

APPENDIX 24 - CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Guidelines for the Health and Safety of Young Persons (0-18yrs)

- The Child Protection Policy is co-ordinated and overseen by the Child Co-ordinator and is for the protection of both cast and audience alike.

If you are paying children to perform [not usual in this production] – you need a Child License from the local Council [varies per Council]. Just be aware that some Councils may require you to complete a licence application as rules governing children being off school tightens.

These guidelines are intended for use during the production of 'The Life of Jesus Christ' but apply anywhere where young persons are playing or learning. They apply to situations where an activity runs for more than two hours per day for six or more days of the year.(Children Act-1989). There will be a briefing on child protection for adults pre-production.

1. Rehearsals:

- any child attending rehearsal will be registered by the Child Protection Co-ordinator who will take contact details plus any medical condition notes.
- Children under 16 should have a complete permission form completed with notes of address; contacts; medical conditions; who will deliver and collect the child at rehearsals.

2. Performances:

- children at school need written permission to be off school [this is the parents responsibility to contact the school]
 - children will be briefed on safety onsite
 - the emergency contacts for each child will be kept by the Child Co-ordinator onsite.
 - There will be handwipes available in the dressing rooms since the play takes place on farm land
 - Parents should be told to provide spare clothing for children in case of wet weather or accidents
- adult /child ratio - 1:10 This will be covered by school parties but a high level of stewardship will also be required to ensure-
 1. safety near water

Areas such as the lost child post, first aid post should be given priority for any available stewards to provide help in those areas.

Planning and Liaison

- special consideration may need to be given to pushchairs in the event of an evacuation
- Mother and baby area for baby feeding and nappy changing is located in the First Aid area [or the Production Portakabin]

Care of Children in Specified Areas

- all site helpers are over 18 years of age
- First-Aid post is manned by suitably qualified persons
- all accidents are recorded in the Accident log
- all personnel are fully briefed on all aspects of event safety

Child Protection in Specified Areas

- children under 8 years not to be left unattended
- where possible a child should be accompanied by an adult (toilet, first-aid)
- a child must not be left under the supervision of only one site helper
- children must not leave the event and **must** return to their party
- site helpers must be aware of the Child Protection Policy with relation to the touching or handling of children and should be briefed by the Safety Co-ordinator
- site helpers are aware of procedures for discipline and dealing with unco-operative children or their parents
- corporal punishment is illegal
- practices that threaten, frighten or humiliate children are not to be used

Children of differing ages

Site helpers should be aware that different age groups demand different levels of supervision.

Children with Special Needs

- children with Special Needs must always be accompanied by a responsible adult (parent/relative/friend, S.A., Nurse)
- their difficulties should be specified on the booking form and the site helpers given a list prior to the performance

Lost Children

- There is a clearly advertised collection point for lost children with fully briefed site helpers. Ensure that children are not left in the care of a single worker. In some circumstances it may be necessary to make an announcement over the P.A. system taking care not to refer to children specifically or giving personal details, descriptions or names
- If a child is reluctant to go with a parent or collecting adult, seek a second opinion. The parent's or guardian's signature or proof of identity should also be obtained.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY cont/

Summary of good practice for paid and voluntary members

It is the responsibility of each person within the cast and production team of 'The Life of Jesus Christ' to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people.

You must....

- treat all children and young people with respect
- provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- ensure that wherever possible, there is more than one adult present during rehearsals/performances/activities with children or young people, or at least you are within sight or hearing of others
- respect a young person's rights to personal privacy
- encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned they may be
- be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted
- recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- operate within the code of Good Practice outlined above
- check the Child Protection Code of Good Practice with the Child Protection Co-ordinator(M.H.Begg)

You must not.....

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour
- make suggestive/derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual

- rely on your good name or that of the Steering Group to protect you
- believe 'it could never happen to me'
- take a chance when common sense, policy and practice suggest a more prudent approach

What to do.....

If a child or young person discloses to you abuse by someone else:

- Allow him/her to speak without interruption and outwith the presence of offender, accepting what is said but **do not** investigate
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- Let them know you are glad they have shared this information with you.
- Advise the young person that you **must** pass on this information.

If you suspect a child or young person is being abused, emotionally, physically or sexually

- Report the matter to the Chairman of the Steering Group and the Child Protection Co-ordinator

If you receive an allegation about any member of the cast/production team or about yourself:

- Immediately tell the head of the Steering Committee and /or the Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could ensure further compromise.

In all cases:

- Record the facts and report these to the Chairman of the steering group and /or the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

N.B. You must **refer**; you **must not** investigate.

Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 - Further Information

Where can you get more information about the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003?

The Central Registered Body Scotland (CRBS)

Helpline 01786 849777 E-mail info@crbs.org.uk

YouthLink Scotland

Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5EZ

Telephone 0131 313 2488 Fax 0131 313 6800 E-mail info@youthlink.co.uk

Disclosure Scotland

PO Box 250, Glasgow, G5 1YU

Helpline 0870 609 6006 E-mail info@disclosurescotland.co.uk

Information on sports governing bodies is available from:

Sportscotland

Caledonia House, South Gyle, Edinburgh, EH12 9DQ

Telephone: 0131 317 7200 Fax 0131 317 7202

E-mail library@sportscotland.org.uk

The Scottish Executive's Guidance for Organisations can be found at

www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/pcagfo.pdf

The Scottish Executive's Guidance to the Voluntary Sector on who needs to be checked against the Disqualified from Working with Children List is available at

www.scotland.gov.uk/childprotection