

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

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Contact details:

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DETAILS OF THE ORGANISATION

Charity Number: 1183512

The Abingdon Passion Play

Aims and Objectives: To spread the word of God to the people of Abingdon and its surroundings, by means of a public theatrical representation of Jesus' Passion (a Passion Play) every three years.

Trustees: David Pope, Samuel Poyton, Anne-Marie Green, Sarah Mears, John Clare, Joyce Kelly, Jane Cadogan, Eliane Pony

Staffing: Ralph Westby (Director), Sarah Mears (Music Director), trustees as listed above, other volunteer members of The Abingdon Passion Play Committee.

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to provide safe, positive and empowering environment for all people who engage in projects, programmes and events organised directly by The Abingdon Passion Play, or in partnership with other organisations. We believe that the safety and well-being of young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and that all people have the right to protection from abuse, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity.

This safeguarding policy is in place to ensure that we do everything we are able to ensure the safety and protection of young people and vulnerable adults involved with our projects and events.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18. For the purposes of this policy, vulnerable adults are defined as anyone over the age of 18 who requires activities which lead to them being considered vulnerable to significant harm or exploitation at that particular time.

A vulnerable adult can be anyone:

- Who receives social care services or personal care
- Who requires assistance in relation to general household matters such as paying bills, shopping etc. due to a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem
- Who is detained by Her Majesty's Government or in contact with probation services

All Children/Vulnerable Adults who connect with the Passion Trust have the right to:

- **Feel safe**
 - **Be treated with respect and dignity**
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- We are committed to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults
 - We recognise that child/vulnerable adult protection is everybody's responsibility
 - We are committed to following the agreed procedures and following statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines
 - We will review this policy annually.

Role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator includes:

- Overseeing the preparation and implementation of the Safeguarding policy and ensuring that it is regularly reviewed
- Establishing contact with organisations
- Being aware of local Safeguarding procedures
- Ensuring that Safeguarding policies and procedures are followed
- Maintaining accurate records relating to Safeguarding concerns
- Making sure that staff members and leaders receive adequate Safeguarding training where required
- Ensuring that a copy of this policy is provided to any group working with The Abingdon Passion Play.

This position is currently undertaken by David Pope who can be contacted by telephone on 07920031324 and by email at davidpope@mac.com

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

There are a variety of approaches required to ensure an effective preventative strategy. These include:

- *Creating the right environment.*
Work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication). If a staff member needs to work with a young person on a 1:1 basis this should be done in a public space, or if this is not appropriate, in a room with the door left open.
- *Developing practice standards.*
Sharing information about child protection and good practice to ensure that all staff have awareness of the issues which can cause harm to young people and that all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- *Empowering young persons and staff.*
Treat children and young people equally and with respect and dignity. Put the welfare of children and young people first. Strive to build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and young people to share in the decision-making process.
- *Providing effective management for all staff through supervision, support and training.*
Ensure confidentiality of information in order to protect the rights of all staff and young people, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any information provided for a project (Data Protection Act 1998).

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

1. Staff members should treat all participants with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
2. Always consider the best interests and the specific requirements of the people whom we are working with.
3. Note that physical contact is appropriate in certain situations/workshops. Always be guided by those we are working with. Let them initiate contact where possible and appropriate.
4. Consider particular needs due to religious, cultural, disability or ethnic background.
5. Give due consideration to the words used and the tone of voice employed in sessions.
6. Consideration should be given whether a male and/or female worker should be involved. There should always be 2 staff members present at all times where possible. **NEVER BE ALONE WITH A CHILD/VULNERABLE ADULT.**
7. Have a clear strategy for summoning additional adult help (if needed).
8. The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child/disabled adult whilst also accepting that some participants have special needs. This should always be done by a support worker/parent.
9. The privacy of participants should be respected, avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.
10. No person under 16 years of age may meet with an adult for a counselling situation on their own: there must always be another adult present. This situation should still be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and written up.
11. Bullying: We will not tolerate bullying in any form, including physical, verbal, emotional, damage to property or theft, intimidation through gesture and threat, both verbal and non-verbal, cyber through a range of technologies – mobile phones, email and social networks, or exclusion or non-communication.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS

If a member of staff suspects abuse has occurred they should consider the context of the situation and report the matter according to the following guidelines. In all cases a staff member should listen, accept, reassure, explain, act immediately, record and get support.

Do ensure action is taken. It is not the responsibility of the team member to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. Nevertheless there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT

Individuals and organisations commissioned by us or working in partnership with us cannot use film and photography without the consent of the participating groups. Staff should only take and store photographs of young persons with their formal consent and use them for specific purposes (eg. feedback/publicity). Young persons and their parents/carers should be made aware of how images will be used and stored.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS

In any case where someone The Abingdon Passion Play has concerns or an allegation is made, a record will be made using a standardised format [Appendix A]. Details must include:

- Name of child/ vulnerable adult
- Date of birth of child/ vulnerable adult (if available)
- Approximate age of child/ vulnerable adult if date of birth is not available
- Name of staff member completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action taken
- Were the parents informed?

The record must then be signed by the completing person and the Safeguarding Officer.

DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as protection of vulnerable beneficiaries will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Ensure you never use closed questioning or leading questions
- Offer him / her / them reassurance without making promises, and take what is said seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption, accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement

- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact The Abingdon Passion Play Safeguarding Officer for advice / guidance.
- Record any discussions or actions taken as soon as is practicable.

REFERRAL

For allegations of sexual abuse or physical injury, contact the Social Work Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Safeguarding Team direct.

RECORD-KEEPING

- All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet.
- Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

We review this policy annually and after each annual review, the Policy will be shared with current and incoming staff members, so updates within the Policy are known and upheld by all staff and volunteers.

This policy is accompanied by two appendices. Appendix A is an Incident Report Form, Appendix B details appropriate contact with young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy will be reviewed annually and will be signed off by The Abingdon Passion Play Committee. **Next review date: December 2024**

Incident Report Form

Name of Child/ Vulnerable Adult:	Name of staff member completing form:
Date of Birth/ Approximate Age:	
Date the incident took place:	
Time:	
Where did the incident take place:	
Who else was involved/witnessed the incident:	
Details- Please provide a statement of fact:	
Action taken:	Parents informed? Yes/No

Signature of staff member reporting incident: _____

Signature of Safeguarding officer: _____

Date: _____

GUIDANCE FOR CONTACT WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG ADULTS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Staff and volunteers should:

- Should actively avoid spending any time alone with children or vulnerable beneficiaries, away from others
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable Adult this meeting must be as open as possible, and other staff members will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. The meeting should not take place in a room that is not private, unless absolutely necessary. If no adult is available as company to the meeting, the young person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

Physical Contact

- Staff and volunteers should never engage in any type of physical contact with any young person or vulnerable Adult without first asking permission.
- We will always require a responsible adult to accompany any vulnerable beneficiaries or groups of vulnerable beneficiaries. The responsible adult will never be a member of staff.
- If a child or vulnerable Adult is reliant upon an adult for any aspects personal care, e.g. toileting or assistance of movement, The will engage the responsible adult, which will never be a member of staff.
- Staff and volunteers should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind.

Online Contact

- We will only contact a child directly via email or telephone in reference to workshops, performances or related work.
- Where possible, all contact with children will be conducted via schools, or relevant and responsible adults.
- We will not contact a child directly in regards to non-professional or personal matters.
- staff and volunteers will never issue or accept “friend requests” or equivalent from social networking sites from a child.
- If a child makes contact with a staff member via social media, it will be reported to the Chairman of The Abingdon Passion Play who will ensure it is followed up and the appropriate action taken. On no account should the staff member respond of their own volition.
- Staff and volunteers will not take or share photos or video footage of children without confirmation from the Music Director or the Director of The Abingdon Passion Play that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.
- The relevant staff member related to any given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms to schools and for discussing how best to document projects, and will circulate this information
- Confidential data that is collected on children including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between adults only on a need-to-know basis.
- When sharing information, personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.