



Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Last Reviewed July 2010

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1. Introduction

Claque Theatre's *Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures* (the CVAPPP) are intended to protect and promote the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults. A key consideration in implementing and following the CVAPPP is respect for the individual; it follows from this that most of what is contained in the CVAPP is best practice in all circumstances, regardless of age or circumstances.

1.1 Responsibilities

- Ensure the safety, health and welfare of children and vulnerable adults whilst they are taking part in projects and Claque activities.
- Respect the rights, wishes and feelings of children and vulnerable adults.
- Implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well being of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise Claque Theatre workers and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and to minimise risk to themselves.
- Require that all volunteers and company workforce adopt and abide by this Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and these Procedures.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children or vulnerable adults in line with this Policy and these Procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Review and evaluate this Policy and these Procedures on a regular basis.

1.2 Principles

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting them from abuse. Children and vulnerable adults have a lot to gain from performance, the arts and our community programmes. Their natural sense of fun and spontaneity can blossom in a positive environment created by sports organisations. It provides an excellent opportunity for them to learn new skills, become more confident and maximise their own unique potential. This Policy and these Procedures are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is the primary concern.
- All children and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse to the management of Claque Theatre who will have the responsibility to undertake investigation and where appropriate seek guidance, advice or report conduct to the right authorities.
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.



1.3 Review

This Policy and Procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children and vulnerable adults or any changes within Claque Theatre following any issues or concerns that are raised about the protection of children or vulnerable adults within Claque or in all other circumstances, at least annually.

2. Claque Theatre's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Procedures

2.1 Recruitment and Employment

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and vulnerable adults. For all positions that require regular contact with children or vulnerable adults the following recruitment procedures must be completed. The following procedures will also apply to volunteers and in house election of people to work with children or vulnerable adults.

2.2 Advertising

All forms of advertising used to recruit members for positions involving regular contact with children or vulnerable adults will include the following:

- The aims of Claque and, where appropriate, details of the particular project or programme involved.
- The responsibilities of the role.
- The level of experience or qualifications required
- Details of Claque's open and positive stance on child and vulnerable adult protection and equal opportunities.

2.3 Pre-application Information

Pre-application information for positions involving regular contact with children or vulnerable adults will be sent to applicants and will include:

- A job description including roles and responsibilities
- A candidate specification (e.g. stating qualifications or experience of working with children or vulnerable adults required)
- An application form and self-declaration form
- Information on [name of organisation] and related topics

2.4 Application and Self-Declaration Form

All applicants will be requested to complete an application and self-declaration form. The purpose of the application form is to obtain relevant details from the applicant for the position. In the case of volunteers this will be a part of their original enrolment form. The purpose of the self-declaration form is to collect information on criminal behaviour that is relevant to the position e.g. criminal records or investigations. The self-declaration form is requested in a separate sealed envelope and is not opened until the applicant is selected for an interview. If the applicant is not selected the form is returned unopened to the applicant or destroyed.



2.5 References

References will be sought as required. Where possible at least one of these references will be from an employer or a voluntary organisation where the position required working with children or vulnerable adults in any of the following capacities: employee; volunteer; or work experience. If the person has no experience of working with children or vulnerable adults, specific training requirements will be agreed before appointment.

2.6 CRB Checks

Claque Theatre is not presently registered with [Disclosure England or Central Registered Body for England] but in due course when it's volunteer levels are such Claque will seek registration. In the mean time appointees will be cleared through the District Council or other such body who agrees to act as our agent. Prior to appointment a Disclosure check will be completed. This will require the prospective position holder to complete and submit a Disclosure form, with the results returning to the Director of Claque Theatre. A Standard Disclosure will be sought by anyone who is likely to be involved regularly with children and young people under the age of 18; and the elderly, sick and handicapped people. An Enhanced Disclosure will be requested for positions that involve a greater degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults. For example, positions that require regular contact with, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children and young people.

2.7 Interview

For positions that require regular contact with children or vulnerable adults, interviews will be carried out. An interview will include requests for additional information to support the application.

2.8 Offer of Position

Once a decision has been made to appoint an individual, an offer letter will be presented to the applicant including the details of the position, any special requirements and the obligations e.g. agreement to the policies and procedures of the organisation, the probation period and responsibilities of the role. Confirmation of the position being accepted will require the offer letter to be formally accepted and agreed to in writing e.g. by the individual signing and dating their agreement on the offer letter and returning it to the organisation.

2.9 Induction

The induction process for the newly appointed member will include the following:

- An assessment of training needs, individual aids and any other needs and aspirations.
- Clarification, agreement and signing up to the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures
- Clarification of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of the position



2.10 Training

Newly appointed members will complete the following training over an agreed period:

- Protecting children and vulnerable adults.
- Working effectively with children and vulnerable adults (including presentation skills, developing child and vulnerable adult friendly resources and activities).
- Any other identified training needs.

2.11 Probation

Newly appointed members will complete an agreed period of probation on commencement of their role.

2.12 Monitoring and Performance Appraisal

All members who have contact with children or vulnerable adults will be monitored and their performance appraised. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate progress, set new goals, identify training needs and address any concerns of poor practice.

3. **Staff and Volunteers Specific Responsibility for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults**

3.1 The Volunteer Co-ordinator and Director of Claque Theatre

The Volunteer Co-ordinator and Director of Claque Theatre have the main responsibility for managing child and vulnerable adult protection issues within Claque Theatre. Their role and responsibilities are detailed below. Specific responsibilities in relation to allegations against volunteers and staff are detailed in the Procedure for Managing Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse

3.2 The Role of The Volunteer Co-ordinator and Director of Claque Theatre in relation to the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Within Claque, the Volunteer Co-ordinator and Director will:

- Implement and promote Claque's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Regularly report to Claque's Board on managers
- Act as the main contact within Claque for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Provide information and advice on the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Support and raise awareness of the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Communicate with members on issues of child and vulnerable adult protection.
- Keep abreast of developments and understand the latest information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- Encourage good practice and support of procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- As appropriate establish and maintain contact with local statutory agencies including the Police and Social Work Department



- Maintain confidential records of reported cases and action taken and liaise with the statutory agencies and ensure they have access to all necessary information.
- Organise training for members.
- Regularly monitor and review the Claque's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.

3.3 Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

This code of conduct details the types of practice required by all volunteers and staff of Claque or its related projects when in contact with children or vulnerable adults.

3.4 Good Practice

Claque supports and requires the following good practice by staff and volunteers when in contact with children and vulnerable adults.

When working with children or vulnerable adults:

- Make the activity fun, enjoyable and promote personal and social development.
- Always work in open environments e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage an open environment for activities.
- Treat all children and vulnerable adults equally, with respect and dignity.
- Put the welfare of each child or vulnerable adult first before winning or achieving performance goals.
- Be a positive role model
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Ensure that if any form of manual or physical support is required for a child or vulnerable adult, it is provided openly, the child or vulnerable adult is informed of what is being done and their consent is obtained.
- Deliver educational instruction first verbally; secondly role-modelled; and thirdly, and only if necessary, with hands on - which must be accompanied by telling the child or vulnerable adult where you are putting your hands and why it is necessary and obtaining their consent.
- Involve parents, guardians and carers wherever possible.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust that empower children and vulnerable adults to share in the decision-making process.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children and vulnerable adults and avoid excessive training or competition and either pushing them against their will or putting undue pressure on them.

3.5 First Aid and Treatment of Injuries

If, in your capacity as a member of staff or volunteer of Claque or a related project, a child or vulnerable adult requires first aid or any form of medical attention whilst in your care, then the following good practice must be followed:

- Where practicable all parents/guardians of children under 16 must complete a Medical Consent Form before participating in any long term activity.
- Be aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required.



- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Where possible, ensure access to medical advice and/or assistance is available.
- Only those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification should respond to any injuries.
- Where possible any course of action should be discussed with the child/vulnerable adult, in language that they understand and their permission sought before any action is taken.
- In more serious cases, assistance must be obtained from a medically qualified professional as soon as possible.
- The child's or vulnerable adult's parents/guardians or carers must be informed of any injury and any action taken as soon as possible, unless it is in the child's or vulnerable adult's interests and on professional advice not to do so.
- A Notification of Accident Form must be completed and signed and passed to the organisation as soon as possible

3.6 For taking and transporting children or vulnerable adults away from home

If it is necessary to provide transport or take children or vulnerable adults away from home the following good practice must be followed:

- Where practicable request written parental/guardian consent if members are required to transport children or vulnerable adults.
- Always tell another member that you are transporting a child, give details of the route and the anticipated length of the journey.
- Ensure all vehicles are correctly insured.
- All reasonable safety measures are taken, e.g. children in the back seat, seatbelts are worn.
- Ensure, where possible, a male and female accompany mixed groups of children or vulnerable adults. These adults should be familiar with and agree to abide by [name of organisation]'s Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Always plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities and ensure copies are available for other members and parents/guardians.

3.7 Practice to Be Avoided

In the context of your role within Claque and their project for everyone's security as well as the following practice should be avoided:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or vulnerable adults away from others.
- Ensure that when children or vulnerable adults are taken away from home adults avoid entering their rooms unless in an emergency situation or in the interest of health and safety. If it is necessary to enter rooms, the door should remain open, if appropriate.
- Avoid taking children or vulnerable adults to your home.



- Avoid, where possible, doing things of a personal nature for children and vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves. It may sometimes be necessary for members to do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults, particularly if they are very young or vulnerable. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the child or vulnerable adult and where possible their parents/guardians. It is important to respect their views. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible, particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child or vulnerable adult to carry out particular activities. Do not take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.
- Never engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Never engage in rough or physical contact except as permitted within the rules of the workshop games
- Never allow or engage in touching a child or vulnerable adult in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Never allow children or vulnerable adults to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Never make sexually suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- Never reduce a child or vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control.
- Never allow allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

3.8 Reporting

If anyone has concerns about an incident involving a child or vulnerable adult that seems untoward or unusual they must report their concerns as soon as possible to the Director of Claque, the Volunteer Co-ordinator or project director. Parents should also be informed of the incident as soon as possible unless it is not in the child's or vulnerable adult's interests to tell them (refer to Section Sharing Concerns with Parents, Guardians or Carers).

3.8.1 Report, record and inform if the following occur:

- If you accidentally hurt a child or vulnerable adult.
- If a child or vulnerable adult seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child or vulnerable adult misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.
- If a child or vulnerable adult appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a child or vulnerable adult needs to be restrained.

3.9 Identifying and Managing Bullying

The lives of many people are made miserable by bullying. Victims of bullying can feel lonely, isolated and deeply unhappy. It can have a devastating effect on a child or vulnerable adult's self-esteem and destroy their self-confidence and concentration. They may become withdrawn and insecure, more cautious and less willing to take any sort of risk. They may feel it is somehow their fault or that there is something wrong with them and at worst cause depression and/or feelings of worthlessness. Any suspicions or allegations of bullying of a child or vulnerable adult against a staff member or volunteer will be dealt with through Claque Disciplinary Procedures



3.10 Photographing, Videoing and Filming of Children and Vulnerable Adults

There is evidence that some people have used sporting and performance activities venues and activities as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children and vulnerable adults. The following procedures have been developed to protect children and vulnerable adults. The following is required for Claque's activities or events where children or vulnerable adults are participating:

- Where appropriate all materials promoting Claque events or activities shall state that accredited photographers will be present. The accredited t photographer will be a registered staff member or volunteer.
- Where possible consent from the parent/guardian for photographing, videoing and/or filming of a child or vulnerable adult must be obtained prior to the event or activity.
- Where possible anyone wishing to use photographic/film/video equipment at a venue must obtain the approval from Claque Theatre.
- An activity or event specific identification badge/sticker must be provided to and clearly displayed at all times by accredited photographers, film and video operators on the day of the activity or event.
- No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions are to be permitted unless this has been approved in advance by the child or vulnerable adult, parent/guardian and the organisation, and appropriate vetting has occurred of individual wanting to photograph, film or video.
- Claque reserves the right at all times to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which it is associated.
- The requirements above are publicly promoted to ensure all people present at the event or activity understand the procedure and are aware of whom to contact if concerned.

3.11 Concerns about Photographers, Video or Film Operators

Any concerns with photographers or video or film operators are to be reported to Claque's Director, Volunteer Co-ordinator or project director or staff member.

3.12 Children or Vulnerable Adults in Publications and on the Internet

Claque and project websites and publications provide excellent opportunities to promote the achievements of individuals and to provide a showcase for the activities of young people or vulnerable adults. In some cases, however, displaying certain information about children and vulnerable adults could place them at risk. The following procedure must be followed to ensure Claque and project publications and information on the Internet do not place children and vulnerable adults at risk.



Claque and project publications and] information on the Internet must adhere to the following:

- Publications or information on an Internet site must never include personal information that could identify a child or vulnerable adult. Any contact information must be directed to either Claque or another relevant organisation's address, for example another project's operating address
- Before publishing any information about a child or vulnerable adult, written consent must be obtained from the child or vulnerable adult's parent/guardian. If the material is changed from the time of consent, the parents/guardians must be informed and consent provided for the changes.
- The content of photographs or videos must not depict a child or vulnerable adult in a provocative pose or in a state of partial undress other than when depicting a performance or workshop activity. Try to avoid photographs that are revealing. Children and vulnerable adults must never be portrayed in a demeaning or tasteless manner.
- For photographs or videos of cast or groups of children or vulnerable adults ensure that only the group or cast is referred to, not individual members. Credit for achievements by a child or vulnerable adult are to be restricted to first names.
- All published events involving children or vulnerable adults must be reviewed to ensure the information will not put children or vulnerable adults at risk. Any publications of specific meetings or child/vulnerable adult events e.g. team coaching sessions, must not be distributed to any individuals other than to those directly concerned.
- Particular care must be taken in publishing photographs, film or videos of children or vulnerable adults who are considered particularly vulnerable e.g. the subject of a child or vulnerable adult protection issue or a custody dispute.
- Particular care is to be taken in publishing photographs, films or videos of children or vulnerable adults with physical, learning and/or communication or language disabilities, as they could be particularly vulnerable to abuse. Any concerns or enquiries about publications or Internet information should be reported to Claque's Director.

4. Responding to Disclosures

Information you receive about or from a child or vulnerable adult may fall into one of the following categories:

- a) Suspicion or allegation of misconduct against a member of staff or Volunteer of Claque
- b) Suspicion or allegation of abuse against a member of staff or Volunteer of Claque
- c) Suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour against someone who is a participant or non-member
- d) Suspicion or allegation of abuse against someone who is a participant or non-member

It is not the responsibility of anyone from Claque or related projects to decide whether or not a child or vulnerable adult has been abused. It is however everyone's responsibility to report concerns. It is very important that Claque staff members and volunteers understand what is meant by the term 'abuse'. The different types of abuse are:

- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse



- Negative Discrimination (including racism)
- Bullying (includes bullying by gangs; bullying by family members; physical bullying; verbal bullying; teasing; and harassment)

4.1 How to Listen to a Disclosure

It is important to listen carefully to the information a child or vulnerable adult discloses. When listening to a disclosure the following good practice is required:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child/vulnerable adult.
- Listen to the child/vulnerable adult.
- Do not show disbelief.
- Tell the child/vulnerable adult that he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell.
- Take what the child/vulnerable adult says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child/vulnerable adult says, especially if they have a speech disability and/or differences in language.
- Do not pre-suppose that the experience was bad or painful - it may have been neutral or even pleasurable. Always avoid projecting your own reactions onto the child or vulnerable adult.
- If you need to clarify, keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- If you need to clarify or the statement is ambiguous, use open-ended, non-leading questions.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children or vulnerable adults.
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult.

4.2 Actions to Avoid

When receiving a disclosure:

- Avoid panic.
- Avoid showing shock or distaste.
- Avoid probing for more information than is offered.
- Avoid speculating or making assumptions.
- Avoid making negative comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made.
- Avoid approaching the individual against whom the allegation has been made.
- Avoid making promises or agreeing to keep secrets.
- Avoid giving a guarantee of confidentiality.



4.3 Responding to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct against someone who is a member of staff or volunteer of Claque

In the course of your role within Claque a child or vulnerable adult may disclose information to you about a person who is not a member that leads to a suspicion or allegation of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct:

- If the disclosure is about an incident that occurred during a Claque event or activity:
- Listen to the child as detailed above.
- Acknowledge the information received.
- Pass the information to both the manager of the event or activity and the Volunteer Co-ordinator or Director who will inform, if appropriate, the parents/guardians/carers of the child or vulnerable adult.
- Make a full written record of the disclosure on the day you receive the disclosure.
- Sign and date the record then pass it to the Volunteer Co-ordinator or Claque's Director.

4.4 Establishing the Basic Facts

The Volunteer Co-ordinator or Claque's Director must clarify the basic facts to establish whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that misconduct has occurred. If the basic facts support a suspicion or allegation of misconduct by member of staff, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the Claque's Disciplinary Procedure.

4.5 Responding to a suspicion or allegation of abuse against someone who is not a member of Claque

All allegations of abuse must be taken seriously. Although false allegations of abuse do occur, they are less than usual. If a child or vulnerable adult says or indicates that he/she is being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused, you must react as soon as possible that day in line with the following procedures.

Where there is uncertainty about whether the concern relates to abuse or misconduct, the Volunteer Co-ordinator and Claque Director must firstly be consulted for advice on the appropriate course of action. If neither are available, external agencies such as the Police and Social Work Department must be consulted for advice. This is important because they have an overview of child protection issues and they may well have other information that together causes concern.

4.6 On receiving information about a non-member that leads to a suspicion or allegation of abuse:

- Follow procedures as detailed above How to Listen to Disclosures.
- Pass your concerns to the Director of Claque or Volunteer co-ordinator. Only if they are unavailable contact the Social services Department or the Police in the area where the abuse is alleged to have occurred immediately (these are available 24 hours a day). Act on any advice given. At the earliest opportunity tell the Volunteer Co-ordinator or Director about the action taken.



- Make a full written record of what has been seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible in the child/vulnerable adult's own words. The information must, where known, include the following:
 - Name of child/vulnerable adult.
 - Age, date of birth of child/vulnerable adult.
 - Home address and telephone number of the child/vulnerable adult.
 - The nature of the allegation in the child/vulnerable adult's own words.
 - Any times, dates or other relevant information.
 - Whether the person making the report is expressing their own concern or the concerns of another person.
 - The child/vulnerable adult's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any injuries occurred.
- Describe the nature of the allegation (include all of the information obtained during the initial account e.g. time, date, location of alleged incident).
- Give a description of any visible (when normally dressed) injuries or bruising, behavioural signs, indirect signs (do not examine the child/vulnerable adult).
- Details of any witnesses to the incident.
- Whether the child/vulnerable adult's parents/guardians/carers have been contacted.
- Details of anyone else who has been consulted and the information obtained from them.
- If it is not the child/vulnerable adult making the report, whether the child/vulnerable adult has been spoken to, if so what was said.
- Record, sign and date on the day what you have seen, heard or been told.
- If making an electronic copy do not save to the hard drive or floppy disk. Print off the record, sign and date, and then delete the electronic copy, that day.
- This report can be done with the support of the director or Volunteer Co-ordinator, the record in any event needs to be passed onto them, they will pass it on to the Social Work Department or the Police. If neither the director nor volunteer co-ordinator are available pass it straight on to social services or the police yourself.
- Remember: Listen; Respond; Report and Record

4.7 Responding to a Suspicion or Allegation of Abuse against a Member of staff or Volunteer of Claque

The feelings caused by the discovery of potential abuse by a member of staff or volunteer will raise different issues, e.g. disbelief that a member would act in this way. It is not the responsibility of a member to take responsibility or to decide whether or not a child or vulnerable adult has been abused. However, as with allegations against non-members, it is the responsibility of the individual to act on any concerns.

Any information that raises concern about the behaviour of a member towards a child or vulnerable adult must be passed on as soon as possible that day, in accordance with these procedures. No member in receipt of such information shall keep that information to himself/ herself or attempt to deal with the matter on their own.

These Procedures aim to ensure that all suspicions and/or allegations of abuse against a member are taken seriously and are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. They must be read in conjunction with the [name of organisation]'s Disciplinary Procedures.



4.8 On receiving information about a member that leads to a suspicion or allegation of abuse:

Follow the above procedures as for non-members. Where the concern is about the Volunteer Co-ordinator it must be reported to the Director, where about the director it must be reported to the Board of Directors.

4.9 Actions for the volunteer co-ordinator and director when Concerns are reported

Before taking any action the director must always seek advice from the Police or Social Work Department. Thereafter:

- Establish Basic Facts – the director and or the director must initially clarify the basic facts to establish whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a member may have abused a child and/or vulnerable adult.

Important Note:

- This may necessitate the children or vulnerable adults involved being asked some basic, open-ended, non- leading questions solely with a view to clarifying the basic facts. It may also be necessary to ask similar basic questions of other children, or other appropriate individuals e.g. coaches. After seeking advice from the Police and/or Social Work Department, the parents/guardians may be approached to provide consent to speak to a child/vulnerable adult.
- Advice must be sought from the Police and/or Social Work Department as to whether the member about whom the allegation has been made may be approached as part of the initial enquiry.
- This process will not form part of the disciplinary investigation.

4.10 Making a Referral in Cases of Suspected and/or Alleged Abuse – If the basic facts support a suspicion or allegation of abuse:

- The Director will refer the suspicion and/or allegation to the Social Work Department and the Police, as soon as possible that day.
- Appropriate steps may be required to ensure the safety of the children or vulnerable adults who may be at risk.
- A record should be made of the name and designation of the Social Work Department member of staff or the Police Officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is required.
- Following advice from the Social Work Department and/or Police, the parent/guardian of the child or vulnerable adult should be contacted as soon as possible.

Important Note:

- Reporting of the matter to the Police or Social Work Department must not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. A Referral for Reporting Suspicions and/or Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of [name of organisation] Form must be completed as soon as possible that day. Where possible, a copy of this form must be sent to the Police and Social Work Department within 24 hours.



Possible Outcomes following advice from Police

Where the initial enquiry reveals that there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a member has abused a child and/or vulnerable adult there will be an investigation. There are three types of investigation that can result:

- A disciplinary investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A criminal investigation

Following advice from the Police, disciplinary action may be taken in cases where a criminal investigation is ongoing provided sufficient information is available to enable a decision to be made and doing so does not jeopardise the criminal investigation.

4.11 Managing the Member against Whom the Allegation has Been Made

Following advice from the Police, if the decision is made that the member against whom the allegation has been made is to be informed, the member should be told an allegation has been made which suggests abuse. It is essential to preserve evidence for any criminal proceedings while at the same time safeguarding the rights of the member.

4.12 Suspension

- Suspension is not a form of disciplinary action. The member may be suspended whilst an investigation is carried out.
- Suspension will be carried out by [name of person/group/panel responsible] in accordance with Claque's Disciplinary Procedures.
- At the suspension interview the member will be informed of the reason suspension is taking place and given the opportunity to give a statement should he/she wish. Notification of the suspension and the reasons will be conveyed in writing to the member in accordance with Claque's Disciplinary Procedures.

4.13 Managing False or Malicious Allegations

- Where after investigation, the allegation is found to be false or malicious the member will receive an account of the circumstances and/or investigation and a letter confirming the conclusion of the matter. The member involved may wish to seek legal advice.
- All records pertaining to the circumstances and investigation will be destroyed.
- Where this involves a member of Claque they will be advised of the appropriate counselling services available.

4.14 Managing Allegations of Historical Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event e.g. an adult who was abused as a child by a member who is still currently working with children. Where such an allegation is made the procedures for managing allegations of abuse above must be followed.



5 Sharing concerns with Parents, Guardians or Carers

5.1 Where it is Not Abuse

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents/guardians/carers where there are concerns about a child/vulnerable adult. Therefore in most situations, not involving the possibility of the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, it would be important to talk to parents/guardians/carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child or vulnerable adult seems withdrawn, he/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation, divorce or bereavement. Common sense is advised in these situations however advice should be sought from the Director or Volunteer Co-ordinator if there is any uncertainty about the appropriate course of action.

5.2 Allegations of Abuse

There are circumstances in which a child or vulnerable adult might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared e.g. where a parent/guardian/carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately. In all cases of suspected or alleged abuse, advice and guidance must first be sought from the local Social Work Department or the Police as to who contacts the parents.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the community, the business and its employees.

John Harries
Chair of the Board of Directors
Claque Theatre Limited

Date: July 2010

Flowchart 1:

Procedure for Responding to Suspicions and/or Allegations of Abuse of a Child or Vulnerable Adult against a Member

