



# **Random Opera Company**

## **Safeguarding Children Policy**

**July 2021**

### **Safeguarding Children**

Our core safeguarding principle is that all children should feel and be safe when they are with us. Random Opera Company is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children and young people it works with. The organisation expects all parents, volunteers and directors to share this commitment.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child or young person, a referral will be made immediately to the organisation's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who will determine whether a referral to children's social care or the Police is needed. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, anyone with concerns should press for reconsideration. Concerns should always lead to the child being helped at the appropriate time.

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## Rationale

Random Opera Company recognises its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to its care by establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop

The staff, volunteers and directors of the organisation are committed to establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to, knowing there are adults in the organisation whom they can approach if they are worried or have concerns

All staff, volunteers and directors in the organisation have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and are well placed to observe the signs of possible abuse

We recognise our responsibility to discuss with Children's Social Care Services and/or the Police any significant concerns about a child which may indicate physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect

Random Opera Company recognises its duty to work with agencies such as Children's Social Care Services, Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, and Education Welfare Services, in protecting children from harm and responding to concerns about possible abuse

We wish to promote a positive, supportive and secure environment, giving children a sense of being valued

This policy is written with full regard for the Government and DfE legislation and guidance: Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education

## Definitions required by the Policy

Throughout this document, certain acronyms will be used for commonly used expressions and documents for ease of reading and clarity. These include:

**DSL:** Designated Safeguarding Lead

**ACPC:** Area Child Protection Committee

**S&HC:** Social and Health Care (*the name now used for Social Services*)

**CAMHS:** Child and Adolescent Mental health Service

**WSCB:** Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board

## Aims of the Policy

- To advise all staff, volunteers and directors of their responsibilities for the safeguarding of our children
- To ensure all staff, volunteers and directors are aware of the procedures to be followed should there be a concern that a child may be 'at risk'
- To clarify the role of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and identify them
- To make clear to staff, volunteers and directors the procedures for recruitment in accordance with legislation regarding DBS checks and references
- To make clear to staff the training requirements for all adults who come into contact with children
- To advise all staff on policies regarding Restraint
- To advise on the organisation's policy regarding Information Sharing and when and to whom it is appropriate to share information

## Objectives of the Policy

To ensure staff, volunteers and directors are aware of their duty of care for all children

To ensure staff, volunteers and directors are aware of the procedures to follow should there be concern that a child is 'at risk'

## Responsibilities in relation to the Policy

The **Directors** of the organisation have responsibility for:

- Ensuring that the Random Opera Company has a Safeguarding Children policy in place that meets the statutory requirements
- Reviewing the Random Opera Company's Safeguarding Children policy on an annual basis taking appropriate legislation into account
- Ensuring that it follows all procedures with regard to Safer Recruitment, DBS checks and references
- Ensuring correct procedures are followed in all matters relating to this policy

The **DSL** has responsibility for:

- Enacting the Safeguarding Children policy on behalf of the Directors
- Keeping the Directors informed of any cases against staff or volunteers
- Informing staff, volunteers and Directors of their responsibilities regarding training
- Informing staff, volunteers and Directors of their responsibilities regarding Safeguarding Children and following appropriate procedures
- Informing all staff and volunteers of their rights and procedures regarding accusations of abuse against staff or volunteers
- Adhering to the systems and procedures as designated by the Safeguarding Children policy

Each **member of staff** and **volunteer** has responsibility for:

- Reading the Safeguarding Children Policy
- Carrying out their duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of all our children
- Following the procedures outlined
- Undergoing the required training when necessary and ensuring that all such training is current

## **Safer Recruitment Practice**

A key element of this practice is that directors will ensure that safe recruitment practices are in place and followed in checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work with our children.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead for 2021 - 2022 is:**

- Richard Tegid Jones ( Director )

In accordance with DfE guidance the organisation will have at least one DSL who will be a senior member of the organisation. The DSL will have responsibility for liaising with Health and Social Care and other agencies over cases of abuse.

The organisation recognises the importance of the DSL and will enable him/her to carry out the duties of that role effectively and with appropriate training. The DSL:

- is responsible for referring cases on to S&HC in accordance with the procedures; it is not the responsibility of the DSL to investigate suspected abuse
- will seek guidance and liaise with S&HC when necessary on safeguarding issues
- must have Specialist Safeguarding and Child Protection training which must be updated every 3 years
- will share information with relevant agencies, i.e. Police, S&HC, Schools when there are safeguarding concerns involving a child in the organisation
- will ensure records are kept securely and separate from the main child's file
- will act as a source of advice for other staff, volunteers and directors regarding safeguarding issues
- will be available to support staff, volunteers and directors involved during, and after, procedures have been followed for a safeguarding issue

## **Organisation Ethos and Curriculum**

Random Opera Company is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of its staff, volunteers and children. Through the supportive nature of the organisation, involvement of outside agencies, support from parents, promotion of high standards from staff, volunteers and the excellent role models they provide, and other positive influences, the organisation will provide a caring and supportive atmosphere.

We will provide a mechanism, through our pastoral care for the children, where they are provided with immediate access to an adult they feel they could trust. Sometimes children would prefer to talk with an adult who is not directly involved with them and the organisation will provide such opportunities with members of the outside agencies.

Through encouraging and enforcing high standards of behaviour the organisation will endeavour to create a calm, supportive and caring atmosphere where children feel safe. Bullying issues will always be treated seriously and investigated thoroughly.

## Procedures For Staff Re Disclosures And Safeguarding Concerns

Further details, advice and guidance can be found in the DfE documents 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'.

Members of staff, directors and volunteers to be given access to a copy of the Random Opera Company Safeguarding & Child Protection policy, which is updated at the start of each academic year or more frequently if needed. Spare copies can be obtained from the DSL.

## Training Requirements and DBS Checks

All staff and volunteers must have undergone generalist safeguarding and child protection training which must be updated every three years. This training can be done either face to face or online. The DSL will have undergone specialist safeguarding training, which must be updated every three years. New staff must provide evidence to the DSLs if they have undergone this training in another establishment and it is still current, otherwise they will be required to undergo the training as soon as can be arranged.

All staff in contact with students must have had an enhanced DBS check and evidence of its existence must be provided to the organisation. Volunteers who are regularly used by the organisation and directors must also have had a DBS check and evidence of its existence must be provided to the organisation.

The procedures for the handling of DBS certificate information is outlined in Appendix B.

## Listening to Children

Evidence shows that children will talk about their concerns and problems to people they feel they can trust and are comfortable with. This will not necessarily be a member of staff and, therefore, it is essential that all staff and volunteers in the organisation know how to respond sensitively to a child's concerns, whom to approach for advice and the **importance of not guaranteeing complete confidentiality**. Children also want to know that they will be listened to and their concerns taken seriously so it is important to provide a safe environment where this can happen.

Procedures are covered in the generalist training but general guidelines include:

- If a child has asked if they can talk to you and it is not convenient to talk at that time make arrangements to meet with them as soon as possible
- Any member of staff or volunteer who is approached by a child wanting to talk should listen positively and reassure the child that they are not doing anything wrong (some will have been asked 'not to tell' etc.)
- Let the child know that **you cannot promise to keep everything confidential** and that you may have to pass on information to the DSL, tell them who this is, and why, if you have concerns that they may be 'at risk'
- Try not to jump to conclusions and do not ask leading questions or put words into their mouth; usually it is best to listen as much as possible without interrupting and let the child relay things as they feel comfortable to do so - this will be a very difficult and worrying conversation for them – (it is not our responsibility to investigate the concerns, ours is to refer them on to Social and Health Care).
- Write a record of the conversation as soon as possible afterwards, (using WCC green form ) distinguishing clearly between fact, observation, allegation and opinion and sign and date the record. Any conversation recorded should be recorded verbatim, solely in the words of the child.

Concerns may also arise from the appearance or demeanour of a child during a Random Opera Company session or comments made by other children; these concerns should be passed on to a DSL and a written record made

Pass on any concerns immediately to the DSL

**If you are unable to discuss your concerns with the DSL i.e. it is the end of a session and you have been unable to contact them through mobile phones or on home numbers, and you have any concerns about what to do next you can ring the duty care team for local S&HC on 01926 410410.**

'at risk' can include areas such as:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Neglect – both emotional and physical
- At risk because of drug/alcohol abusing parents
- Drug/ alcohol abuse
- Mental health concerns which put the child at risk, both their own or those of their parents/carers
- Domestic violence
- Self harm
- Sexual Exploitation of Children
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriages

Random Opera Company 'session' includes rehearsals at any venue, concerts, residential trips, day trips, etc

### **Following a Disclosure, or Concern Regarding a Child's Welfare**

Various actions may be needed after a disclosure or concern regarding a child's welfare. The DSL:

- may need to speak with the child to clarify facts and reassure them regarding future action from the organisation
- will then decide whether the case should be referred on to S&HC or any future action: this is often done after advice from S&HC as to whether a referral is appropriate or not
- will usually inform and reassure the child of the action they have taken and where appropriate inform the parents of a referral: the organisation is aware of the harm this can do to the relationship between the parent/carer and the organisation but will endeavour to inform unless it is felt that this would put the child at serious risk of harm
- will be the responsible for the referral to S&HC
- will need, almost immediately, the written record of the initial disclosure or concern from the member of staff or volunteer who passed on the details to the DSL as this will be required for the referral to S&HC: a copy will be kept in a confidential and secure location away from the child's main record.

## **Sharing Information and Working with Outside Agencies**

The organisation is committed to working with other agencies to promote and ensure the welfare and safety of its children. As such we will, when there are safeguarding concerns, pass on any relevant information and concerns to S&HC or the Police. This may include any records of conversations between staff/volunteers and parents and staff/volunteers and children, and children's details such as address, parent/carer names, sibling names and ages. We may also contact schools which siblings attend to ascertain if there are any concerns from professionals there.

Following a referral, S&HC or the Police may need to interview the child. It is the responsibility of S&HC to obtain the permission and/or attendance of the parent/carer. In exceptional circumstances, an interview can take place without the parent/carer's attendance or permission but this is the responsibility of S&HC and will be done in accordance with their procedures and the level of risk. The organisation will work cooperatively with the Police and S&HC.

Procedures from the organisation regarding interviews will be as follows:

- Unless S&HC have informed the DSL, the parent/carer should attend the meeting
- If the parent/carer attends the meeting a DSL should attend – this is a very difficult time for both the parents and the child and consequently these can be very difficult meetings for all involved, including the organisation.
- If parents have given permission for the interview to proceed without them, a DSL or other appropriate member of staff should attend – consideration should be given to the child's wishes alongside the 'level of allegation'
- In exceptional circumstances a meeting will go ahead without parental consent; this is a decision to be taken by S&HC. The organisation will offer a member of staff to support the child who will be the DSL: should the child wish someone else to attend, such as another member of staff, they will do so in addition to the DSL

## **Supporting the Child**

We recognise that children who are abused, neglected or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth and to view the world as benevolent and meaningful. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of self blame. Random Opera Company are aware that we may be a stable, secure, predictable and supportive element in a child's life. However, the behaviour of the child at risk could be challenging, defiant or they may be withdrawn.

We will endeavour to support the child through the sessions and ethos of the organisation which promote self esteem and self motivation. The organisation promotes a caring and supportive atmosphere. Whilst children whose behaviour is unacceptable face sanctions all children are given every opportunity to put the incidents behind them, learn what needs to change in their behaviour and improve. Where necessary support from staff, volunteers and outside agencies will be used to help the child.

## **Children Looked After (CLA)**

Random Opera Company will take particular care to ensure that all Children Looked After are supported throughout their involvement. The needs and circumstances for each individual child are very different and the organisation will work in cooperation with S&HC where necessary to ensure that a child is looked after appropriately. The DSL will act on behalf of looked after children. They have been delegated the responsibility to ensure that any necessary meetings take place and records are passed to the relevant S&HC team if the child's home address is 'out of county'.

## **Sexually Active Young People Under the Age of 18**

The organisation adopts the WSCB guidance for professionals working with Underage Sexual Activity in Warwickshire which is in accordance with Government guidance. A copy of the policy can be found on their website at: [www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk](http://www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk).

### **Physical Contact With Students – Restraint**

Guidance is found in Education and Inspections Act 2006, Part 7, Chapter 1: Use of Reasonable Force

The Act states that a member of staff: 'may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing a pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely:

1. committing any offence
2. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the child himself), or
3. prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any children receiving education from the organisation, whether during a session or otherwise.'

Random Opera Company deems 'reasonable force' as: 'the minimum amount of force which is reasonably necessary to restore safety'. Staff should not intervene where they feel their own safety is at risk or where intervention could lead to accusations of assault or abuse. There is no obligation on staff to intervene in this way.

- Physical intervention or restraint should only take place if there are good grounds for considering it necessary to prevent a child from significant harm to themselves, to others, to property or if engaging in a behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline in the organisation's venues
- Where appropriate, actions should be taken to avoid intervention i.e. by discussion or distraction
- Where possible, a clear verbal warning should be given that restraint is going to be used if the child persists in their behaviour. Assistance should be summoned from another member of staff/volunteer and only if a child is in immediate danger should a member of staff/volunteer intervene without another member of staff/ volunteer present.
- Only the minimum force necessary to restore safety should be used. This may involve blocking, holding, pushing or leading a child away. It should not involve anything that would further endanger the child such as slapping, punching, kicking, twisting, knocking to the floor or against a wall, forcing a joint or limb, holding an ear or hair - As soon as it is safe to do so the restraint should be relaxed.
- Staff should be aware not to restrain a child in a way that may be deemed 'indecent' and leave them open to allegations of assault or abuse
- All incidents must be recorded and copies given to the DSL.
- If a member of staff/volunteer has had to restrain a child, the organisation should offer support with the opportunity for a debrief with a senior member of staff/director.

## **Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers**

Whilst we would hope that this is an area we never need to refer to, staff and volunteers must be aware of the procedures that may need to be followed should an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer be made by a child, a parent, another member of staff, volunteer or any adult working with the organisation. The procedures refer to behaviour which may fall into the category of child protection, inappropriate behaviour or emotional abuse of a severe nature. Other concerns will be dealt with under the organisation's complaints, disciplinary and grievance policies.

The Directors recognise that for any member of staff/volunteer involved in any form of allegation it is one of the most stressful, distressing and emotional things they will ever go through. Preparation for such is impossible but we would advise staff and volunteers to seek professional independent support and advice at such a time. The organisation will act within the guidance from DfE and this dictates and informs the following procedures which the organisation will adopt:

- Allegations against any staff or volunteers should be made to the DSL.
- Any allegations against the DSL should be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (Telephone 01926 743433)

### **Why Procedures are needed?**

- Procedures need to ensure children and young people have as much protection as possible from the extremely small number of people who seek access to children/young people, to cause them harm physically, sexually or emotionally.
- Children may misinterpret actions which, when reported to parents, could lead to complaints
- Small proportions of children lie about allegations to create difficulties for staff and volunteers
- During times of stress or provocation some professionals react inappropriately to children and may behave in an unacceptable manner
- When an allegation has been made concerning anyone they should have the case against them dealt with quickly, professionally and impartially
- The child's welfare is paramount (Children Act 1989)
- Research shows that some "institutions" fail to protect their children because of over emphasis on the protection of staff and the natural reaction to believe a colleague rather than a pupil
- The system for dealing with allegations within the organisation ensures that all allegations are dealt with in a clear structured manner using a procedure that is professional and impartial

If a member of staff/volunteer is informed of a possible allegation they should immediately notify the DSL who will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Where the allegation is against the DSL, the LADO (Telephone 01926 743433) should be informed.

There should be no time delay and care should be taken to maintain confidentiality as in child protection procedures. The organisation will not commence an investigation before agreement is reached with the LADO.

**APPENDIX A** gives a more detailed summary of the guidance which the organisation will follow should an allegation ever be made and staff must make themselves aware of its content. It is very much dependent on the nature of the complaint as to how the 'investigation' proceeds.

Suspension is not an automatic response and staff should be aware of the circumstances under which this would be advised.

## APPENDIX A

### Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and Volunteers

This is not a new issue, but one which remains important for everyone in the arena of dealing with children to have a very clear understanding about the procedures that must be followed in the case of an allegation being made. The procedures refer to allegations of abusive behaviour, which may or may not fall into the category of child protection. Other concerns will be dealt with under the organisation's complaints, disciplinary and grievance procedures.

#### Why are Procedures needed?

- Procedures need to ensure children and young people have as much protection as possible from the extremely small number of people who seek access to children/young people, to cause them harm physically, sexually or emotionally.
- Children may misinterpret actions which, when reported to parents, could lead to complaints
- Small proportions of children lie about allegations to create difficulties for staff and volunteers
- During times of stress or provocation some professionals react inappropriately to children and may behave in an unacceptable manner
- When an allegation has been made concerning any employee they should have the case against them dealt with quickly, professionally and impartially
- The child's welfare is paramount (Children Act 1989)
- Research shows that some "institutions" fail to protect their children because of over emphasis on the protection of staff and the natural reaction to believe a colleague rather than a pupil
- The system for dealing with allegations within the organisation ensures that all allegations are dealt with in a clear structured manner using a procedure that is professional and impartial

#### Allegations / Suspicions of Abuse

Allegations are received in a variety of ways. Usually these are:

- Direct complaint by child to another staff member/volunteer
- Direct complaint of a parent/carer to another staff member or volunteer
- Concerns raised by parties who may have been told about or witnessed abuse
- Direct contact by parent/carer to a director
- Anonymous referral
- Direct complaint to the Children and Families Assessment team (S&HC) or the Police

If an employee is informed of a possible allegation they should immediately notify a DSL who will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if necessary. Where the allegation is against a DSL the LADO (Telephone 01926 743433) should be informed directly.

There should be no time delay and care should be taken to maintain confidentiality as in child protection procedures. The organisation will not commence an investigation before agreement is reached with the LADO.

## What happens when an allegation is made?

The DSL will immediately consult the LADO if it is alleged that a member of staff, volunteer or other contractor, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children

All matters will be dealt with under WSCB's Child Protection Procedures and therefore confidentiality is essential. Information will be shared on a "need to know" basis only. All documentation will be carefully stored. The accused person will then be told about the allegation as soon as possible. This may be delayed if Police or S&HC need to be consulted with to agree what information can be disclosed.

If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, a strategy discussion will be held which will include Social & Health Care, the Police, LADO, DSL or Directors and other relevant agencies. A strategy discussion considers not only the children directly involved in the allegation but also any other children who could be at risk of significant harm, it could therefore include staff members' own children and any other children with whom they may have contact.

If the threshold for significant harm is not met, but a criminal offence may have been committed, an initial evaluation, which is similar to a strategy discussion, will take place with the Police, LADO, DSL or Director and other relevant agencies.

The aim of these discussions is to share relevant information about the allegation and to determine whether an investigation needs to be conducted and if so by whom. They are not part of any disciplinary procedure.

If the allegation is about physical contact, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the police will take account of the fact that teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour, under section 550A of the Education Act 1996.

## What types of investigation might be undertaken?

There are three possible types of investigation:

1. By Social Care, under child protection procedures
2. By Police relating to possible criminal offences (see Appendix A)
3. By the organisation under disciplinary or capability procedures

**Under no circumstances will the DSL/Director conduct their own investigation of any serious allegation until the matter has been agreed with the LADO or Police. Attempts to do so could seriously hinder any further investigation and reduce professional impartiality.**

In cases where a Police investigation is necessary, the joint evaluation with the Police will consider whether there are matters which can be taken forward in a disciplinary process in parallel with the criminal process, or whether any disciplinary action will need to wait for completion of the police enquiries and/or prosecution.

## Summary of Key Issues/Actions to be Taken

Suspension should never be an automatic response. Appropriate criteria should be applied in all cases.

Do not leave the child alone/with other children until there have been consultations with the organisation's safeguarding team and a course of action agreed, including the appropriateness of the child remaining in session.

Do not seek to investigate the allegation yourself or interview pupils.

You **must** consult with the LADO

Ideally obtain details of the "allegation" in writing, ideally signed and dated by the person receiving the allegation, and counter signed and dated by the DSL or chair of Directors (but not the child who is the subject).

An investigating officer will be appointed, in consultation with police and executive Director, if a joint decision is made that a formal investigation is appropriate.

Consider the need for disciplinary action in respect of the employee where it is clear that a reportable offence has not been committed, again in consultation with the DSL/director and LA

However, any disciplinary action must be kept separate from child protection investigations except when there is agreement otherwise between the LADO and those in charge of investigations.

Investigations by the police or early years and families assessment team will take priority over an internal investigation by the organisation.

When issues are resolved, the designated LADO will write to all relevant parties with findings

### **What considerations are made regarding suspension?**

The provision for suspension is set out in the Education Act 2002 and accompanying regulations. Decisions regarding suspension can only be taken by the Board of Directors. Suspension is a neutral act, not a sanction, and it should not be automatic. The DSL/director may seek advice from the LADO who should canvass the views of police and social care if they are involved. The final decision, however, rests with the Directors.

Suspension should be considered in all cases where:

- there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, or
- the allegation warrants investigation by the Police, or
- it is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

In cases where the police are involved, suspension may be considered necessary to allow the conduct of the investigation to proceed unimpeded.

Once a suspension has been enacted, and if there is no police investigation, an interview will normally be arranged and the member of staff advised to seek assistance from their Trade Union or Professional Association. They have the right to be accompanied to the interview by a Trade Union representative or a friend. If they are suspended, one of the roles of the union representative will be to promote their interests and raise issues that may be of concern to them.

Alternatives to suspension will always be considered, for example, leave of absence, transfer of duties or additional supervision. Suspended staff should be kept informed of the position regarding their case on a regular basis even if there are no developments to report.

## **Who will be notified?**

Various people will need to be informed that an allegation has been made, regardless of whether a suspension has taken place or not. These will include:

- The child concerned, their “parents” and any party making an allegation
- The member of staff at the appropriate time
- DSL
- Directors
- The LADO
- Senior members of staff, so far as is necessary, as determined by the Director

Decisions will be based on a ‘need to know basis’ and take into consideration, as far as possible, the issues of confidentiality. There may be occasions when the police will need to decide the appropriate timing for the above individuals to be notified.

Where, unfortunately, the matter becomes common knowledge or subject to speculation, it may also become necessary to issue a brief and accurate statement for all members of staff, Directors, parents, children and the public. This will be determined by the appropriate individuals following consultation.

## **What comes after the allegation and initial actions?**

The complete details of the actions which may follow an allegation are summarised below and outlined in the DfE publication: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse, August 2011.

## **Additional Information and Guidance**

Further information and guidance can be found in: DfE: Dealing with Allegations of Abuse, August 2011  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g0076914/dealing-with-allegations-of-abuse> Independent Safeguarding Authority: <http://www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

## Appendix B | DBS Handling and Storage

### General principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Random Opera Company complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

### Storage and access

Certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

- DBS records held by Director
- Safeguarding green forms held by DSL

### Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. In practise, this is the DSL and Director. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

### Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

### Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints.

If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

### Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

## Appendix C | Websites

Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board: [www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk](http://www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk)

Safeguarding advice for staff/volunteers: [www.NSPCC.org.uk](http://www.NSPCC.org.uk)

DfE Publications regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection: [www.publications.education.gov.uk](http://www.publications.education.gov.uk)

Random Opera Company Safeguarding Children Policy	Last Review Date:	July 2021
	Next Review Date:	July 2022