



Teesdale Operatic Society Child & Young Persons Protection Policy

"We, in the Teesdale Operatic Society, are committed to a practice which protects children from harm. All the volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which can cause children harm."

Teesdale Operatic Society CIC ("TOS") recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, the Protection of Children Act 1999, Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 (in Scotland change to Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003), Children Act 1989, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by the United Kingdom Government in 1991), and the safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The Company recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

TOS is committed to practices which protect children from harm. All members of TOS accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm. This policy has been written in accordance with NODA guidelines.

1. A 'child' in the context of this policy refers to any person under school leaving age (i.e. they can leave school on the last Friday in June if they are under 16 at the end of the summer holiday) who is at any time engaged in activities associated with TOS.
2. A 'young person' in the context of this policy refers to any person aged between school leaving age and under the age of 18 years who is at any time engaged in activities associated with TOS.
3. Participants must be school leaving age or above unless a parent or licensed chaperone is also present in the same production. Children under school leaving age may also be involved in TOS productions, provided that the signed consent of a parent is received for this specific activity and that they are accompanied by a parent or a Durham County Council approved Chaperone (who maybe the same person as the named adult) at any given time.
4. A standard Parental Consent Form is attached as part of this policy (Annexe A)

Teesdale Operatic Society believe 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 of TOS should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

Teesdale Operatic Society will ensure that:

- An initial meeting will take place with the Production Director of each production and the designated Child Protection Officer before rehearsals begin.
- The designated Child Protection Officer will be at the 1st meeting of all productions.
- The Production Director is aware it is their responsibility to inform the Child Protection Officer of any young person under the age of 18 taking part after auditions and any changes to the cast or new people joining in any role if the person is under 18.
- The Production Director is proactive in determining if a young person is under the age of 18.
- TOS will ensure that all activities involving children are licensed in accordance with the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014.
- The Parents of the children are expected to respond promptly to requests from TOS for information to ensure that a Child Performance Licence can be put in place if necessary.
- All children and young persons will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The duty of care to children and young persons will always be put first.
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children and young persons 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 TOS provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- TOS will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation.
- TOS will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.
- TOS will undertake relevant development and training.
- TOS 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.

TOS has child protection procedures which accompany this policy (Annex B)

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Company's Equal Opportunities Policy, its Health & Safety Policy, its Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy and its Data Protection Policy.



**Teesdale Operatic Society
Child & Young Persons
Protection Policy**

The Company has at least one dedicated Child and Young Person Protection Officer who is also a trustee. The Child and Young Person Protection Officers are in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to and to act as a point of contact for any areas of concern.

Their name is: Adele Tyler

They can be contacted at: adele.tyler@teesdaleoperaticsociety.co.uk

Date: 4th March 2020

signed, Chair, Teesdale Operatic Society



Teesdale Operatic Society Child & Young Persons Protection Policy

Annex A - Example Consent Letter

Teesdale Operatic Society
Westholme Farm
Winston
County Durham
DL2 3QL
info@teesdaleoperaticsociety.co.uk

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Thanks for your family's interest in Teesdale Operatic Society.

TOS is a community musical theatre company with an open door policy to all adult members. We do not carry out background checks on any new members and therefore, for the safety of all participants, we restrict membership to individuals aged 16 and over, unless the child is accompanied by a parent/guardian or a Durham County Council approved Chaperone.

Whilst TOS will do their utmost to safeguard every participant, we ask parents or guardians of young people to read and agree to the following guidelines for their children's participation.

- Children or young people aged under 16 must be accompanied at all rehearsals, events and performances by a parent/guardian or DCC approved Chaperone.
- Parents or guardians are responsible for young people's travel to and from rehearsals and performances.
- All children must be handed over by an adult to a DCC approved Chaperone who will register their attendance and will check their collection arrangement. Children must be collected from a chaperone by a parent or guardian.
- Parents or guardians will reply promptly for request for information in order that we can obtain a Child Performance Licence.
- TOS is unable to take responsibility for any actions by individual members.
- TOS is committed to a practice which protects children from harm and a copy of our current Child Protection Policy is attached.

If you are happy for your child to remain involved, please complete the form attached and return it to the Production Director at the next rehearsal. Please contact me if you have any questions about any of the points in this letter.

TOS has one members who is the designated Child Protection Officer and they will be in touch with you should your child / children become involved in our next production.

Thank you again

Chair, Teesdale Operatic Society



**Teesdale Operatic Society
Child & Young Persons
Protection Policy**

Teesdale Operatic Society Parents/Guardian Consent Form (Please complete in block capitals)

Name of child:

Date of Birth:

Name of parent/guardian.

Parent/guardian Address:

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Parent/guardian

Home Telephone number:.....

Mobile phone number:

Alternative contact number

e-mail:

I have read and agree to the guidelines for my child's participation in Teesdale Operatic Society.

Signed.

(Parent/guardian)

Date:

Please inform us of any medical conditions that we should be aware of:-

Teesdale Operatic Society has a data protection policy, which may be viewed on the Teesdale Operatic Society website (www.teesdaleoperaticsociety.co.uk) By giving yours or your child's contact details you have consented for TOS to hold your details for production purposes for the duration of the rehearsals and performance. After the performance we would like to keep in contact with you to let you know about future shows. Please tick this box if you do not wish us to keep your details on file

Digital still and video photography will be taken during the rehearsals and production, in addition there may be voice recording (e.g. for local radio). Some of this material may be used on the TOS website and in newspapers and individuals may be named. Please tick this box if you do not want your child named on the TOS website or their photograph taken for newspapers, the latter may require individuals to be named. Please note by the ensemble nature of the show we cannot guarantee that their image will not be on the TOS website but will ensure that no name is associated with it. In addition TOS will not name under 18s on the radio, on Facebook or other forms of social media.

Note: The information above will only be used internally for Teesdale Operatic Society and will NOT be distributed to third parties.

Annex B - Child and Young Person Protection Procedures

1.0 Responsibilities of the Company

At the outset of any production or event involving children and Young Persons the Company will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for child and young persons protection.
- Engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate vetting.
- Identify nominated licensed Chaperones for those children under 16.
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern, by ringing First Contact on Tel: 03000 267 979.

2.0 Parents

- TOS believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents/guardians and TOS. Parent/guardians are encouraged to be involved in the activities of TOS and to share responsibility for the care of their child. All parents/guardians will be given a copy of the Company's Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- All parents/guardians have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of TOS to take children home.

3.0 Unsupervised Contact

- TOS will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children or young persons.
- If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children or young persons.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, 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.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children or young persons, he or she may be required to obtain a DBS clearance. Refer to DBS Policy.

4.0 Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children and young persons.
- Adults will only touch children and young persons when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child and young person prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

5.0 Managing sensitive information

- TOS has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children and young persons.
- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children or young persons for promotional or other purposes.
- TOS will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

6.0 Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of TOS, please make this known to the person with responsibility for child/young person protection. If you suspect that the person with responsibility for child protection is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to a member of the Board.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of, or person associated with TOS, that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the venue, rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children in the production.

7.0 Disclosure of abuse

If a child/young person confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child/young person to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.

Teesdale Operatic Society Child & Young Persons Protection Policy
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- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the person with responsibility for child/young person protection. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child/young person that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child/young person what you are going to do next. Speak immediately to the person with responsibility for child/young person protection. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's/young person's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

8.0 Recording

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken e.g. suspension of an individual, and where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

9.0 Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of TOS, he or she will be made aware of his rights.
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the child/young person who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 2018. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.
- In criminal law the Crown, or other prosecuting authority, has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

10.0 Accidents

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children will be advised of "house rules" 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/young person is injured while in the care of TOS, a first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in TOS's accident book. The Chair or Vice Chair of the trustees will be informed.
- If a child/young person joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the Accident Book.

11.0 Criminal Record Disclosures - Refer to DBS Policy

12.0 Designated Adults (Chaperones)

- Chaperones will be appointed by TOS for the care of children during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- Potential chaperones will be required to supply photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport, driving licence) and two references from individuals with knowledge of their previous work with children, unless already well known to TOS. They will also be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children.
- Chaperones will be made aware of The Company's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care. If unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a criminal record disclosure will be sought.
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the Production Director or a TOS officer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily, the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the Production Director and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act, no child is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the Production Director to cease using children in this way and should contact the local authority.
- During performances / rehearsals chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the door of the venue unless prior arrangement has been made with the parent / guardian.



Teesdale Operatic Society Child & Young Persons Protection Policy

- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
- Children are not to leave the venue unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents/guardians, or with the permission of their parents/guardians.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.

Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.

- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by TOS
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances / rehearsals. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent / guardian to confirm the arrangements.
- If a parent/guardian has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child or make arrangements to take them home.