



SMILE MUSICAL YOUTH THEATRE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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SMYT

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Safeguarding Policy

Smile Musical Youth Company (herein referred to as SMYT) is open to all children and young people between the ages of 11 and 19. We undertake theatrical productions throughout the year and offer wide ranging opportunities for our young people to develop their craft.

At **SMYT** we place the safety and well-being of children and young people at the centre of our work. We are committed to keeping children and young people safe at all times and ensure that their welfare is promoted and is at the heart of our company.

The policy is based upon the legislation, policy and guidance set out in

Legislation

The Children's Act 1989

The Children's Act 2004

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Children and Families Act 2014

Education Act 2002

Children and Adoption Act 2002

Children and Young Persons Act 2008

Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009

Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009

Education Act 2011

Policy and Guidance

Working together to safeguard children 2015

Mandatory Reporting on Female Genital Mutilation

Code of Practice

The following provides an overview of the way in which **SMYT** will ensure that the safety and well-being of children and young people are safeguarded.

1. It is the policy of **SMYT** to provide a safe and secure environment in which children can thrive and develop and where all aspects of their welfare will be protected.
 1. To help Staff support this, parents & carers are invited to inform **SMYT** of the difficulties/challenges/issues etc. that may impact an individual's well-being
2. Any child using the services of **SMYT** may disclose to a staff member any abuse they may be suffering elsewhere in their lives and all staff will be vigilant for the signs of abuse.

3. Any child using the services of **SMYT**, and anyone acting on behalf of such a child, may complain to the management about any aspect of the service they receive. There will be a simple and well publicised process for this and complainants will have a right of appeal to an independent person/agency if they are dissatisfied with the way a complaint is handled.
4. Any indications that a child may be suffering from abuse will immediately trigger **SMYT**'s child protection procedures. These procedures are consistent with the good practice guidelines of the Sandwell's Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
(<https://www.sandwellcsp.org.uk/>)
5. All **SMYT** staff members and volunteers will follow the 'Receive, Reassure, React, Record & Remember' safeguarding procedure.
 1. RECEIVE:
 - I. Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
 - II. Accept what is said and react calmly so as not to frighten the child/young person.
 - III. Make a note of what has been said as soon as possible.
 2. REASSURE:
 - I. Reassure the child/young person, but only so far as is honest and reliable.
 - II. Tell the child/young person they are not to blame and that it was right to tell, e.g. *"I am glad you came to me."*
 - III. It is important that you do not promise to keep it a secret as your professional responsibilities will require you to report the matter.
 3. REACT:
 - I. React to the child/young person only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether you need to refer this matter, but do not interrogate for full details.
 - II. Take what the child/young person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child/young person who has a speech disability and/or differences in language.
 - III. Do not ask 'leading' questions, for example 'what did he do next?' (This assumes he did!), or 'did he touch your private parts?' Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and that of the child/young person) in any later prosecution in court.
 - IV. Explain what you must do next and whom you must talk to.
 4. RECORD:
 - I. Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand.
 - II. Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court.
 - III. Record the date, time, place, persons present and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
 - IV. Be specific when noting the words used by the child/young person.
 5. REMEMBER:

- I. To share your concerns with the Chair or relevant committee member who may take the matter forward.
6. In recruiting staff **SMYT** will follow a systematic selection process designed to assess the applicant's suitability for the post and to work with children.
 - I. Checks will be made to ensure that all the information provided by any potential member of staff of **SMYT** is accurate and, within the limits of procedures available.
 - II. DBS checks will be undertaken for all **SMYT** staff at their own expense and before they begin work, to ensure they are safe to work with children/young people.
 - III. No new member of staff will be appointed to any position in **SMYT** without two suitable references being provided. All referees must be persons who can comment on relevant and recent aspects of the applicant's work with children.
 - IV. All staff appointments to **SMYT** will be subject to a probationary period during which they will be closely supervised.
 - V. All paid staff of **SMYT** will have clear roles detailed for them.
 - VI. **SMYT** will ensure that issues of child protection receive continuous attention and will regularly review the way that the organisation operates to support this principle.
 7. This policy is publicly available or by other means and parents and members are made aware of the **SMYT** statutory responsibilities in accordance with the policy. Both electronic and paper copies will be made available upon request.

Definitions:

SMYT uses the term 'child' to refer to anyone under the age of 18, as defined by the Children Act 1989. The term 'staff' is used to denote any person working under a paid permanent, fixed term or freelance contract and who is over the age of 18.

Equal Opportunities

Smile Musical Youth Theatre (herein referred to as **SMYT**) is committed to promoting equal opportunities, to pursuing non-discriminatory policies and practice and eliminating unfair discrimination on grounds of age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, class, nationality, race, or disability.

SMYT undertakes and promotes equal opportunities for all, including auditions, rehearsals, performance, and teaching. Encouraging all staff and members to take responsibility in the promotion of equality. **SMYT** aims to provide excellent, flexible, and accessible rehearsals that are suited to its location and external spaces. Applicants who identify themselves as having specific needs, including any disclosed disabilities may be offered appropriate support provision to ensure they can participate in **SMYT**.

In fulfilling **SMYT**'s commitment to its policy, **SMYT** will

- Communicate to all staff and young people the company Equal Opportunities policy, informing them of their responsibilities in promoting and maintaining equality.
- Ensure all employees and members are made aware that they have a personal responsibility to create and maintain an environment in which the individual is respected, and each employee or member is accountable for their own behaviour.
- Work to ensure that equality of opportunity is considered in all activities, for example in employing staff, in recruiting and supporting members, in teaching and rehearsal, in selecting and performing shows.
- Ensure all teaching and marketing materials reflect the company commitment to the equality of opportunity.
- Respect the wide diversity of the member body.
- Not tolerate any acts of discrimination or harassment by staff or members, whether they are carried out intentionally or not.

At **SMYT** A minimum age limit of 11 and maximum age limit of 19 is set to ensure diversity without compromising the education and wellbeing of our members.

SMYT takes reasonable steps to ensure that text and scripts used are ethnically diverse, offering material across a range of cultures, societies and classes.

Signposting Policy & Information

Connecting young people with services that provide support and encouragement is an important part of ensuring **SMYT's** members are healthy and happy. This page should help **SMYT** members and other young people aged 11-19 find assistance with educational and personal matters.

Bullying:

If you feel that you are a victim of bullying you may want to reach out to an organisation that can help

- **Bullying UK:** Visit the Bullying UK website for support & information – www.bullying.co.uk
- **National Bullying Helpline:** Information and advice for anyone dealing with bullying - <https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/> - 0300 323 0169
- **Kidscape:** Kidscape is an organisation which offers support to children and parents – www.kidscape.org.uk

Mental Health & Happiness:

If you are feeling low or in need of assistance in regards to mental health & happiness

- **MIND:** The National Association for Mental Health – for families & individuals – <https://www.mind.org.uk/> - 0845 766 0163
- **Young Minds:** An organisation that supports young people & families in Mental Health - <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/> - 0808 802 5544
- **SHOUT:** Shout is a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope - <https://giveusashout.org/> - 85258

Eating Disorders:

If you are struggling with your eating habits you may want to speak to professionals to kick-start a healthy lifestyle.

- **BEAT:** Helpline who support those affected by eating disorders - <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/> - 0845 634 1414
- **Seed:** Supporting those struggling with eating disorders and those caring for them - <https://seed.charity/> - 01482 421525

Relationship Concerns:

If you feel that you need support when in relationships (or when one has ended);

- **Relate:** Nationwide service for those needing support with relationship issues - <https://www.relate.org.uk/> - 0300 100 1234
- **Act On It Now:** Learn about what healthy, unhealthy and toxic relationships look like. Get help if you're worried about your own relationship or someone else's. - <https://www.actonitnow.org.uk/>
- **KidsHelath:** Want to get along better with your parents & teachers? – www.kidshealth.org

Homelessness:

If you or your family are at-risk of becoming homeless, there are several organisations who can help.

- **Shelter:** Support for individuals & families at risk of being homeless - <https://www.shelter.org.uk/> - 0808 800 4444
- **Depaul:** Homelessness organisation with specialism in supporting young people - <https://www.depaul.org.uk/>

Education/Qualification Support:

Get tips on surviving school, finding the right qualifications, revision, passing those all-important exams and getting into college or university. This site has all the information you need to get the best out of your education.

www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/DG_10016099

General Support:

If you need a sympathetic ear to talk to someone immediately about a problem:

- **Childline:** Free & confidential helpline for children & young adults – www.childline.org.uk - 0800 1111
- **Samaritans:** Samaritans provide confidential emotional support 24/7 - <https://www.samaritans.org/> - 116 123

SMYT will undergo regular updates of this information but cannot accept responsibility for the contents & services of the above organisations. If you wish to talk to SMYT Staff about a concern please do not hesitate to contact us.

Anti Bullying Policy

Smile Musical Youth Theatre (herein referred to as SMYT) acknowledges that bullying behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. We endeavour to ensure that a secure environment is provided for every young person who wishes to participate in the performing arts. **SMYT** acknowledges that bullying can take place and may need to be addressed amongst any combination of persons that are present at **SMYT**, regardless of their role: participant, volunteer, staff or committee member.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

EMOTIONAL	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding possessions, using threatening gestures).
PHYSICAL	pushing, hitting, kicking or any use of violence.
RACIST	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
SEXUAL	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
HOMOPHOBIC	because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
RELIGIOUS	because of or focusing on the issue of faith.
VERBAL	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours
CYBER	all areas of internet, such as e-mail and internet chat room misuse mobile phone threats by text messaging and calls misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities

IMPLEMENTATION

SMYT's artistic team oversees the implementation and review of the Anti Bullying Policy. Member Reps are used as a forum to discuss the problem of bullying and to agree systems to tackle unacceptable behaviour with young people.

SMYT will provide appropriate awareness raising to all relevant staff and volunteers to reinforce this policy and to provide skills and techniques to counter bullying behaviour.

All staff and volunteers should be informed of what to do when an incident of bullying is reported.

PROCEDURES

- I. Incidents should be reported to staff and subsequently to the Artistic Director
- II. Incidents will be recorded by staff
- III. In serious cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to visit to discuss the problem
- IV. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

- V. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- VI. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

OUTCOMES

- I. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise and other consequences may take place
- II. In very serious cases, suspension or exclusion could be considered
- III. If possible, the participants will be reconciled
- IV. After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored in striving to ensure repeated bullying does not take place

MONITORING & RECORD KEEPING

- I. All incidents should be written up within 24 hours.
- II. Reports should be signed by the staff member/volunteer, with the name printed and designation.
- III. Reports and records should be passed to the Chairman who in turn will take responsibility for the safe storage and processing of this information.
- IV. All information gathered should be treated with strict confidentiality

EVALUATION

Records of incidents are kept and used to inform future practice. Spot checks and occasional surveys are also used. Evaluation and review will ensure that the Youth Theatre remains responsible to changing needs whilst striving to protect young people from bullying.

WHAT WE INTEND TO ACHIEVE

Our Anti-Bullying Policy aims to achieve a reduction in bullying due to:

- The vigilance and responsiveness of staff and volunteers to bullying behaviour
- Acknowledgment by young people that bullying will be tackled
- Raised awareness about bullying and the forms it can take
- A greater proportion of young people informing an adult if they are being bullied
- The involvement of staff, volunteers, parents and young people in implementing the Anti-Bullying Policy

Data Protection Policy

Smile Musical Youth Theatre (herein referred to as SMYT) has a duty of protecting & handling your information in an accessible & lawful manner. This Policy ensures your information is safeguarded whilst retained by the company, its Staff body and the responsible persons who handle it.

Collecting Information:

SMYT will ask to collect specified types of personal data for the following individuals:

Members:

1. Full name, D.O.B, Age, Gender For recognition & filing
2. At least three different contact numbers In case of emergency contact
3. An email address for company correspondence
4. The school/training they have attended/are attending for licensing purposes
5. Any significant medical information for safeguarding & wellbeing
6. The methods of communication that lead Members to join for marketing analysis
7. Photographs of children taking part in performances or attending events
This point is done so on a basis that signed consent is received upon booking in new members.

Parents/Guardians/Carers:

1. At least two of the contact details collected from Members should be the contact numbers of significant guardians (see point 2 of Members).
2. If the related Member is performing in the current/upcoming production and under the age of 16 (or in year 11 and below), additional medical declaration/contact information will be required.
3. Where a significant guardian is volunteering (chaperoning, open days etc.) an email address, phone number and DBS Check may be required in order to safeguard the welfare of young persons.
4. No adult without a DBS will be left alone with young people.
5. In the case of the member being looked after/fostered/in care, you will need to provide evidence of proof-of-care for licensing purposes.

Media/Press/Professional Contacts:

1. **SMYT** will collect (in research) openly accessible contact information for any contacts relevant to current activities, these individuals include (but are not limited to):
 - Press Contacts | Forum Administrators | School/Teacher Contacts | Working Professionals

Storing Information:

When collecting information **SMYT** will undergo stringent data protection procedures in order to safeguard the information provided, attained or requested. When stored on paper, information will be kept in relevant files that will be securely placed and non-accessible to public, young persons or parents. When stored electronically, information is stored on encrypted documents, password protected computers and to the greatest extent not stored on cloud storage unless approved by the Chairman.

To comply with GDPR, stored data (other than visual media such as photos and video) of young people are kept for no longer than 6 years. Medical Information, such as accident & incident reports, are kept securely locked for a maximum of 3 years after the young person turns 18.

Using Information:

SMYT will not pass on your information to third parties without prior permission or unless legally necessary, and all personal/professional data is used to:

- Send relevant correspondence to you.
- Contact you in the event of incident, non-attendance or query.
- Send you statements, invoices or relevant information.
- Send you marketing communications & company updates.

Additional Notes:

SMYT has a duty of care in safeguarding the wellbeing of current **SMYT** Members. Your personal information is not (unless absolutely necessary – see below) passed to third parties nor is it easily accessible.

SMYT reserve the right to pass on your personal data to the relevant authorities in order to comply with our Safeguarding procedures for Young Persons where **SMYT** Staff feel the welfare of young persons is endangered.

Health & Safety Policy

Smile Musical Youth Theatre (herein referred to as SMYT) is dedicated to keeping all members, staff, committee members and volunteers safe and therefore have composed a healthy and safety policy for all.

Aims And Intent

It is the policy of **SMYT** to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:

1. Safe and healthy working conditions for its members, staff, committee members and volunteers
2. The safety of its premises and equipment
3. That freelance workers, participants and members of the public are not exposed to risks to their health and safety

SMYT recognises its responsibilities under the Health and Safety etc. at Work Act 1974 and other related legislation and seeks to satisfy its obligations by achieving these general aims. The policy is relevant to activities within the rehearsal venue, performance venue and other places of work in circumstances where the location does not have its own health and safety policy.

Implementation of this policy is reviewed regularly by the committee and the policy itself will be formally reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently if required due to changes in our organisation, work practices or changes in health and safety legislation.

Organisation And Responsibilities

SMYT Committee

Ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters lies with the committee. The committee is responsible for ensuring that all staff and volunteers fulfil their responsibility for implementing this policy. This will be achieved through a meeting prior to the commencement of teaching or working on the annual show.

The committee will be responsible for the implementation of the following:

- Ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out and kept up to date
- Reviewing risk control measures
- Ensuring that hired venues are fit for purpose and safe for use
- Making sure that all staff, volunteers and members are aware of the fire exits and various fire systems available to them.

Core Staff

All staff, volunteers and members are responsible for ensuring that the relevant arrangements detailed in the Health & Safety Policy are adopted within their own areas of control and have a duty to look after their own health and safety and that of anyone else that might be affected by their actions. In particular this involves:

- Making sure the control measures identified in any relevant risk assessment are put into place for the activity or work environment they are overseeing
- Reporting and investigating any health and safety incident
- Providing adequate opportunity for consultation and communication with other employees and freelancers within their areas of responsibility
- Ensuring that suitable and sufficient information, and supervision is provided to ensure the health and safety of all other employees and freelancers working within, or affected by, activities being carried out under their areas of control.

Standards & Expectations

SMYT will be guided by HSE standards and Health & Safety legislation. The effective implementation of procedures will be monitored by the committee. Procedures and guidance will be reviewed annually to ensure they meet the changing needs of the organisation and its premises.

SMYT strive to impress upon all staff, volunteers and members that health and safety is the responsibility of all and to encourage a culture where simple actions are taken when a minor risk is noted (e.g. moving a trip hazard, wiping up spilt liquid on the floor) and more significant risks are reported and dealt with promptly.

General Health and Safety Terms

First Aid

During rehearsals and performances suitable first aid arrangements must be available. Staff, volunteers and members should be made aware of how to summon a first aider/medical assistance if required. There will be a registered first aider present at all sessions.

Accident Reporting

Following an accident of any kind it must be reported within 12 hours to the committee. There will be an accident book kept by the Chairman and this will be present at all rehearsals, meetings and performances, it must be kept up to date and signed accordingly. Copies of any accident forms filled out will also be given to members parents/guardians.

Medical information

Committee members and staff are to ensure information on the medical conditions (and medications taken), including allergies, of young people is known to them and acted upon as theatre activities can bring members into contact with make-up, paints and other substances such as smoke machines, dry ice and also laser lights. This information will be updated regularly, at least once a year. The information will be stored securely and accessible to those who need it via request of the Chairman.

Manual Handling

Only those who have undergone suitable manual handling training should undertake manual handling and securing of flats and any other equipment or items that require moving or handling. This training will not be supplied by SMYT.

Special effects

Special effects should only be handled under the strict supervision of a suitably trained competent person. A risk assessment must be carried out by a competent person for any special effects such as, for example, lasers, smoke machines and dry ice. Pyrotechnics or special effects must always be hired from reputable suppliers and should always be fixed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using properly designed and constructed devices.

Stage Platforms and Rostra

Some stage platforms and rostra need to be clipped or fastened together. Staff should ensure the stage platform and rostra is inspected before use to ensure it is suitably fastened together and the manufacturer's instructions are fully adhered to.

Complaints Procedure

Smile Musical Youth Theatre (herein referred to as **SMYT**) actively invites the feedback of Parents & Members[1] and provides several methods of receiving & acting upon advice, concerns, queries or complaints. There are four key ways in which to provide feedback:

1. **Query/Question/Concern:** A straightforward verbal query, question or concern related to your child(ren)'s development within **SMYT**, can (in almost every instance) be dealt with promptly by the Committee[2]. Correspondence will be dealt with in the medium it is received i.e. verbal – in person or over the phone, via email or in writing.
2. **Anonymous Feedback:** You can give feedback anonymously by giving a letter to a committee member. Any anonymous comments will not be able to have a direct response and any action that is necessary may be done so without notification to the **SMYT** Membership body.

The Procedure:

Once your feedback has been received through an email or via either of the above methods, the committee or chairman will have one week to address the complaint and will ensure that the complaint is recorded. If either party have further concerns, please see the below procedures.

1. **Further Discussion:** If either party (Production Team/Committee/Member & Parent) feel your area of concern needs more discussion and a more detailed response; a meeting will be arranged as soon as possible – ideally the same day, but within a week at the latest. A witness/additional staff may be present as appropriate. All complaints will be taken seriously and the complainant given the opportunity to express their grievance to their satisfaction. The committee will liaise over each response and take advice where appropriate[3]
2. **Confidential/Concerns Related to Staff:** If you are not satisfied with the committee's response or if you wish to make a complaint regarding the committee, you may choose to bypass the above action points and have your comments/feedback considered individually by **SMYT's** Chairman[4].
 1. The Chairman will reply within a maximum of three weeks. The Chairman will initially send a written receipt of correspondence and it is at their discretion whether they offer a further face to face meeting.

Your feedback is important to **SMYT** and any question, query, feedback or complaint will be treated with respect of privacy & dignity in order for a satisfactory conclusion to be reached.

SMYT is an open-access company that holds the safeguarding of Young Peoples welfare at its core principle of engagement ethics. Where necessary, **SMYT** committee will refer Members & Parents to relevant Signpost Organisations where a young person's specific needs cannot be met within **SMYT**.

Additional Notes

When giving feedback or expressing concern please be advised that **SMYT** staff, volunteers and committee have the right to work in an environment free from physical and verbal aggression (*as stated in the **Health & Safety at Work Act of 1974***). Your feedback is important to us however in the instance of a situation becoming un-safe or inappropriate (*i.e. that a situation potentially escalates to the point of physical & emotional harm*) for any individual, the correspondence/interaction will cease and in severe cases the relevant authorities will be contacted.

[1] Parents & Members in this instance refers to current company members & their parents, guardians or carers. I.e. a young person (young adult, vulnerable young adult, child(ren) or Youth) and the immediate relation of care.

[2] Committee in this document refers to the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Registrar. Production Team and Volunteers do not in this instance represent the company of **SMYT** and should, where a concern or complaint arises be bypassed in seeking advice.

[3] Notes of the complaint and action/responses will be kept on confidential file by **SMYT**. Confidential responses (i.e. responses that endanger the welfare of individuals) will be kept on file by the committee.

[4] Please be advised that the Chairman (if the situation merits) may approach the committee for background information/more details prior to taking action. It is at the Chairman's discretion whether to show the committee's feedback.