



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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POLICY INTRODUCTION

The trustees of The Miller Centre Theatre Company and officers of The Miller Centre Club recognise their duties under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963; the Children (Performances) Regulations 1968; the Protection of Children Act 1999; the Care Act 2014 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

The following policy has been written in line with the terms of The Charity Commission for England and Wales. Any safeguarding incidents will be reported to the CC as per their recommendations.

The following principles of The Miller Centre Theatre Company and The Miller Centre Club will apply to the use of this policy and procedure:

- The welfare of the child and/or adult at risk is paramount
- The interests, wishes and rights of the child and/or adult at risk will be respected at all times
- Any action taken by The Miller Centre to protect an adult at risk from abuse will involve the participation of the individual throughout the whole process
- This policy and procedure respects the individual's right to live free from abuse in accordance with the principles of respect, dignity, autonomy, privacy, beliefs and equality. Activities undertaken at The Miller Centre will be provided in a manner which does not discriminate on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, gender, age or sexuality
- The Miller Centre will work with external agencies to ensure the prevention, identification, investigation and treatment of alleged, suspected or confirmed abuse
- The Miller Centre will respond to actual or suspected cases of abuse with prompt, timely and appropriate action
- The Miller Centre will be responsible for taking action in respect of all incidents of abuse
- The Miller Centre will access legal advice to pursue prosecution of criminal offences where necessary
- The Miller Centre will ensure that all Trustees, Members and Officers have a good understanding of the and have access to appropriate training and support. This will include publishing this policy on The Miller Centre Theatre website (millercentretheatre.org). The further benefit of ensuring this is that parents/guardians or carers of the children and/or adults at risk can be fully informed of the safeguarding procedures in place at The Miller Centre.

- The Miller Centre will make information available to Trustees, Members and Officers which explains what abuse is and how and to whom to express concern and make a complaint. This will be clear and easy to understand

COMMITMENTS AND VALUES

The Miller Centre is committed to providing a safe environment where children and adults at risk are able to participate in theatre activity or youth workshop without fear of abuse or harm. The Miller Centre recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The Miller Centre is committed to taking positive steps to prevent such abuse of children involved in theatre activities. It is the responsibility of all members of the Miller Centre to be aware of and adhere to the child protection policies and procedures currently in force.

The Miller Centre will appoint a Safeguarding Officer or Officers whose responsibilities are outlined later in this document.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- The Miller Centre - For the purpose of clarity within this policy, trustees and members of The Miller Centre Theatre Company, and members and officers of The Miller Centre Club shall hereafter be referred to collectively as 'The Miller Centre'. This will also broadly apply to those in the position of influence when working with a child or adult at risk i.e. the director and/or stage manager of a given production.
- Trustees – elected individuals on The Miller Centre Theatre Company chair committee.
- Members – refers to any person who holds a current paying membership to The Miller Centre
- Officers – patrons of The Miller Centre Club
- Child - For the purposes of the Child Protection Procedures contained within this policy and pursuant to the performance regulations, the definition of "a child" is a young person under the age of 18.
- Adult at Risk - An 'adult at risk' for the purposes of this policy, is anyone over the age of 18 who may be at risk of harm or abuse

"An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support. Where someone is over 18 but still receiving children's

services and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with as a matter of course by the adult safeguarding team” (NHS England, 2015, p.2).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MILLER CENTRE

The Miller Centre will ensure that:

- All children and adults at risk will be treated equally and with respect
- The welfare of each child or adult at risk will always be a main priority in any activity, rehearsal period or production within The Miller Centre Theatre.
- The age of the child and recommendations of the Child Performance regulations for that age group will be adhered to at all times
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built and maintained through:
 - Annual reviews of this policy
 - Professional and appropriate conduct by The Miller Centre
- Any incidents of bullying will be neither ignored, accepted or condoned
- All adult members of The Miller Centre will provide a positive role model whilst working with young people, either as performers or visitors to the theatre
- Action will be taken to prevent any inappropriate behaviour
- All Trustees and members of The Miller Centre will keep up to date with health and safety legislation

The Safeguarding Officer will ensure that:

- Relevant development and training will be undertaken by appropriate persons to ensure best practice is maintained
- The Miller Centre will hold a register of every child involved with the Miller Centre and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies
- Any persons who wish to apply for the role of chaperone for the purpose of The Miller Centre Young Players can request assistance to pay the fee from the Trustees. This must be referred to the Safeguarding Officer and then authorised by the Treasurer.
- In respect of production photos, parents/guardians of each child will be asked to sign a photography disclaimer document prior to rehearsals beginning for any Young Players production at The Miller Centre Theatre. This is to ensure that parents/guardians are aware of the photographs being taken in line with the production, and to give them the opportunity to remove consent for their child if they wish to do so.

- The use of cameras is forbidden both by audience members in the auditorium and cast and crew backstage.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

The Safeguarding Officer will:

- Apply to the appropriate Licensing Authority for performing licences where appropriate.
- Ensure that The Miller Centre will be kept informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and adults at risk
- Review the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure on an annual basis and submit to the Trustees for approval.
- Provide training to directors, stage managers, chaperones and other interested individuals within The Miller Centre.
- Report any safeguarding incidents to the Charity Commission for England and Wales, email: RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk

The Miller Centre has safeguarding children and adults at risk procedures which accompany this policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with The Miller Centre's Equal Opportunities Policy 2022 and Health and Safety Policy 2022.

The Miller Centre appoints a **Safeguarding Officer** who will hold the responsibility of ensuring that safeguarding children and adults at risk policy and procedure is adhered to. This position is currently held by **Pamela Cuthill**

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN AND/OR ADULTS AT RISK

This section largely focuses on the ways in which children will be kept safe from harm during their time with The Miller Centre. However, it should be expected that these areas will also apply to any adults at risk who may be more vulnerable to certain situations highlighted below. All areas discussed are the responsibility of all those involved in a production that includes children and/or adults at risk:

Photographs & Images

- There are risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on web sites and in other publications such as theatre programmes. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information, for example, "this is X who goes to such-and-such a school and who likes playing football". This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to 'groom' that child for abuse.

Secondly the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of this adapted material finding its way on to child pornography sites.

- The Miller Centre will assess the potential risks to the child when making decisions about the type of images they wish to use and the way they are used, i.e. for promotion of a production. Use of names of individuals in a photograph should be limited and The Miller Centre will avoid use of any additional information that might help locate the child. Using only images of children in suitable dress may reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- Parental permission to use an image of a young person must be sought in advance via parental/guardian consent form (see appendix)

The use of cameras or mobile phones with camera or filming capability in dressing rooms and the auditorium is expressly forbidden by anyone, except in the case of the dress rehearsal for promotional purpose.

E-Safety

- Most of our children will use mobile phones and computers. They are a source of fun, entertainment, communication and education. However, we know that some individuals will use these technologies to harm children. The harm might range from sending hurtful or abusive texts and emails, to enticing children to engage in sexually harmful conversations, webcam photography or face-to-face meetings.
- Cyber-bullying by children, via texts and emails, will be treated as seriously as any other type of bullying or abuse.

Parents

- The Miller Centre believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and members of the production in hand. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of The Miller Centre and to share responsibility for the care of children.
- All parents will be given a copy the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and procedures. This is also accessible via The Miller Centre website (millercentretheatre.org)
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. The Miller Centre has a responsibility to ensure suitable arrangements are in place to take children home.

Unsupervised Contact

- The Miller Centre will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible, there will always be two adults in the room during any rehearsals or backstage with children.
- 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, he or she may be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service
- All children will be chaperoned at all times

Gifts Made to Children and/or Adults At Risk

- Gifts of any sort, including sweets and chocolates given to the children must be made via the chaperone and with consent of the parents
- Chaperones will be mindful of any allergies/food intolerances in the group before accepting gifts for the children
- Favouritism of any child(ren) is not appropriate
- All gifts should be made to all the children rather than any specific child(ren)

Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Physical contact will only take place when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- 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

- The Miller Centre has a policy and procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children.
- Permission will be sought from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.
- The organisation's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- The Miller Centre 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.

Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of The Miller Centre, they will be made aware of their rights under the organisation's disciplinary procedures.
- Both the alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.

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 is injured while in the care of the organisation, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the organisation's accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection, i.e. the safeguarding officer.
- If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the person with responsibility for child protection. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later, and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

Chaperones

- Chaperones registered with their local authority, will be appointed by The Miller Centre for the care of children during the production process. 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 obtain a chaperone registration from their local authority and to supply this registration to The Miller Centre once the local authority has approved them as a chaperone.
- Chaperones will be made aware of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Chaperones may have unsupervised access to children in their care consequently a criminal record disclosure will be sought as a requirement of the local authority, before the grant approval for the chaperone
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. 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 producer and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to stop involving children in dangerous performances, and should contact the local authority.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- 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 place of performance unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- 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 the organisation.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until arrangements have been made to take the child home.

PROCEDURE FOR INCIDENTS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

Once a disclosure has been made, or there is any concern or suspicion of abuse, neglect or exploitation of a child or an adult at risk, The Miller Centre will:

- Take action to ensure the immediate safety of the child or adult at risk
- Complete an Incident or Accident Report form within 4 hours if the reported or suspected abuse warrants the completion of one or both forms
- Report any suspicion or incidence of abuse to the Safeguarding Officer immediately or within 24 hours of the incident occurring
- Call the police and / or an ambulance immediately in situations where the abuse of a child or adult at risk requires an urgent need for medical treatment, where there is an immediate risk of harm involving urgent action to protect the individual, where there is a need to protect forensic evidence, or where a crime has been committed

REVIEW

This policy and procedure will be regularly monitored by the Trustees of the Miller Centre Theatre Company and Officers of the Miller Centre Club and will be subject to annual review by the Safeguarding Officer

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| Review Date: | July 2023 |
| Next Review Date: | July 2024 |
| Review Completed by: | Pamela Cuthill |
| Approved by Trustees of The Miller Centre on: | July 2023 |

CONTACTS

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|-----------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
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| Safeguarding Officer | Pamela Cuthill | pamelacuthill@hotmail.com |

| The Miller Centre Theatre Club | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Chairperson | Steve Bishop | skrb@waldini.org |
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