



## **Safeguarding Policy**

Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. Minis Theatre Club (“Minis”) recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 2008, the Child Performance and Activities licensing legislation 2015, the Children Act 2004 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

Minis recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical, emotional, sexual or through neglect. Minis is committed to protecting children from harm. Everyone working for Minis, as committee members or production staff, accepts and recognises their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

Minis 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
- Everyone working in, for or with Minis should be clear on how to respond appropriately

Minis will ensure that:

- All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity
- The welfare of each child will always be put first
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned
- Adults will be positive role models 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 safeguarding
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children
- 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

Minis has codes of conduct for the children and adults working with the group to help implement and maintain these aims and standards.

### **Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Lead**

The designated Safeguarding lead for Minis is:  
Helen Tylee

The deputy safeguarding lead for Minis is:  
Hannah Wiltshire

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is trained in safeguarding and safeguarding management and takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within Minis.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for promoting positive outcomes for the children's welfare.

The main responsibilities of the DSL are:

- Managing referrals
  - To take lead responsibility for promptly referring all cases of suspected abuse of any child at the School to Bristol Children's Services.
  - To take lead responsibility for promptly making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed or resigns in circumstances where there has been actual harm, or risk of harm, to a child.
  - To take lead responsibility for promptly making referrals to the police where a crime may have been committed which involves a child.
- Work with others
  - Liaise with other adults in the club on matters of safety and safeguarding (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
  - To act as a source of support, advice and expertise to those working with the club on matters of safety, safeguarding, and child protection including when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- Raising awareness
  - To ensure those working with Minis has access to and understands our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures.
  - To ensure this Policy is reviewed annually and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly
  - To ensure this Policy is available publicly
  - To ensure that parents are aware that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made to Bristol Children's Services and the club's role in this.
  - To provide necessary updates for staff

This policy and the associated procedures will be regularly monitored by the committee of the and will be subject to annual review.

### **Responsibilities of the club**

At the outset of any production involving children Minis will

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process

- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child protection
- Engage in effective recruitment of supervisors and other individuals with responsibility for children including, where appropriate, conducting DBS checks or other suitable vetting procedures
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times in a manner and ratio appropriate to the activity and their age
- Know, and be able to implement, the process for reporting any concerns both internally and externally

### **Parents**

- All parents will be made aware of the existence of the Child Protection Policy and the code of conduct
- Minis believes strongly in the importance of a partnership with the parents. To encourage transparency and a good working collaboration parents are permitted to be present during rehearsal
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. Children of senior school age (year 7 upwards) will only be permitted to leave unaccompanied on the written approval of a parent, and with Minis being satisfied that the arrangements are suitable to ensure the safety of the child having regard to the time, venue and likely journey. Children of junior school age are never permitted to leave a rehearsal or performance unaccompanied.
- A register of attendance is maintained for each rehearsal. Children remain under the supervision and responsibility of a parent until registered.

### **Unsupervised Contact**

- Whilst under the care of Minis, no child will be left unsupervised in the care of anyone who is not either a) their own parent or someone who holds parental responsibility for them or b) the holder of an enhanced DBS certificate or c) a licensed chaperone,
- Where possible Minis will endeavour to have two adults in the room when working with children
- Where unsupervised contact is required (e.g for solo rehearsals), steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open
- All members of the production team working with the children, and anyone supervising in a dressing room, must be the holder of an enhanced DBS certificate or a licensed chaperone.

### **Physical Contact**

- Adults will engage only in such physical contact with the children as it necessary to properly carry out their functions for or within Minis.
- It will never be appropriate for there to be any intimate contact between an adult working in/for Minis and a child.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear

## Managing Sensitive Information

- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes at the time they join the club and such permission will continue until the parent notifies otherwise.
- Minis website, social media accounts, and any web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use
- The Society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information in accordance with the relevant GDPR provisions.

## Reporting a child protection issue, whether known or suspected

All safeguarding and child protection concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. If there is an immediate or serious risk to a child, and it is not possible to report to the DSL or deputy DSL, a referral should be made to the Bristol Children's Services immediately (First Response: 0117 903 6444), or the police (999).

Any adult working with Minis, whether as a member of staff, volunteer or contractor who receives an allegation made against another member of staff, volunteer or contractor must report this directly to the DSL. Any allegation against the DSL must be made to the first response team without informing the DSL.

The DSL will make immediate contact with the First Response team, without investigating, within one working day. Thereafter any investigation will be as directed or agreed with First Response or LADO. Any discussions will be recorded in writing and communication with children and parents should be, where possible, agreed. In cases of serious harm, the police will be informed by the DSL from the outset. Parental consent is not required before referring to the Bristol LADO or the Police.

Minis will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against any unwanted publicity in any cases of allegations against staff and volunteers until and unless the person is charged with an offence.

### Contact Information

Helen Tylee Designated Safeguarding Lead	07917 864415
Hannah Wiltshire Committee Chair, Deputy DSL	07801 417497 Hannah.wiltshire@allbionchambers.co.uk
Nicola Laird, Bristol LADO	0117 9037795 nicola.laird@bristol.gov.uk
Bristol Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) (the local Safeguarding Children Board)	0117 903 7786 bscb@bristol.gov.uk

To contact Bristol Children's Services about any concerns regarding the care and welfare of a child

telephone: First Response  
0117 903 6444  
01454 615 165 (out of hours)

Minis performances ordinarily take place in The Olympus Theatre, Filton, which is part of South Gloucestershire. If you have any concerns about a child during or related to any performance in the theatre you can contact

Helen Tylee Designated Safeguarding Lead	07917 864415
Hannah Wiltshire Committee Chair, Deputy DSL	07801 417497 <a href="mailto:Hannah.wiltshire@allbionchambers.co.uk">Hannah.wiltshire@allbionchambers.co.uk</a>
Tina Wilson, South Gloucestershire LADO	07767002901 or 01454 8668508 <a href="mailto:Tina.Wilson@southglos.gov.uk">Tina.Wilson@southglos.gov.uk</a>
South Glos Access and Response	<a href="tel:01454866000">01454 866000</a> (office hours) <a href="tel:01454615165">01454 615165</a> (out of hours / weekends) Office hours are Monday to Thursday 9.00 – 5.00 and Friday 9:00-4.30 <a href="mailto:accessandresponse@southglos.gov.uk">accessandresponse@southglos.gov.uk</a>

#### Other contacts

- NSPCC 24 hour Helpline: 0800 800 5000 (free from a landline)
- NSPCC Text helpline: 88858 (service is free and anonymous)
- Police: 101 (non-emergency calls)

#### **Disclosure of Abuse**

If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place

- Listen carefully to the child and keep an open mind. You are listening, not making a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place.
- Not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer.
- Reassure the child but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. Explain to them the need to pass the information to others who will ensure that the correct action is taken.
- Keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence with quoted phrases only if you are sure of the accuracy of them. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to the DSL. The written record should not be made in the presence of the child, but should be written up as soon as possible.
- Not investigate it any further.

## **Accidents, illness, absence**

- A risk assessment will be conducted prior to any performance by Minis.
  - Supervisors and children will be advised of the rules and expectations regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken
  - If a child is injured a designated first-aider will treat the child and the injury will be recorded in the accident book. The incident/event will be reported to the DSL.
  - Any child partaking in a rehearsal or performance must be healthy and fit to perform. Minis retains records of the medical needs of each child which will be provided to the adults supervising the children at a performance
  - In the event that a child fails to attend a performance or rehearsal Minis will, in the first place, contact the parent to ensure that the child's whereabouts are known.
  - In the event that a child is missing (i.e they have not attended and the parent does not know their whereabouts) or is found to be missing during a rehearsal or performance Minis will
    - Take a register in order to ensure that all the other children were present
    - Inform the DSL and Chair of the Committee
    - Ask all of the adults and children calmly if they can tell us when they last remember seeing the child. Ascertain whether the child has a mobile telephone.
    - Occupy all of the other children in a safe area
    - At the same time, arrange for one or more adults to search everywhere within the venue site, both inside and out, carefully checking all spaces, cupboards, washrooms where a child might hide
    - Check the doors and gates for signs of entry/exit
- If the child is still missing, the following steps would be taken:
- Contact the child's parents and explain what has happened, and what steps have been set in motion. Ask them to come to the venue at once.
  - The DSL/Chair of the Committee will notify the Police
  - Arrange for staff to search the rest of the venue and grounds again.
  - If the child's home is within walking distance, an adult would set out on foot to attempt to find them.
  - Cooperate fully with any Police investigation and any safeguarding investigation by Social Care.

## **Chaperones & Supervisors**

- All children will, at all times, be supervised, at a ratio of 1 adult for each 12 children. Supervision generally may be provided by licensed chaperones, holders or enhanced DBS certificates, or parent volunteers. No one, other than a licensed chaperone or holder of an enhanced DBS certificate is permitted to be left alone with a child unless they are the parent of that child or hold parental responsibility for them
- During performances any child requiring a performance licence will remain at all times under the care of their own parent or a registered chaperone.
- Children not subject to individual performance licenses will be supervised during a performance on the terms stipulated by, or agreed with, the relevant local authority issuing the exemption from licensing or BOPA agreement.

**Safeguarding Policy and Procedures drafted October 2019**  
**Last reviewed: June 2023**

I confirm that I have read and understood the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures of Minis Theatre Club

Signed:

Name:

Role (parent, staff, etc):

Name of child: