

Policy Owner: BVP Committee	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">for Burdock Valley Players</h3>	
Review due: November 2022		
Last Reviewed: November 2021		

1. Introduction

Burdock Valley Players (BVP) is firmly committed to the belief that all children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and fully recognises its responsibility for child and adult protection. The safety and protection of all vulnerable people that BVP supports is paramount and has priority over all other interests, unless life is at imminent risk.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the personal safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults using the facilities, resources and activities provided by BVP, actively promoting awareness, good practice and sound procedures.

BVP is committed to:

- a. ensuring that it practices safe recruitment in checking the suitability of members to work with young people and vulnerable adults
- b. raising awareness of child protection and vulnerable adult issues amongst members
- c. developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases, of child or adult abuse
- d. supporting the child or adult who has been abused
- e. establishing a safe environment in which children and adults can develop and grow, where they are able to talk and be listened to.

3. SCOPE

- a. This policy applies to BVP's members, children, chaperones, stage crew, committee and directors.
- b. This policy describes BVP's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy.

4. REFERENCES

- a. Appendix 1: Children in the Theatre
- b. Health and Safety policy, Equal Opportunities policy

5. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply throughout this policy document.

a) Persons Involved

Person Type	Description
Child or Children	The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under eighteen.
Vulnerable Adult	The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) defined a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a substantial learning or physical disability • a physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including addiction to alcohol or drugs • a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.
Young Person	The term young person will include those aged between 5 and 24 years. For the purposes of this policy, a young person aged under 18 years is regarded as a child and a vulnerable adult includes all people aged 18 and over subject to the criteria of the POVA Scheme.

b) Types of abuse

Abuse Type	Description
Physical	Physical abuse may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child or vulnerable adult. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as fabricated or induced illness.
Emotional	Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment causing severe and persistent effects on the child or vulnerable adult's emotional development and may involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveying the message that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person • imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations • causing the child or vulnerable adult to feel frightened or in danger – e.g. witnessing domestic violence • exploitation or corruption of children, young people or vulnerable adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment, although emotional abuse may occur alone.
Sexual	Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening, and includes penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities such as looking at, or being involved in, the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children or vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect	<p>Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of the neglected person's health and development. It may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of basic emotional needs.</p> <p>Members should also be aware of other factors which influence these forms of abuse such as racial or homophobic abuse.</p>
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6. RESPONSIBILITIES

All members, children, chaperones, stage crew, committee and directors have a responsibility for the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact while working on behalf of BVP.

All members, children, chaperones, stage crew, committee and directors have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident or allegation relating to child and vulnerable adult protection is reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy.

7. PERSONNEL/RECRUITMENT

BVP has systems in place to prevent unsuitable people from working with children or vulnerable adults and to promote safe practice. These systems apply to any members or directors, who will be working with children and vulnerable adults on an intensive and frequent basis and require the following checks to be made on appointment:

- a) Enhanced CRB/DBS Disclosure.

8. VETTING AND BARRING

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 places a duty on BVP to undertake an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure for all directors, the children's coordinator and chaperones supervising or in intensive or frequent contact with children or vulnerable adults.

For individuals who have lived outside the UK further checks are carried out, where appropriate, if a CRB/DBS Disclosure is not felt to be sufficient to establish suitability to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

BVP recognises the changes introduced by the Independent Safeguarding Authority. No new director, children's coordinator or chaperones should start work on their own with vulnerable people until references have been verified and CRB/DBS checks received.

All directors, children's coordinator and chaperones will be made aware of BVP's Safeguarding Policy and the appendix 'Children in the Theatre'. All directors, children's coordinator and chaperones will receive appropriate support in their work with children and vulnerable adults.

9. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

BVP has a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and a nominated deputy, who are a suitably qualified company member and a committee member. BVP Chair must also be informed of issues that arise under this policy. The Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer are responsible for child protection and the implementation of this policy. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will attend training as appropriate and make referrals to external agencies.

Other aspects of their role include:

- a) obtaining information from directors, members, children, parents or carers who have concerns relating to the protection of children or vulnerable adults and to record this information
- b) assessing information quickly and carefully and asking for further information where appropriate
- c) consulting with statutory child and vulnerable protection agencies e.g. the local Social Services department and police, to clarify doubts or worries
- d) making referrals to Social Services, or the police, without delay
- e) keeping up to date with the requirement of the appropriate agencies.

All directors, trustees and members will be made aware of the named Designated Safeguarding Officer and how to contact them. The Designated Safeguarding Officer has contact telephone numbers for the local Area Safeguarding Board and other statutory agencies.

10. REPORTING

All members working in direct or indirect contact with vulnerable people as part of the BVP's activities, or as part of the environment where the activities take place, must be alert to the signs of abuse.

Any suspicion or allegation must be reported as soon as possible on the day of the occurrence to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways including a comment made by a child or adult, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour, or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge.

11. INVESTIGATING AN ALLEGATION

When any form of complaint is made against a director or member, it must be taken seriously and the complaint should initially be dealt with by the most senior person on site at the time the complaint is made. The senior person must report the complaint to the DSO or their nominated deputy immediately, giving details of the circumstances.

The DSO or their nominated deputy will attend the site of the allegation to gain an initial account of what has occurred from all relevant parties, including the person against whom the allegation has been made. If this is not possible, contact will be made by telephone.

The DSO or their nominated deputy will have the right to suspend from the activity and/or the premises, any person who is a party to the allegation until a full investigation has been made in line with this policy.

This action does not imply in any way that the person suspended is responsible for, or is to blame for, any action leading up to the complaint. The purpose of any such suspension is to enable a full and proper investigation to be carried out in a totally professional manner.

It is the responsibility of the DSO or their nominated deputy to make the decision as to whether to inform Social Services, NHS Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) and/or the Safeguarding Unit of the local Constabulary, depending on the nature of the allegation and its validity.

The DSO or their nominated deputy will ensure that the Chair of BVP, or in their absence a committee member, is fully briefed. An agreed statement will be prepared for the purpose of accurate communication with external sources and for the protection of the legal position of all parties involved.

All committee members will report such incidents directly to the Chair and the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

a) Resignation

If, during the course of an investigation relating to safeguarding, a director, member or volunteer tenders his or her resignation/membership, or ceases to provide their services, BVP is not prevented from following up an allegation in accordance with these procedures. Every effort will be made to reach a conclusion in cases relating to the welfare of children or vulnerable adults, including those where the person concerned refuses to co-operate with the process.

BVP will co-operate fully with the Police, Social Services, the NHS and all other parties involved.

b) Confidentiality

All directors, members and volunteers must work under the principle that confidentiality is extremely important and plays a large part in much of the work carried out with children and vulnerable adults. Therefore, these people must keep confidential any information that comes to their knowledge during an investigation. They must also make known any information about safeguarding situations that cause concern.

12. DOCUMENTING AN INCIDENT

Information about the suspicion or allegation must be recorded by the observer/s. The DSO or their nominated deputy will make a full written report of the incident and the actions taken. All stages of the reporting procedure must be documented, marked

CONFIDENTIAL and stored securely following the principles laid out in the Data Protection Act.

a) Unsuitable Individuals

BVP has a statutory duty to make reports and provide relevant information to the appropriate government agency where there are grounds for believing, following an investigation, that an individual is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, or may have committed misconduct. The responsibility for reporting cases to this body lies with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

BVP is aware that safeguarding cases can be distressing, and that directors, members and volunteers who have been involved may find it helpful to talk about their experiences, in confidence, with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or with a trained counsellor. Those wishing to be referred for counselling should contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

13. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

As part of the community served by BVP, all children and vulnerable adults have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation whatever their race, religion, gender, sexuality, age or disability. This policy relates to the organisation's legal obligation to protect children who are suffering forms of abuse as defined in the Children Act 1989 and is therefore in line with BVP's equality and diversity policy.

14. OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

a) The use of cameras, videos, or camera mobile phones

BVP may take photographs of children and young people participating in activities and events. At all times written permission from parents will be obtained using the 'Parental consent Form' before photographs are taken and used in any promotional material. If a child is identified, only their first name should be used.

BVP reserves the right to prohibit the use of cameras, videos and mobile telephones with picture taking capacity at events it promotes.

b) Social Networking

While social network profiles are easy to set up and use, it is important that members, volunteers, and directors keep a professional distance online, just as they would in the 'offline' world. Careful thought must be given to how any digital communication might appear to a third party. Compared with a conversation in the real world, technology increases the potential for messages to be seen out of context, misinterpreted or forwarded to others.

Guidance for directors, members, and volunteers:

- i). remember that you are in a position of trust
- ii). remember that some sites have an age restriction (i.e. Facebook has a minimum age of 13 years)
- iii). conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face - be aware of what you say and how you say it

- iv). don't engage in one-to-one conversations with young people via chat facilities or instant messaging - this is the same as going into a private room with a young person and closing the door
- v). do not provide personal details about young people on the BVP website or social networking group (this includes school name, email address, ID, etc.)
- vi). only use appropriate photos on the BVP site and Facebook pages, the sort that you would be happy putting on a public notice board - remember that everyone can view them
- vii). if you are concerned about the way a young person is attempting to contact you, report it immediately to the DSO
- viii). if you need to email or text, always send the message to the responsible adult from BVP for the child, and if sending e-mails to groups of people use the 'BCC' facility to avoid sharing e-mail addresses
- ix). don't use your personal social networking account to communicate with young people
- x). monitor places where interaction occurs including walls, discussions boards, comments on photos, tagging of pictures and 'Group' or 'Fan Pages'
- xi). only set up pages for events, activities or groups for which you are responsible
- xii). if you sign yourself up to social networking sites you need to be aware that content is speedily updated. Photos can be tagged and posted on your account
- xiii). use separate profiles and communication routes for email or social networking in order to keep contact with any young people attending BVP events and your private life separate.

c) Employee Ratios for Activities run by BVP

For children, the ratio of directors plus volunteers (children's coordinator/chaperones) will be one to eight for those aged 8 years and under and one to ten for those aged 10 years or over as laid down by guidance issued under the Children Act (1989).

Where a Governing Body or Government guidelines require a higher ratio of directors plus volunteers to the number of children and vulnerable adults this ratio will override the minimum ratios set above.

All children aged 14 and under and vulnerable adults attending a BVP organised activity must have a designated parent/guardian or CRB/DBS checked chaperone present. This applies to all BVP organised activities, regardless of their location.

d) Outside Organisations

Outside organisations include any club, society, organisation or individual undertaking activities on BVP's behalf. If their activities involve children aged 14 and under and vulnerable adults they will be required to either adopt BVP's Safeguarding Policy, signing to say that they have understood and intend to abide by it, or show proof that they have their own robust policy.

e) Unacceptable Behaviour

Burdock Valley Players expects a reasonable standard of behaviour from the children and vulnerable adults in its care. Where other children and vulnerable adults' safety and enjoyment are compromised by bad behaviour BVP will have total discretion whether to

remove the child or vulnerable adult from the activity. Where this has to be done then a full incident report will be required to be completed and kept on file.