

European Opera Centre Safeguarding Policy

The European Opera Centre launches an education programme – initially in schools - in Spring 2017. This programme is designed to be delivered alongside a school’s own staff, who will be present at all times during a project. It is important, however, that everyone involved in delivering a project for the European Opera Centre understands this Safeguarding Policy and adheres to it, since everyone taking part has a role in its implementation.

In general, the European Opera Centre engages with the public and conducts activities and events in schools, on hired premises and at other venues. This work involves rehearsals, workshops, classes and performances open to the public. Our work involves working with children, young people and potentially with vulnerable adults and we have a duty to protect these individuals by providing clear guidelines for our Trustees, staff, course leaders, casts, crew, volunteers, workers whether paid or unpaid (referred to collectively as “Members”).

The purpose of the policy:

- To provide protection for the children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved with the European Opera Centre
- To provide Members of the European Opera Centre with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

Definitions

This policy uses the definitions of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults as framed by Department for Education 2016

Child Protection statement

‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.’ (DfE 2016)

Definition: Children and Young People

A child is “anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’ throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a Member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989. (See Children’s Act 2004)

Child protection: ‘Where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child.’

Members: European Opera Centre Trustees, staff, course leaders, casts, crew, volunteers, workers whether paid or unpaid.

Safeguarding children: ‘Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk’.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: ‘protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.’ (Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016)).

Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is a person “*who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation*”. (See "No Secrets" - Section 2.3.)

The European Opera Centre ensures that:

All Members are given **basic awareness training** to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities within this policy.

Our **hired premises** and other places used by the European Opera Centre where activities are run are safe for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Working practices promote safety for and wellbeing of children, young people, vulnerable adults, our Members.

This statement protects children, young people and vulnerable adults who are participants in European Opera Centre activities from the following forms of abuse:

Physical

Physical violence, pulling or touching a person in a harsh and angry manner, physically threatening behaviour

Emotional

Bullying, angry words, behaviour that undermines the confidence and emotional wellbeing of a person. Threatening behaviour, persistent sarcasm that frightens or weakens an individual

Sexual

Sexual advances. Initiating sexual contact, whether the child or person is aware or unaware of the actions. Taking part in any sexual activity whether the child or person is aware of the situation or not. Encouraging and participating in the production of or the viewing pornographic material in any form. Encouraging a child/person to behave in a sexually inappropriate way.

Abuse by Neglect

Failure to meet a child’s/person’s basic needs to support health and mental wellbeing. Supporting includes the need for food, shelter, warmth and physical safety. Within this requirement is the need to ensure medical attention if required as advised by parents/guardian

Policy Statement

- The European Opera Centre recognises and adheres to the requirements of the current legislation for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- The European Opera Centre recognises its duty of care to children, young people and vulnerable adults by all its Members, whether paid or unpaid.
- The European Opera Centre will take all allegations of abusive behaviour and or practice in all forms seriously and will respond to such allegations quickly.
- The European Opera Centre's activities are defined as any form of music/musical theatre/opera project whether this leads to public performance or not.
- Nothing in this policy should over-ride the paramount concern, that of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy will be used to support the work of the relevant agencies to protect such a group.

‘All adults should be aware of the process for making referrals to children’s social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989 that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.’ (DFE 2016)

All adults have equal responsibility to report their concerns about a child or the behaviour of any adult without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP). Whilst the Designated Safeguarding Person will normally make any necessary referrals to Children’s Services, any Member can refer their concerns to children’s social care directly in emergencies or if they feel they need to do so. (Liverpool Careline 0151 233 3700)

The European Opera Centre Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs) are designated to act as the first point of contact for anyone concerned about the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults

- To be responsible for contacting the Children’s Social Care Department in cases where a child or young person is at risk of harm
- To follow the host venue safeguarding procedure
- To be familiar with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures
- To ensure that all Members are familiar with safeguarding policies and procedures
- To advise and provide guidance to Members concerned about a child protection issue
- To liaise with appropriate local agencies for support and advice and keep a list of local contacts
- To organise training about how to respond to protection concerns
- To collect monitoring data on all safeguarding activities

The **Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs)** are:

Veronica Kelly: Production Manager
Fiona Chambers: Trustee

Their contact details are given on the Company Contact Sheet

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Care must be taken to ensure that confidentiality is maintained and that information is handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. Individuals must be confident that information held about them by the European Opera Centre will only be disclosed to others either with their consent or when there is a legal duty to do so.
- Guidance allows for the disclosure of personal information without consent of the subject in certain conditions, including for the purposes of the prevention and detection of a crime, for example where there is a child protection concern.

The European Opera Centre will work in partnership with other agencies to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, including the need to share information about a child in order to safeguard them. 'Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.' Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)

The European Opera Centre will follow Local Authority Guidance for example when working in Liverpool will follow Liverpool Children's Safeguarding Board's procedures and provide them with information as required. (www.liverpoolscb.org)

Changing facilities

When working with groups of children, young people and vulnerable adults:

Changing rooms will be allocated to protect the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults. If support is required this will be given only with prior consent from parents/guardians and an appropriate chaperone will support the person. Except in an emergency, changing rooms will not be accessed at any time, by any Member of the European Opera Centre

When individual children, young people and vulnerable adults are involved with European Opera Centre activities:

Children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in the European Opera Centre's activities and their parents/guardians must be informed of the policy on, and circumstances of, changing arrangements

If children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in the European Opera Centre activities are uncomfortable changing in public, no pressure should be placed on them to do so. They should be encouraged to change at home

If the European Opera Centre has disabled participants, it undertakes to involve them and their carers in deciding how, if applicable, they wish to be assisted to change and ensure they provide full consent to any support or assistance required

If adults and children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in the European Opera Centre need to share a changing facility, consent will be sought from the parents/guardians that their child/children can share a changing room with adults

If children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in the European Opera Centre need to share changing facilities with adults, their parents/guardians or teacher should be allowed to supervise them while they are changing.

Counter-Terrorism and Security

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty upon local authorities and educational providers to 'have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The DfE has provided statutory guidance for schools and child care providers: 'The Prevent Duty' (June 2015). The guidance summarises the requirements on schools and child care providers in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies. Members should be aware of the indicators of extremism and radicalisation and know how to respond in keeping with local and national guidance. Members will use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme. Equally children will be made aware of the risks and support available to them. Members will ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the Internet. The Government has developed an 'educate against hate' website providing information and resources for schools and parents to support them to recognise and address extremism and radicalisation in young people.

If any Member has any concerns over terrorism and security, these must be discussed without delay with one of the Designated Safeguarding Persons.

Additional Child Protection Guidance re adults working with young people used to inform this policy include:

- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016)
- The School's Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers
- Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children (Safer Recruitment Consortium 2015)
- A flowchart summarising the child protection procedures
- Definitions of abuse or neglect and possible indicators
- Identified groups of children more vulnerable to abuse
- Specific guidance related to Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Child Sexual Exploitation, Extremism and Radicalisation, Neglect and online-safety
- Dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers procedures
- Whistleblowing procedures
- 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015- Advice for practitioners DFE 2015'
- On-line safety, data protection and the use of digital photographic equipment

On-line/E-safety/Acceptable User policy

The European Opera Centre operates under policies established by Liverpool Hope University which are displayed on the University's website.

Technology must be used responsibly to ensure safe use by all.

When working with children and/or vulnerable adults, Members are **not** permitted to:

- Take any personal technology, including mobile phones, iPads, photographic and sound recording equipment into any area being used to deliver workshops.
- Use any technology used to access the Internet without the specific prior written approval of the European Opera Centre's Chief Executive.
- Use any photographs, video or sound recordings made in the course of workshops by any party without the prior written approval of the European Opera Centre's Chief Executive.

The European Opera Centre will consider, in particular, Looked After Children (Children in Care) who might be put at risk by being included in publicity materials and always gain written permission for photographs before using them publicly.

The DfE highlights the risks of new technologies:

'The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues. Child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation- technology often provides the platform that facilitates harm. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm'

Members should bring immediately to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead any behaviours by adults or children themselves that may be considered risky or harmful.

General Code of Behaviour for Members

Members should:

- Put the welfare of a child/vulnerable adult/participant and their enjoyment of the activities first
- Act as a positive role model
- Recognise the developmental needs of a participant, whether child, young person or adult.
- Set and monitor appropriate boundaries and relationships when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, based on openness, honesty and respect for personal space.
- Plan activities that avoid Members working in isolation with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Create and maintain a safe and caring environment that enables children, young people and vulnerable adults to raise concerns about attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Challenge activities which do not promote the above
- Take action if they have concerns about children, young people and vulnerable adults welfare, or if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards them - **NON ACTION IS UNACCEPTABLE**

- Ensure physical contact does not occur without the prior consent of a parent or guardian.
- Challenge sensitively inappropriate behaviour from a child, young person or vulnerable adult (eg attention seeking, following a Member around, a perceived crush on a Member).

Members SHOULD NOT:

- Engage in flirtatious behaviour, innuendo or suggestive terms, gestures which could indicate such.
- Dismiss an allegation
- Offer lifts in a vehicle home, or to the venue to children, young people and vulnerable adults without prior agreement with parents/guardians and only when accompanied by another Member of the European Opera Centre
- Delay or cover up the reporting of an allegation
- Spend excessive time with one participant away from other participants

If you suspect a participant is at risk/an allegation is made

Record the facts, as you know them

Ensure the participant's safety

Alert the Designated Safeguarding Person

Contact local child protection authorities in the case of a child/young person or local police for a vulnerable adult and report the details to them. Do not make any investigations yourself; involve the relevant authorities and share the facts that you have recorded.

If a Participant discloses abusive behaviour to you

Remind them at the earliest opportunity that you cannot guarantee confidentiality. Explain what this means and that you are under obligation to take this allegation further.

Refer the matter immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Person

If you are accused of Abusive Action

Make notes of all your actions/contacts with the participant , consult diaries and registers, as soon as possible to review your actions and the alleged allegations

Report allegations to a Designated Safeguarding Person immediately and factually

Ensure you have stopped working with the participant to ensure no further allegations.

Review procedures to ensure you and the Designated Safeguarding Person are following all procedures correctly.

Seek professional and legal advice

This Policy will be reviewed annually and will be available on the European Opera Centre's website

This Policy has been agreed by the Board of Trustees of the European Opera Centre

Date: 22 March 2017