



Kentish Opera Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement

Kentish Opera is committed to creating an environment in which children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm.

We have a separate overall safeguarding policy which deals with these matters. This document specifically refers to child protection.

Kentish Opera believes that all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse, including physical, emotional and sexual harm, and neglect.

A child is defined as being under the age of 18.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children who join or perform with Kentish Opera and
- To provide members with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

We will seek to keep children safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them, as well as respecting their right to privacy and dignity
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and a lead committee member for safeguarding
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment by applying appropriate Health & Safety measures and assessments
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding procedures and sharing these with members as appropriate
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against members appropriately
- Using our procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies that need to know, and involving the children and their parents/carers as appropriate

- Ensuring that children are appropriately chaperoned at all times by their parents or chaperones with up-to-date licenses

Child protection and safeguarding procedures

Kentish Opera recognises that it is not practical, or strictly necessary, that all members should be in receipt of a current DBS certificate, given that we are not undertaking a 'regulated activity'. However, a register will be maintained of all members who are in possession of a valid DBS certificate, either in their workplace or in another setting.

Bullying or abuse, either physical, emotional, financial or discriminatory will not be tolerated and should be reported to the DSO if experienced or witnessed.

One-to-one contact with a child, away from others, should be avoided at all times. If privacy is needed to discuss a matter, then the DSO or lead committee member for safeguarding should be informed of the meeting.

Inappropriate physical contact with a child must never happen, including rough games and horseplay.

Photographic images of children will not be used on the company's website, in the press or on private or public social media unless express permission is provided by the organisation the children belong to or unless express permission is provided by the child's parent or guardian.

A child may only take part in an activity that involved being away from home overnight if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian.

All children will be provided with appropriate changing facilities for any costume changes necessitated by taking part in a show. Any concerns regarding changing or toilet facilities raised by chaperones will be resolved with the Lead Committee Member for Safeguarding in the first instance, or with the DSO.

Child protection and safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. If any member has concerns regarding safeguarding or child protection, or regarding the actions of another group members in relation to child protection matters, they should discuss it, in the first instance, with the DSO or, secondly, the lead committee member for safeguarding.

A member who is approached by a child with a safeguarding concern should:

- Listen without interruption, and not ask leading questions
- Not investigate the matter, but accept without challenge what is said
- Not over-react
- Not guarantee confidentiality or make promises of action
- Explain that the issue will be passed to the DSO
- Offer support, without passing judgement on the matter
- Document the conversation as soon as possible afterwards
- Report the issue to the DSO at the earliest opportunity

In the event that the DSO is unavailable, all matters should be referred to the lead committee member for safeguarding.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer

The Designated Safeguarding Officer leads upon policy development and reporting, including:

- Reviewing and updating Kentish Opera's Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis, or when necessary
- Leading upon contact with Local Authority Social Services in the event that a child is at risk of harm
- Managing complaints or allegations against members
- Referring relevant issues of safeguarding to the lead committee member for safeguarding for consideration
- Promoting safeguarding across the organisation

Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Ian Alexander

+44 7803 246999

ianalexander107@msn.com

Lead Committee Member for Safeguarding

Alice Blogg

07903682184

Missaliceblogg@hotmail.com

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

Kent Safeguarding Children Board

03000 411 111

Adoption and Review

This policy was reviewed and re-adopted by the committee in on 7th April 2024

Alice Blogg

Alice Blogg – Lead Committee Member for Safeguarding