

Child Protection Policy

Winchester Musicals and Opera Society 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 Society recognizes that abuse can take many forms, whether it is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The Society is committed to practice that protects children from harm. All members of the Society accept and recognize their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children harm.

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 and employees of the Society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The Society 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 provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- It will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation and informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- It 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.

The Society has child protection procedures, which accompany this policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Society's Equal Opportunities 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 **Suzanne Hall** and she can be contacted on **07791549804** or chairman@wmos.org.uk

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Executive Committee of the Society and will be subject to biannual review.