



Child Protection Policy

Preliminary Statement: The safety of children and vulnerable adults is paramount and all, without exception, have the right to protection. To that end staff and volunteers of Cyclone Rep are committed to a safe performance environment during the presentation of their Theatre-in-Education shows. Our aim is to make sure that all children and young people who attend our performances are protected from harm and can participate in an enjoyable and safe environment where they feel valued and have fun. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriately.

1. Purpose and Function of the Organisation

To act as promoters and producers of all forms of theatrical productions.

2. The Performance Environment and Supervision of Young People

Performances will be held primarily in theatrical venues and, to a lesser degree, in schools. It is our policy to inform teachers in partnership to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, a safe environment at the venue or their school. This is done by making teachers aware of this policy before attending our performances via a link to our website.

Cyclone Rep will not act “in loco parentis” in the case of minors. It is the responsibility of all teachers to care for the students in their care while attending the performance. Cyclone Rep staff take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children and young people who attend our performances. In relation to the venues Cyclone Rep personnel do not directly supervise public areas. The safety of our patrons is important to us therefore Cyclone Rep requests that teachers and carers make sure that children or young people in their care are supervised always when using public areas such as toilets, café, lobby, stairs etc. Concerns in relation to patron safety should immediately be reported to the venue personnel.

Cyclone Rep will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- 1) following carefully procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers in the document Cyclone Recruitment Process;
- 2) providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- 3) closely working with venues and schools prior to performances to ensure that the student participation elements of our shows are conducted in a safe environment;
- 4) adapt our show(s) as necessary to comply with both the venue’s and school’s health & safety requirements;
- 5) reporting concerns to relevant statutory agencies while involving teachers, parents and children where appropriate;
- 6) adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers;
- 7) sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, teachers, parents/guardians, staff and volunteers.

3. To Whom Does This Policy Apply:

This policy relates to all persons under the age of 18 years and members of vulnerable groups of any age whose needs are identified to the organisers by teachers and carers prior to their arrival at a venue. This should be done by contacting Cyclone Rep directly on 021 2355 356 or info@cyclonerep.com. Cyclone rep actively seeks, wherever possible, to meet any special requirements or needs, but must be informed beforehand in order to prepare appropriate support – or to inform the booker if we are unable to help.



4. Preparing for Attendance at a Cyclone Rep Performance:

Cyclone Rep staff are not responsible for the supervision or care of unaccompanied children and minors. Where parents, guardians and carers are not personally attending a performance with their children, this policy requires that parents are satisfied that their children are adequately supervised by responsible adults acting on their behalf.

5. Child Safeguarding Statement:

As our shows are staged performances in a public space where teachers are present we do not have unsupervised contact with the children. However, if we have a child protection concern about a child, we will discuss it with the relevant teacher/guardian. If we feel that this is not being adequately dealt with, we are then obliged to report the matter to the venue and/or a Duty Social Worker in the Health Service Executive (HSE), or for emergency cases, to An Garda Síochána.

In the event of a report being made, Cyclone Rep will, where possible, pass on the child's name, school name and address and a contact person for the school. We will state the reason(s) for the concern and include the name of the person making the report. Anyone making a report of suspected child abuse will have immunity from civil liability, provided they act 'reasonably and in good faith' (Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998).

A code of behaviour for staff and volunteers is part of our child protection policy. Staff and volunteers are advised to take care that their relationships with students reflect the age, gender and maturity of the pupils. It will be particularly important to ensure that all aspects of demeanour, language and attitudes - however conveyed - do not give rise to any misunderstandings. Ambiguous or ambivalent comment(s) and physical contact should be avoided. Physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, parent or observer. Touching students, including well-intentioned informal and formal gestures such as patting on the back or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to questions being raised. Staff and volunteers must not make gratuitous physical contact with pupils and should avoid attributing 'touching' to their performance style as a way of relating to pupils.

6. Photographs, Video/Audio Recording and Press Photography:

Use of any kind of audio or visual equipment is strictly prohibited for the protection of all children and young people attending a Cyclone Rep performance. Participating teachers and guardians are requested to help ensure that this prohibition is enforced. Any teachers and/or students that wish to take pictures with the actors after the end of our performances must ensure that the child/young person's parent/guardian or teacher is aware of their school's position on the use of photographs.

7. Guidance that Supports this Document:

This policy is in conformity with the State Guidelines: *Children First, 2015* and is concurrent with its most recent update in 2017.

8. Policy Review:

Staff and volunteers in Cyclone Rep accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm, and to establish and maintain a safe environment for them. We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and practice at regular intervals, improving and enhancing as necessary.

The Child Protection Officer for Cyclone Rep is: Dr. Peadar Donohoe, 2nd Floor, Block B, Heritage Business Park, Bessboro Road Cork, Ireland T12 RW2C.
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