

POLICY STATEMENT

Sherman Theatre aims to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults participating in the Arts and will ensure that its managers, staff, partner organisations, contractors and any volunteers commit to good practice which protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. In so doing it will comply with current legislation and take account of best practice. In particular, the company recognises that managers, staff and volunteers all have responsibilities under the Children Act 2004.

This Policy should be read alongside the Sherman Theatre “Guidelines for Working with Young People and Vulnerable Adults” contained in the staff handbook.

The Child Protection Officer is the Executive Director, with the Head of Finance & Administration as Deputy if the ED is not available.

Scope and Focus of this Policy

This policy will relate to all activities undertaken by Sherman Theatre which involve children, young people and vulnerable adults. In practice, it will relate to activities at the home base (Sherman Theatre), in schools, community venues, theatres, outdoor sites and in particular to weekly classes and workshops, holiday activities and any intensive weekend schools or residencies. It will also relate to any activities involving Sherman Theatre staff that are run jointly with Councils or external partners and to school and college students on Work Placements.

Recruitment, Selection and Contracting Procedures

Recruitment, selection and contracting procedures will be applied to all personnel, whether paid or unpaid, staff or contractor, where the post involves direct contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

In each and every case:

Applicants must provide evidence of their identity and this process will be recorded [note: 1]

Applicants must provide details of previous experience, paid or voluntary of working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. [note: 2]

At least two references will be sought, at least one of which will make informed comment on the applicant’s experience of paid or voluntary work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

It will be made clear to applicants that the position is exempt from provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, which means that all convictions however old must be declared. It will be stressed that this process is confidential.

Applicants will be interviewed and this will be seen as an opportunity to assess the individual’s experience of working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

All paid and voluntary appointments will be conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period. [More information on Probationary Periods is included in the Staff Handbook.]

¹ Bank details on signature of Contract and completion of Employee details form.

² Details will be taken from application forms and from previous employers (not necessarily the applicants’ referees).

Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Health and Safety

All managers, staff, volunteers and contractors must be aware of the company's Health and Safety Policy and issues affecting the operation of performances, classes, workshops and other activities. [All current policies are contained in the Staff Handbook.]

A generic risk assessment for Youth Theatre activities has been developed and is kept under review based on the delivery of classes, workshops and performances by experienced and qualified professional tutors both at the home base and other venues. [see "Guidelines for Working with Young People and Vulnerable Adults" in the Staff Handbook.]

Any additional local risk factors, any outdoor activity or additional sessions involving a different format will be assessed separately. [note 3]. There will be shared responsibility between the company, staff, volunteers and contractors to maintain effective communication on Health and Safety issues, so that any additional risks which may arise can be assessed.

Members of staff should be clear, at all times, who is responsible for children, young people and vulnerable adults on the home base premises particularly when the responsibility for a group is shared between workers in different departments. [note 4]

Members of staff must encourage safe and authorised use of different areas on the premises and should lead by example. Unsafe or inappropriate use of rooms or equipment will not be tolerated.

Illegal drugs and /or alcohol must not be brought onto the premises.

Smoking is not tolerated anywhere within the premises or within a meter of any external doors and windows.

Prescribed drugs should be hidden out of sight and reach. [note 5] [please see the staff handbook "Alcohol and Drugs Policy" for further detail].

Procedures to ensure Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults are protected from harm

- Members of the company and tutors who deal with children, young people and vulnerable adults should have an understanding of the issues of assault and abuse as they relate to children, young people and vulnerable adults, and of the need to implement measures to avoid any such instances occurring within its projects or programmes (including but without limitation Dealing with Challenging Behaviour).
- Due to the relatively informal nature of the relationship between tutors/actors and children it is possible that an abused child may confide or 'let slip' some important information concerning their welfare. Do not agree to keep the issue secret and ensure they are clear you will need to report what they have said to your Child Protection Officer (CPO) at Sherman Cymru.
- If something a child tells you leads you to suspect they are being abused you are obliged to report it to the CPO. (see What to do if you think a child or vulnerable adult is at risk procedure).
- If a member of the company or a tutor finds themselves or the children in a threatening situation they should immediately inform the CPO. If the CPO or deputy is not available, and the situation is such that you have concerns about the immediate safety of a young person, then follow the steps in the "what to do if you think a child or vulnerable adult is at risk procedure" –ringing 101 for Police as a last resort.

³ By the appropriate SMT.

⁴ Youth Theatre: Youth Theatre Leader and Communities and Engagement Coordinator. Chaperones.

⁵ Please see the Alcohol and Drugs Policy in the **Staff Handbook**.

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Training

All staff who work with or who have a responsibility for overseeing work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be offered guidance on the implementation of this policy through the induction system, training is offered every three to five years depending upon the turnover of staff. Questions relating to this policy can be directed to the CPO.

This policy will be reviewed and monitored by the Trustees according to the Schedule of Delegated Authority.

Appendices or attachments to the child protection policy

The Anger Rules

Dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Guidelines for Working with Young people and vulnerable adults

Staff Handbook

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Monitored and reviewed: 11.06.2017 (HR & governance Committee)