

The Wick Theatre Company

Child Protection Policy - 2015

Purpose of the policy

The Wick Theatre Company has a key aim of educating and introducing young people to theatre. One of the ways in which this aim is realised is through the regular workshops and productions of our youth group, Young Wick. Our aim is to make participation by young people in Young Wick Activities as safe and enjoyable as possible and to this end we accept and recognise our responsibility for adopting good practice in protecting children and young people from harm.

Who does the policy apply to?

This policy applies specifically to all Wick members involved in organising or running activities with Young Wick but as a company we believe everyone has a responsibility for the safety of children or young people. For the purpose of this policy “children and young people” means up to the age of 18 but also includes over 18’s who are vulnerable through learning or other disabilities. We recognise that abuse occurs in all groups within society, within all cultural, ethnic and religious communities and across all classes

Our Policy

We will ensure that all volunteers who work with Young Wick members:

- Will be full and long standing members of Wick Theatre Company with a proven record of company work and promotion of theatre.
- All will be required to have two satisfactory references including one from their most recent employer and photographic proof of identification
- All volunteers working with Young Wick will be required to declare all previous and pending convictions *and to produce a satisfactory and up to date standard Criminal Records Bureau check. Wick Theatre Company will undertake these checks and may delay the start of volunteering until such checks have been completed or withdraw the opportunity to volunteer where such checks are unsatisfactory.*
- The Wick Theatre Executive Committee will be responsible for sanctioning all requests to work with Young Wick.
- The Wick Theatre Committee will nominate one person on the Committee to act as the designated child protection person to whom any allegations or suspicion of child abuse can be reported. Volunteers and members of Young Wick will be made aware who this designated person is and encouraged to report all incidents of concern. This person will

also be responsible for conducting the CRB checks and maintaining the confidentiality of all information relating to the checks.

- Should a query arise as to the suitability of any volunteer working with Young Wick, the designated child protection person will be informed who will then inform the Committee Chair. A full and prompt investigation will take place, which could result in the Wick member not being permitted to continue as a volunteer with young Wick. The Chair will also decide whether Social Services should be informed.
- All Young Wick Volunteers will be given a copy of this policy and the Appendix on Code of Conduct and briefed on its contents
- Relevant training opportunities will be given to volunteers to ensure that they are up to date with child protection.

Our Code of Conduct workers in contact with children

- We have developed a Code of Conduct to advise Wick members working with Young Wick of the standards we expect when working with children or young people (attached as Appendix). This Code will be kept up to date by the Wick Committee keeping in touch with best practice and advice from organisations such as the NSPCC who specialise in child protection.
- Breach of the Code of Conduct will be regarded as a serious matter and dealt with appropriately by the Wick Committee.

CODE OF CONDUCT

CONTACT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This Code of Conduct sets the standards that are expected of Wick Theatre Company members working with Young Wick. Most of it will appear to be common sense but it is important that you understand that in working with children and Young People, you have an important role to play in ensuring the safety and protection of the children and young people involved in Wick. If you require any explanation for any of the points below, please contact Judith Berrill, who is the nominated child protection person on Wick Committee – details from Hon. Sec: petera.joyce@btopenworld.com

- Wick Theatre Company members are expected to have a positive approach to dealing with children including listening to them, valuing and respecting them as individuals and encouraging and praising them.
- Should any issue of behaviour arise eg disruptive behaviour, the matter should be referred to the parent/carer unless there is an immediate threat to the child's safety, which can be averted by action from the Wick volunteer.
- If you notice or are made aware of any allegation or suspicion of abuse you must report this to the designated person from the Committee (see above) who will be responsible for recording the incident and reporting it to an appropriate agency.
- You should not during the course of your work:
 - Spend any time alone with children and away from others.
 - Engage in any unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. This does not preclude you from taking action where a child's safety is at risk.
 - Meet with children and young people outside organised activities.
 - Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay.
 - Use inappropriate language (eg swearing or sexually explicit) in front of children or young people.
 - Allow children or young people to use inappropriate language without reporting it to the parent/carer.
 - Make sexually suggestive comments in front of, about, or to a child, even in fun.
 - Let allegations made by a child or young person go by without referring it to the nominated person.
 - Deter children or young people from making allegations through fear of not being believed.

- Do things of a personal nature that they can do themselves.
- Invite a child or young person to visit your home.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Rely on your own good name to protect you.