what was said. If not, please state the reason for this.</p>
<p>Are you aware of any previous incidents or concerns relating to this child and of any current risk management plan/support plan? If so, please provide details:</p>
<p>Summary of discussion with supervisor/manager:</p>
<p>Has the situation been discussed with the named person for child protection? Yes/No (delete as appropriate)</p> <p>If so, please summarise the discussion:</p>
<p>After discussion with the supervisor/line manager and named person, do you still have child protection concerns? Yes/No (delete as appropriate)</p>
<p>Have you informed the statutory child protection authorities?</p> <p>Police: Yes/No Date and time: Name and phone number of person spoken to:</p> <p>Local authority designated officer: Yes/No Date and time: Name and phone number of person spoken to:</p> <p>Action agreed with child protection authorities:</p>
<p>What has happened since referring to statutory agency(ies)? Include the date and nature of feedback from referral, outcome and relevant dates:</p>

If the concerns are not about child protection, details of any further steps taken to provide support to child and family, and any other agencies involved:

Signed:	Name and position:	Date and time

## Dealing with allegations made against another child

This procedure explains what to do if child protection allegations are made against another child involved with the organisation.

### Aims and purpose of procedure

The aims of this procedure are to:

- ensure that children who attend Chester Mystery Plays, and any other children who may come to the attention of Chester Mystery Plays are protected and supported following an allegation that they may have been abused by another child or young person involved with Chester Mystery Plays
- ensure that there is a fair, consistent and robust response to any allegations of this nature so that the risk posed to other children by the child/young person in question is managed effectively
- facilitate an appropriate level of investigation into allegations, whether they relate to recent alleged activity, said to have taken place during the time that the child/young person in question has been involved with Chester Mystery Plays, or whether they relate to abuse which allegedly took place prior to the child's/young person's involvement with Chester Mystery Plays
- ensure that Chester Mystery Plays continues to fulfil its responsibilities towards children and young people who may be subject to such investigations and are in need of support
- ensure that there is an appropriate response in situations where allegations are unfounded or deemed to be malicious in origin

The purpose of the procedure is to provide a clear direction to staff that are called upon to deal with such allegations and to manage investigations and care plans which may result from them.

This procedure applies to:

- any member of staff (including fee paid artists), volunteer or trustee to whom an allegation of abuse has been made which suggests that another child or young person is responsible
- anyone in a managerial position, including the named person for child protection, line managers and supervisors, who may be required to deal with such allegations and manage investigations and care plans that result from them

### Different types of abuse

Types of abuse that one child might inflict upon another are most likely to be either physical abuse or sexual abuse.

**Physical abuse** is violence causing injury or occurring regularly during childhood. It happens when:

- a child is hurt or injured by being hit, shaken, squeezed, thrown, burned, scalded, bitten or cut
- someone tried to drown or suffocate a child

- someone gives a child poison, alcohol or inappropriate drugs
- someone fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child

In some cases the injuries will be caused deliberately. In others they may be accidental but caused by the child being knowingly put at risk.

**Sexual abuse** occurs when someone uses power or control to involve a child in sexual activity in order to gratify the abuser's own sexual, emotional or financial needs or desires. It may include:

- forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening
- encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- showing children pornographic material or involving them in the production of such material
- involving children in watching other people's sexual activity or in inappropriate discussions about sexual matters.

**Emotional abuse** is persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment of a child that is likely to cause serious harm to his/her development. It may include:

- persistently denying the child love and affection
- regularly making the child feel frightened by shouts, threats or any other means
- hurting another person or a pet in order to distress a child
- being so over-protective towards the child that he/she is unable to develop or lead a normal life
- exploiting or corrupting a child eg by involving him/her in illegal behaviour
- conveying to the child the message that he/she is worthless, unlovable, inadequate, or only valuable insofar as they meet the needs of another person. This may or may not include racist, homophobic or other forms of abuse.

**Neglect** involves persistently failing to meet a child's physical, psychological or emotional needs. It may include:

- failing to ensure that a child's basic needs for food, shelter, clothing, health care, hygiene and education are met
- failing to provide appropriate supervision to keep a child out of danger. This could include lack of supervision of particular activities or leaving a child alone in the house.

**Ways that allegations might be made against another child/young person involved with (name of group/organisation)**

- a child or parent/carer might make a direct allegation against another child or young person
- a child or parent/carer might express discomfort with the behaviour of another child or young person that falls short of a specific allegation
- another child, member of staff or volunteer may directly observe behaviour from one child/young person towards another that gives cause for concern
- Chester Mystery Plays may be informed by a parent or by the police or another statutory authority that a child or young person is the subject of an investigation
- a child or young person may volunteer information to Chester Mystery Plays that he/she has harmed another child or is at risk of doing so, or has committed an offence against or related to a child

### **Child protection or bullying?**

When faced with a situation of one child or young person behaving inappropriately towards another, a decision needs to be made about whether the problem behaviour constitutes bullying or a child

protection concern. This is a decision that needs to be reached by the named person for child protection, in consultation with the staff member responsible for the child, the staff member's manager/supervisor and, if necessary, the local authority designated officer.

If the conclusion is that the behaviour is an example of bullying, and if both children attend the group/organisation, it needs to be dealt with under the anti-bullying policy and procedure.

If it is behaviour that could be described as child abuse and has led to the victim possibly suffering significant harm, then it must be dealt with under child protection procedures. This should include all incidents of sexual assault and all but the most minor incidents of physical assault.

This checklist can be used to help inform the decision:

### **Bullying**

- the difference of power between the bully and the person being bullied is relatively small
- the bullying behaviour may be from a number of children/young people acting in a group rather than from one child acting alone
- it may also, but not necessarily, be directed towards a group of other children rather than an individual child
- the behaviour involves teasing or making fun of someone, excluding a child from games and conversations, pressurising other children not to be friends with someone, spreading hurtful rumours or circulating inappropriate photographs/images/drawings, cyberbullying eg through Facebook, Twitter or text message, shouting at or verbally abusing someone, stealing someone's possessions, making threats, or harassment on the basis of race, gender, sexuality or disability
- the behaviour has not previously been a concern and the bully or bullies may have been responding to group pressure
- the behaviour is perceived as bullying by the victim

Please note: physical or sexual assault, or forcing someone to do something embarrassing, harmful or dangerous is also included in the list of bullying behaviours, but are the most likely to constitute a child protection concern if the victim suffers significant harm as a result of the behaviour.

### **Child protection concerns**

- the difference of power between the child who is abusing and the person being abused is significant eg there is an age difference of more than two years, there is a significant difference in terms of size or level of ability, the abuser holds a position of power (such as being a helper, volunteer or informal leader) or the victim is significantly more vulnerable than the other child or young person
- the behaviour involves sexual assault or physical assault (other than the most minor physical assault)
- the child who is the victim of the behaviour may have suffered significant harm
- the behaviour may not necessarily be perceived by the victim as abusive, particularly if it is sexual in nature
- the behaviour is not a one-off incident and is part of a pattern of concerning behaviour on the part of the child or young person who is abusing
- the behaviour, if sexual, is not part of normal experimentation that takes place between children and young people

### **Sexual abuse or normal experimentation?**

All children and young people develop an interest in their own sexuality from a young age, and seek to learn about sex from their peers. It is important not to label normal, healthy behaviour as deviant or abusive. It is equally important not to allow sexually abusive behaviour perpetrated by one child or young person towards another to go unchecked, as this is harmful both for the victim and the perpetrator.

There are ways of assessing whether sexual behaviour between children and young people is abusive or not. Indicators of abusive behaviour include:

- there is a significant difference in age, dominance or understanding between the children/young people
- the behaviour was accompanied by the use of threats or bribes
- the behaviour was carried out in secret

For the purposes of this procedure however, it is enough to say that if there is any question that the behaviour could be abusive, the matter should be discussed with the local authority designated officer or with the NSPCC Helpline (0808 800 5000). This can initially take place without the names of the children or young people being disclosed, although such information will have to be provided if the view of the LADO or the NSPCC is that the behaviour may constitute significant harm and that an investigation is needed.

### **What to do if you have child protection concerns**

**Is the child who has been allegedly abused, or the child who has allegedly perpetrated the abuse, in immediate danger or does either of them need emergency medical attention?**

- if either child is in immediate danger and is with you, remain with him/her and call the police if you are unable to remove the danger yourself
- if the child is elsewhere, contact the police and explain the situation to them
- if a child needs emergency medical attention, call an ambulance and, while you are waiting for it to arrive, get help from your first aider
- if the first aider is not available, use any first aid knowledge that you may have yourself to help the child
- you also need to contact your supervisor/manager or named person for child protection to let them know what is happening

A decision will need to be made about when and who should inform the families of both the child who has been abused and the child who has allegedly perpetrated the abuse, as well as the local authority children's services department.

If the child who is the alleged victim is not known to Chester Mystery Plays it is not our role to inform the child's family. Even if the child who is the alleged victim is known, the police and/or the health services should be part of the decision making process if they have been contacted.

The paramount consideration should always be the welfare of the children and young people involved. Issues that will need to be taken into account are:

- the children's wishes and feelings
- the parents' right to know (unless this would place the child who has allegedly perpetrated the abuse in danger, or would interfere with a criminal investigation)
- the impact of telling or not telling the parents
- the current assessment of the risk to the child who has been abused and the source of that risk

- the current assessment of any risk to the child who has allegedly perpetrated the abuse and the source of that risk
- any risk management plans that currently exist for either child.

**Once any immediate danger or emergency medical need has been dealt with, the procedure set out below should be followed:**

1. The member of staff who has been informed of the allegation or who has the concern, should make notes of what he/she has been told or of his/her direct concerns using the reporting form, and should discuss these with his/her supervisor/manager within 24 hours. The named person for child protection should also be involved in the discussion.
2. If both children/young people are known to (name of group/organisation) and if their families do not already know about the allegation or concern, the member of staff, manager or named person should discuss it with them unless:
  - the view is that someone (for example the child who has allegedly perpetrated the abuse) may be put in danger by the family being informed
  - informing the family might interfere with a criminal investigation

If any of these circumstances apply, discussions with the families should only take place after this has been agreed with the local authority designated officer.

3. If only the child who is alleged to have harmed another child is known to Chester Mystery Plays, then, subject to the considerations set out in above, discussions with only this child's family should take place.
4. The child who is the subject of the allegation should also be informed of what has been said about him/her. However, if the view is that the LADO or the police should be involved, the child should only be informed after discussion and agreement with these agencies. These agencies may have views about what information should be disclosed to the child/young person at this stage.
5. If there is still uncertainty about whether the allegation or concern constitutes a child protection issue, the named person (or supervisor/manager if named person not available) should discuss with the LADO or with the NSPCC Helpline without disclosing the identity of either child/family.
6. If, having discussed the situation fully and taken advice if necessary, the manager/supervisor and the named person concludes that the alleged behaviour does not constitute a child protection issue, then consideration should be given to whether the anti-bullying policy and procedure should be used (if both children are known to the organisation) and whether either or both children should be referred for other services.
7. If the view is that the behaviour does indeed amount to a child protection issue, the named person should refer both children to the LADO and confirm the referral in writing within 24 hours.
8. Pending the outcome of the referral to the LADO and the possible investigation or assessment that may follow from this, any risk that may be posed to other children by the child who has allegedly harmed another child will need to be carefully managed. This should be done on an inter-agency basis in accordance with



procedures developed by the local safeguarding children board for children who display harmful behaviour towards others.

9. The named person should enquire of the LADO whether these procedures are being used and, if so, should ask to be involved in or at least kept informed of inter-agency decisions made in accordance with these procedures.
10. If the procedures are not being used but Chester Mystery Plays remains concerned that the child/young person could pose a risk to other children, then the named person and the manager should consider whether the child/young person can continue to be involved with Chester Mystery Plays and, if so, on what basis. This is a situation that needs to be kept under regular review as the investigation and assessment conducted by the statutory agencies is carried out and reaches a conclusion. It may also need to be reviewed regularly following the conclusion of the assessment process, as the child or young person may be receiving support that should, with time, reduce the level of risk he/she presents.
11. If the allegation is found to be without substance or fabricated, Chester Mystery Plays will consider referring the child who was said to have been harmed to the LADO for them to assess whether he/she is in need of services (for example, the child may have been abused by someone else).
12. If it is felt that there has been malicious intent behind the allegation, Theatre in the Quarter will discuss with the police whether there are grounds to pursue any action against the person responsible

**What should I say to a child who says that he/she or another child is being abused by another child/young person?**

- reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling someone about it
- tell him/her that you now have to do what you can to keep him/her (or the child who is the subject of the allegation) safe
- let the child know what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it
- let the child tell his/her whole story. Don't try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure that you are clear as to what he/she is saying
- if possible, explain to the child's parent/carer what has happened. Do this first without the child there, and then summarise it again in front of the child so that it is an open subject between parent/carer and child. This may enable them to talk about it together more easily
- check out what the child would like to happen as a result of what he/she has said, but don't make or infer promises you can't keep
- give the child the ChildLine phone number (0800 1111)
- make sure that the parent/carer has support too

**What should I say to a child/young person who says that he/she has abused another child?**

- reassure the child that he/she has done the right thing by telling someone about it
- tell him/her that you now have to do what you can to keep him/her and the child who has been abused safe
- let the child know what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it
- let the child tell his/her whole story. Don't try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure that you are clear as to what he/she is saying
- if there is no risk to the child from the child's parent/carer, then explain to the parent/carer what has happened. Do this firstly without the child there, and then summarise it again in

front of the child so that it is an open subject between parent/carer and child. This may enable them to talk about it together more easily

- check out what the child expects to happen as a result of what he/she has said. Offer reassurance where appropriate but don't make or infer promises you can't keep
- reassure the child that, with help, the problem can be sorted out and that what has happened does not make him/her an abuser for life
- give the child the ChildLine phone number
- remember that the child who has behaved in this way is a child in need of support
- make sure that the parent/carer has support too

### **Recording the concerns**

Use the reporting form to record (pp 7-9 of this document) the concern and how it is dealt with. The relevant sections of the form should be completed and signed at each stage of the procedure. It can be used to forward information to the statutory child protection authorities if a referral to them is needed.



## **Behaviour code for adults working with children**

This has been taken from the Safe Network *Are They Safe?* guide, and was originally adapted from policies developed by Leonard Cheshire Disability media project and NSPCC consultancy services.

### **Chester Mystery Plays behaviour code**

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of staff and volunteers from Chester Mystery Plays, and staff from other organisations who engage with children and young people through Chester Mystery Plays and its activities.

It has been informed by the views of children and young people.

#### **Purpose**

Following this code will help to protect children from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

#### **Upholding this code of behaviour**

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to Julie Elston (Company Manager) under the whistle-blowing procedure or, if necessary, under child protection procedures.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to Chester Mystery Plays' disciplinary procedures. Any breach of the code involving a volunteer or member of staff from another agency or organisation may result in them being asked to leave Chester Mystery Plays.

Serious breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police or the local authority children's services department.

#### **The role of staff and volunteers**

When working with children and young people for Chester Mystery Plays, all staff and volunteers are acting in a position of trust. It is important that staff and volunteers are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and young people and must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

When working with children and young people, it is important to:

- operate within Chester Mystery Plays' principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- follow the Chester Mystery Plays' child protection policy and procedures at all times
- listen to and respect children at all times
- avoid favouritism
- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving children and young people in planning activities wherever possible
- ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and in relation to the work of the project

- always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory
- follow the ICT safety policy and report any breaches
- always ensure equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
- provide examples of good conduct you wish children and young people to follow
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse
- ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people or if this isn't possible, that you are within sight or hearing of other adults
- be close to where others are working. If a child specifically asks for or needs some private time with you, ensure other staff should know where you and the child are
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.

**You must not:**

- patronise or treat children and young people as if they are silly
- allow allegations to go unreported
- develop inappropriate relationships such as contact with children and young people that is not a part of the work of Chester Mystery Plays or agreed with the manager or leader
- conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person. Any such behaviour between an adult member of staff or volunteer and a child or young person using the services of Chester Mystery Plays represents a serious breach of trust on the part of the staff member or volunteer and is not acceptable under any circumstances
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number or address)
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- rely on your reputation or that of Chester Mystery Plays to protect you
- take unnecessary risks when common sense, policy or practice suggests a more prudent approach
- adopt an attitude of complacency with regard to your own conduct.

## **Photography policy**

Taken and amended from the Child Protection in Sport Unit website [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

Avoid using children's names (first name or surname) in photograph captions. If the child is named, avoid using his or her photograph. If the photograph is used, avoid naming the child.

Use a parental permission form to obtain consent for a child to be photographed/videoed.

Obtain child's permission to use their image.

Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. Some activities – swimming, drama, gymnastics and athletics for example – present a much greater risk of potential misuse.

Address the use of images of children on the organisation's website. Images accompanied by personal information eg this is X who likes dance – could be used by an individual to learn more about a child prior to grooming them for abuse.

Issue written expectations of professional photographers or the press who are invited to an event, making clear the organisation's expectations of them in relation to child protection.

Do not allow photographers unsupervised access to children.

Do not approve photography sessions outside the event/workshop/approved activity or at a child's home.



## Consent form for the use of photographs and film (parents and children)

Chester Mystery Plays recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all children.

In accordance with our child protection policy we will not permit photographs, film or other images of children and young people to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and children.

Chester Mystery Plays will follow the guidance for the use of photographs a copy of which is available from Julie Elston.

Chester Mystery Plays will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform Chester Mystery Plays immediately.

*I (parent/carer - print name and sign)*

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consent to Chester Mystery Plays photographing or videoing

*(Name of child)*

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*I (print child's name and sign)*

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consent to *(organisation)* photographing or videoing my involvement in *(insert name of event/workshop/activity)*

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Role description for named person for child protection**

### **Role description**

**Employer:** Chester Mystery Plays

**Hours:** as required

**Location:** as required

**Reports to:** Project Manager

**CRB requirement:** Appointment to this post is subject to a satisfactory enhanced CRB check

### **Purpose of the role**

- To take the lead role in ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place at Chester Mystery Plays for keeping children and young people safe
- To promote the safety and welfare of children and young people using Chester Mystery Plays

### **Duties and responsibilities**

1. Make sure that all issues concerning the safety and welfare of children and young people who attend the youth club are properly dealt with through policies, procedures and administrative systems
2. Make sure that the workers at Chester Mystery Plays, children/young people, parents/carers and the management committee are made aware of the procedures and what they should do if they have concerns about a child or children
3. Receive and record information from anyone who has concerns about a child who attends Chester Mystery Plays workshops, events etc
4. Take the lead on dealing with information that may constitute a child protection concern. This includes assessing and clarifying the information, and taking decisions where necessary in consultation with colleagues, the chair of the management committee and statutory child protection agencies
5. Consult with, pass on information to and receive information from statutory child protection agencies, such as the local authority designated officer and the police. This includes making formal referrals to these agencies when necessary
6. Consult with the NSPCC Helpline when such support is needed
7. Report regularly to the Project Manager and Lead Board member



**8. Be familiar with and work within local inter-agency child protection procedures developed by the local safeguarding children board**

**9. Be familiar with issues relating to child protection and abuse, and keep up-to-date with new developments in this area**

**10. Attend training in issues relevant to child protection from time to time and share knowledge from that training with workers and management committee members**

**11. Attend team meetings, supervision sessions and management meetings as arranged**

**12. Work flexibly as may be required and carry out any other reasonable duties**