

# Whitehaven & District Amateur Operatic Society



## Child Safeguarding Policy

Ratified 2024

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## 1. Introduction:

- 1.1 Whitehaven and District Amateur Operatic Society, hereby referred to as **(WADAOS)** have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that when given the responsibility of Children its Chaperones, Parents/Guardian, Officers and Volunteers understand and accept responsibility for Safeguarding them from harm and abuse.
- 1.2 This means that **(WADAOS)** will ensure everyone follows its policies and procedures to protect Children. This includes reporting any concerns regarding a child's welfare to the appropriate authorities.
- 1.3 **There are three elements to this policy:**
  - A. **PREVENTION** (through awareness of the needs of each Child).
  - B. **DEFINITIONS** (of Child abuse and neglect).
  - C. **PROCEDURES** (for identifying and reporting cases and suspected cases of abuse).

## 2. Policy Aims.

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to promote good practice.
- 2.2 To provide Children and young Persons with adequate/appropriate protection and safety while under the care of **(WADAOS)**.
- 2.3 To allow Members, Volunteers, Chaperones, Officers and Parents/Guardians to make informed and confident responses to any and or specific Child protection issues.

## 3. Prevention.

- 3.1 We recognise that the entertainment industry can be an adult environment.
- 3.2 We expect our Members, Officers, Volunteers, Chaperones, Parent/Guardians, and anyone else that comes into contact with Children to behave appropriately at all times.
- 3.3 With this in mind it is remembered that the welfare of Children is paramount.
- 3.4 **(WADOAS) will:**
  - A. Act within the Children's Act 1989 & 2004.
  - B. Act within the Children (Performances and Activities England) Regulations 2014.
  - C. Establish and maintain an ethos where Children feel welcome, comfortable, and familiar with the environment and are informed of personal, e.g. Toilets, dressing rooms etc. Emergency arrangements e.g. Fire exits, meeting points, etc. Health and Safety procedures, e.g. Dangerous equipment, First aid etc.
  - D. Inform each Child of the persons they are to speak to if for any reason they have questions, problems, or concerns.
  - E. Ensure that all Children are treated with respect and dignity.
  - F. Treat Children as individuals and give them equal opportunities.
  - G. Foster and promote an open, honest environment. To avoid private, unobserved situations, unnecessary physical contact with Children. Involve and allow Parents and Chaperones wherever possible, to take responsibility for the Child/Children under their care and responsibility. (Parents/Guardians must only take responsibility for their own Child.
  - H. To be attentive to each child's individual needs. E.g. Recognising when a child may be tired and may need a break.

- I. To ensure Children are supervised appropriately.
- J. To ensure that all Chaperones are registered with the local authority in which they reside and have an enhanced DBS check.
- K. To ensure all crew and volunteers coming into closer contact with a child are DBS checked.
- L. TO ensure that all volunteers and crew who don't necessarily have close contact with children but who are assisting in the production are aware of their conduct around children.
- M. To ensure that all volunteers, crew and those that have close contact with children are aware of **PREVENT**, a safeguarding sand of the UK governments counter terrorism strategy (**CONEST**).

#### 4. Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect.

- 4.1 A Child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm or fails to act to prevent harm.
- 4.2 A Child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and thus require protection.
  - A. **Physical abuse** – May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates or induces illness in a child who they are looking after.
  - B. **Sexual Abuse** – Forcing or enticing a child/young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, may involve: Physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way.
  - C. **Neglect** - Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or Carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
  - D. **Emotional Abuse** - The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age and developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
  - E. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

## 5. Procedures.

- 5.1 (WADAOS) will adhere to all relevant legislation when working with children and young people under the age of 18 years as outlined in the following:
- A. The Children's Act 1989.
  - B. The Children's Act 2004.
  - C. The Working together to Safeguard Children 2015.
  - D. The Equality Act 2010.

## 6. Suspicions of Abuse.

- 6.1 If you see or suspect the abuse of a child, you must make this known to the Safeguarding Officer, and or the assisting Safeguarding Representatives that have been appointed by the (WADAOS) executive committee.
- 6.2 (WADAOS) LEAD SAFEGUARDING OFFICER:
- WENDY WARDEN – 07817747457.
- 6.3 (WADAOS) ASSISTANT SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES:
- ALISTAIR JONES – 07799063396.
  - REBECCA REYNOLDSON – 07585907367.
  - LAURA SWINBURNE – 07940111093.
  - ARON ARMSTRONG – 07825396638.
  - EMMA JARVIS – 07974464123.
- 6.4 EXTERNAL CONTACTS:
- THE NSPCC – 08088005000.
  - EMAIL: [HELP@NSPCC.ORG.UK](mailto:HELP@NSPCC.ORG.UK)

## 7. Disclosure of Abuse.

- 7.1 If a Child tells you that he/she or another Child/young person is being abused you must do the following:
- A. Always stop and listen straight away, show that you take their allegations seriously.
  - B. Encourage the child to talk, do not ask leading questions, interrupt or ask the child to repeat themselves.
  - C. Never promise that you will keep what is said confidential or secret, explain that if you are told something of concern that you will need to let someone know but that you will only tell the people who need to know and that can help.
  - D. Make a record of what you have been told accurately and as soon as possible, use the child's own words.
  - E. Take note of the time, place, if there were others present and the child's demeanour.
  - F. Report your concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding officer (**Wendy Warden – 07817747457**) or the deputy officers listed on **page 6** of this document.
  - G. Please **DO NOT** confront the alleged abuser.
- 7.2 You may also contact the Cumberland safeguarding hub on **0333 240 1727**. If you have a serious concern about a child or in an emergency, then contact the police immediately on **999**.

## 8. Handling Allegations

- 8.1 If a child makes an allegation against a person involved with society either directly or indirectly, this must be reported urgently to the designated Safeguarding Officer or their Deputies who will refer the allegation to the Social Care department for Children's Services. If the allegation is against the designated Safeguarding officer or their Deputies, information should be reported to a member of the executive or directly to Social Care department for Children's Services. (This would generally be referred to the authority in which the alleged incident took place).
- 8.2 The alleged perpetrator should not be made aware of the allegation at this point.

## 9. Recording

- 9.1 In all situations the details of an allegation or a reported incident, must be recorded.
- 9.2 Take accurate notes of the time, dates, the incident, the persons involved, what was said and done, the action that needs taken to investigate, and any further action taken e.g. The suspension of an individual.
- 9.3 If relevant, give the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency.
- 9.4 Include the name of person reporting, and who it was reported to.
- 9.5 The record must be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know.

## 10. Conclusion

- 10.1 **DO NOT** worry that you might be mistaken, everyone has the responsibility to pass on concerns following a disclosure. **NEVER** think that abuse is impossible, or that an accusation that is made against someone you know and trust to be untrue.

## 11. Wendy Warden

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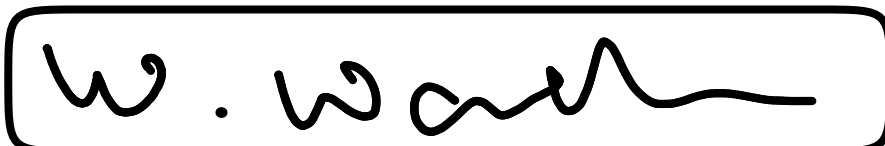
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## Preventing Radicalisation

**We have a duty to be aware of the risks of extremist ideologies and radicalisation for children and young people. Modern technology means that they can radicalise themselves without others being involved just by searching for particular topics.**

### Definition

“Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.”

Keeping Children Safe in Education

This does not mean that individuals are not entitled to have different points of view - differing points of view and healthy debate in relation to those are, after all, what brings about change. However, it's vital that we identify and get support for those who express extremist views.

### What do we mean by extremist views?

Fundamental British values include democracy, mutual respect and tolerance of others. Extremist views oppose these. Such views may be linked to religious beliefs, however, there are other extremist groups (which may or may not resort to terrorism), e.g., far-right/far-left ideologies, extreme animal rights, environmentalist and misogynist groups.

### Prevent duty

Under the government's CONTEST strategy there is a specific requirement for settings to ensure that children who are at risk of being radicalised are identified and flagged to multi-agency partners. In line with general safeguarding practices, this is about knowing the children and young people that you work with and identifying those you have concerns about.

### Vulnerable groups

All children and young people are vulnerable to radicalisation. There are, however, specific groups

- struggle with their sense of identity/knowing where they belong;

<https://safeguarding.network/radicalisation>  
**confidence** in safeguarding

who are more vulnerable, including children who:

- are experiencing family issues;
- are experiencing racism or discrimination; • have experienced a traumatic event;
- have poor self-esteem or mental ill-health;
- have specific needs (e.g., learning needs or disabilities);
- are permanently excluded from school.

### Spot the signs

- being overly secretive about their online viewing or social media;
- expressions of an 'us and them' mentality;
- talk of revenge, an obsessive desire for change;
- being quick to condemn those who disagree and ignoring views that contradict their own;
- questioning their faith or identity, or sudden, unexplained religious conversion;
- downloading or promoting extremist content;
- social isolation or a high number of new friends;
- altered appearance – e.g., a change in style of dress.

### What to do

- listen to the conversations of children and young people;
- support children and families;
- promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development along with fundamental British values;
- raise concerns with your designated safeguarding lead and/or Prevent lead.

Remember - this is not an exhaustive list, and you know the children/young people you work with. However, remain mindful that children can and do change their views, and it's important that there is healthy and balanced debate.

**Take action** – and keep taking action until you know children and young people are safe.