Wychwood Players

BRINGING DRAMA TO THE COTSWOLDS

Wychwood Players : Safeguarding Policy

Overview
Wychwood Players believes in protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This policy is intended to ensure that we have all the right things in place to protect and safeguard vulnerable adults who are taking part in our productions, workshops, or other creative activities. As an adult-only company, we do not work directly with under-18s, but if we were to consider this in future, we will produce a separate safeguarding policy that includes this demographic.

It is not our duty to establish whether or not abuse is taking place, but we have a responsibility to record and report any concerns over the welfare of vulnerable adults we work with. This extends to the identification of abuse, poor practice by participants, contractors, volunteers, and directors, as well as allegations brought to our attention by a member of the public/community.

The safety and wellbeing of all our members is our core priority, and everyone's responsibility. Anyone working with Wychwood Players must behave in accordance with this policy document, and our Code of Conduct policy. This policy should also be read alongside our Health and Safety Policy.

Key principles of adult safeguarding
To ensure the safety of vulnerable adults, Wychwood Players is guided by the six key principles set out in The Care Act 2014:

• Empowerment – People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and consent is informed
• Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs
• Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
• Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need
• Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse
• Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Types of abuse
The Care Act 2014 defines the following areas of abuse. These are not exhaustive but are a guide to behaviour that may lead to a safeguarding enquiry. These include:

• Physical abuse **-** Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.
• Domestic violence/abuse **-** Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so-called 'honour' based violence.
• Exploitation **-** Including sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
• Sexual abuse - Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography. Witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
• Psychological abuse - Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
• Financial or material abuse - Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse of misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
• Modern slavery - Encompassing slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and those who coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
• Discriminatory abuse - Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because you are, or are perceived to be different due to race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
• Neglect and acts of omission - Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care

Radicalisation to terrorism
The Government through its PREVENT programme has highlighted how some adults may be vulnerable to exploitation and radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. Signs and indicators of radicalisation may include:
• being in contact with extremist recruiters
• articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders
• accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element
• possessing violent extremist literature
• using extremist narratives to explain personal disadvantage
• justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues
• joining extremist organisations
• significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour.

Recognising the signs of abuse
The adult in question may say or do things that let you know something is wrong. Otherwise, it may come in the form of a disclosure, complaint, or an expression of concern from another person.

How we will safeguard vulnerable adults
Wychwood Players will ensure that:
• where possible, all contact with vulnerable persons will be conducted via care centres or relevant and responsible persons
• if a vulnerable person contacts Wychwood Players via social media, it should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Person, who will ensure it is followed up and the appropriate action taken
• the team related to any given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms for all persons, vulnerable or not.
• confidential data that is collected on all persons, including vulnerable persons, such as addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and shared between responsible persons only on a need-to-know basis
• any external contractors employed on a project where a vulnerable person is present are required to hold a current DBS check (from within last 3 years)
• any responsible persons employed to support a vulnerable person on any project are required to hold a current DBS check (from within last 3 years) and supply a reference from previous work with vulnerable persons
• a copy of this policy is made available publicly, for all participants to read.

Participants in our productions/workshops must:
• actively avoid spending any time alone with any vulnerable person, away from others
• encourage the vulnerable person to bring a friend if meeting alone, when no responsible person is available
• never engage in any type of physical contact with any vulnerable persons without first asking permission
• should not take or share photos or videos of any vulnerable person without confirmation from our Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will ensure the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.

Reporting concerns
Any participant, volunteer or director who becomes aware that an adult is (or is at risk of) being abused must raise the matter immediately with our Designated Safeguarding Officer. They will then record the concern and actions subsequently taken.
If the adult requires immediate protection from harm, you should contact the police and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB**.** Otherwise**,** our Safeguarding Officer will consider whether a 'safeguarding concern' should be raised with the local authority.

What is a safeguarding concern?
A 'safeguarding concern' is when any person has a reasonable cause to believe that:
• an adult has needs for care and support and,
• may be experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect and,
• is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs.

If it appears that these stages above are met, then a safeguarding concern should always be raised with the local authority. In an emergency, the emergency services should be contacted. Whenever there is information which indicates that an adult may be, or is, at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, or exploitation, this should be shared with the local authority even when it is also shared with other agencies that may need to be advised, such as the Care Quality Commission or the police.
Where possible and safe to do so, the person contacting the local authority about a safeguarding concern would have had a conversation with the adult regarding their consent, views and wishes. Wherever possible there should be a conversation with the adult at the earliest opportunity to establish their views including:
• whether they see the issue as a cause for concern or not
• what they want to happen, if anything, including any actions they may or may not want to take themselves.

Good practice guidance to disclosure
Talk with the adult as soon as possible unless this would put them, others or you, at risk.
• Speak in a private and safe place.
• Accept what the adult is saying without judgement.
• Don't 'interview' the adult - just gather information to establish the basic facts. This will help when you inform Adult Social Care or the police. Ask the adult what they would like to happen.
• Never promise the adult that you'll keep what they tell you confidential; explain who you will need to tell and why.
• If there are grounds to override an adult's consent to share information, explain what these are.
• Explain to the adult how they will be involved and kept informed.
• Provide information and advice on keeping safe and the safeguarding process.
• Keep an accurate record of your conversations, and actions or decisions taken by you and others.

Recording and record keeping
A written record must be kept about any concern regarding an adult with safeguarding needs. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made. All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Confidentiality and information sharing
Wychwood Players expects all participants, volunteers and directors to maintain confidentiality. However, information should be shared with the local authority if an adult is deemed to be at risk of harm, or **with the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed**.

Whistleblowing
Wychwood Players is committed to ensuring that participants, volunteers and directors who in good faith whistle-blow in the public interest, will be protected from reprisals and victimisation.

Policy review
This policy is a working document which will be reviewed and updated regularly to make sure that our safeguarding objectives are achieved and maintained.
Date of last review: September 2025

Contact us
Designated Safeguarding Officer:
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer:
Police Emergency – 999 Non-emergency – 101
Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB Email: OSAB@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 0345 050 7666

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