



Greater Manchester Drama Federation Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

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This policy and procedures document reflects the current statutory guidance of part one from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2018). Volunteers, contractors who offer their services to the Greater Manchester Drama Federation (GMDF) and competing societies will be made aware of this document. This Policy and Procedures document will be reviewed every three years and may be amended from time to time. Should any deficiencies or weaknesses in Child Protection arrangements become apparent, these will be remedied immediately, and this document may be updated before the 3 yearly review date.

Introduction

Greater Manchester Drama Federation (GMDF) will strive to ensure that all members taking part in its annual One Act Play Festival remain safe and free from harm, and the organisation is committed to playing a full and active part in the multi-agency approach to child protection concerns. Additionally, GMDF has a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and to have a child protection policy in place, which should be shared with parents to address concerns about the safety and protection of children whilst taking part in the One Act Play Festival. Through their contact with member societies who have a youth, GMDF have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect. Therefore, parents should be aware that where it appears to a member of staff that a child may have been abused, GMDF is required, as part of the local child protection procedures, to report their concern to Children's Social Care immediately. To avoid any misunderstandings, societies who have been made aware of children who have sustained accidental injuries outside of the GMDF's care, which result in cuts/bruises/fractures etc., should inform the GMDF immediately and explain the cause.

GMDF recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. GMDF recognises that abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to; physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. GMDF is committed to sustaining a culture and ethos that protects children from harm. All member societies of GMDF who are taking part in the One Act Play Festival accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that may cause children harm.

GMDF has a dedicated Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Judith Craig. In the absence of Judith Craig, Anita Stuttard has been nominated by the board as Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Any allegations against either Judith Craig or Anita Stuttard should be heard by Paul Cohen, Chair of GMDF.

Greater Manchester Drama Federation believes that:

- The welfare of children is paramount.
- All children, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All members and volunteers of GMDF should be clear on how to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.

Greater Manchester Drama Federation will ensure that:

- Appropriate policies and procedures are in place, which are followed by all trustees, volunteers and beneficiaries.
- Checks have been carried out to ensure that all people in positions of responsibility are suitable to act in their roles.
- All people in positions of responsibility know how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner.
- All risks are identified and will be managed in a risk register, which is regularly reviewed.
- Statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant GMDF will be observed and followed.
- Appropriate investigations are carried out following concerns being raised.
- Protecting beneficiaries and volunteers from harm is paramount to the culture of GMDF.
- There are always suitable resources available, including trained volunteers who are responsible for safeguarding and protecting all.
- Annual reviews of all safeguarding policies, procedures and practices are made.
- As an organisation working with young people, we follow the safeguarding procedures agreed for our local area by the Local Authority Designated Officer. It is our duty to refer any incident that may undermine the welfare of a child to the Integrated Front Door Team.

At the outset of any One Act Play Festival, GMDF will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Ensure competing societies engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate vetting (if necessary in consultation with the local education authority).
- Ensure that children are supervised at all times.

Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of GMDF, please make this known to the person with responsibility for safeguarding. If you suspect that the person with responsibility for safeguarding is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to Paul Cohen.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of GMDF, for example a group leader, volunteer etc., that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any members, volunteers or trustees of the society.

Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of GMDF, he or she will be made aware of their rights and advised that this will be investigated by the GMDF executive.
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the individual 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.
- In criminal law, the Crown, or other prosecuting authority, has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Accidents

- To avoid accidents, competing societies will be advised of 'house rules' regarding health and safety and will be notified of the appropriate fire safety procedures relating to the theatre where the festival is taking place.
- If a child is injured while in the care of GMDF, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in GMDF's accident book.

Health & Safety

- All adults from participating societies must be aware of a safety/fire procedure. A fire drill should be carried each evening that the festival is taking place..
- Fire extinguishers should be available at the theatre and regularly checked out.
- Children with infectious illnesses must not attend.
- GMDF operates a total no smoking policy.
- A responsible adult from GMDF should make sure that the premises are open in good time, that all children are signed in and that children are collected and signed out at the end of the session.
- A GMDF representative and a leader or responsible adult from the competing society should make sure that all children have left the building.

Insurance

- GMDF has a fully comprehensive insurance policy, which also includes public liability insurance.

Last reviewed: 16th February 2024

Next review date: 16th February 2027