

# ACT 1 THEATRE GROUP



## BEHAVIOUR CODE FOR ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

### **Purpose**

This behaviour code outlines the conduct Act 1 Theatre Group expects from all our staff and volunteers. This includes anyone who is undertaking specific duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

The behaviour code aims to help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made. It has been informed by the views of children and young people.

Ben Clark must make sure that everyone taking part in our services has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

### **The role of staff and volunteers**

When working with or for children and young people, you are acting in a position of trust. You are likely to be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

### **Responsibility**

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- providing a safe environment for children and young people
  - This includes ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose.
  - This includes having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- following our principles, policies and procedures
  - This includes policies and procedures for child protection/safeguarding, whistleblowing and online safety.
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow

- challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to Ben Clark
- reporting all allegations/suspicions of abuse following our reporting procedures
  - This includes abusive behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

## **Rights**

You should:

- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems between yourself and others, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

## **Relationships**

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid favouritism
- patient with others
- use special caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the work of the project you are involved in
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
  - If this isn't possible, ensure you are within sight or hearing of other adults
  - If a child specifically asks for or needs some private time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are.
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible.
  - This is unless you are working under specific circumstances where it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

## **Respect**

You should:

- listen to and respect children at all times
  - value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible
  - In some cases it may be necessary to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures; if this is the case it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

## **Unacceptable behaviour**

When working with children and young people, you must not:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
  - This includes having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children and young people
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.

## **Upholding this code of behaviour**

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you.

If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave Act 1 Theatre Group. We may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to Ben Clark. If necessary you should follow the whistle-blowing procedure and child protection/safeguarding procedures.