



## **POLICY #7**

### **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY**

#### **1. HEALTH AND SAFETY GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT**

Live performance is exciting and fun, but can also be stressful and dangerous. Even the most experienced person can make mistakes, especially when in unfamiliar surroundings. The Board of Directors has spent time writing this guide to help us all observe proper procedures in health and safety. We all have a duty to try to avoid accidents, so please take some time to read this policy.

This policy will be checked regularly to make sure that our health and safety objectives are achieved and maintained.

#### **2. APPOINTMENT, AUTHORITY AND TRAINING OF SAFETY PERSONNEL**

Newcastle Musical Theatre Company (NMTC) has appointed Mrs Jacqui Simpson as its H&S Officer. The H&S Officer will keep an overall watch on the policies set out below, and will help us to maintain proper standards.

NMTC has appointed Mrs Lisa Powell as Deputy H&S Officer.

NMTC members will help the H&S Officer/Deputy as the need arises. Those helpers may receive special instructions or training, and may deputise for the H&S Officer/Deputy.

The H&S Officer/Deputy will be present at every NMTC rehearsal, event, or other gathering, and members must abide by any instructions given by that person. In rare cases, The Board of Directors may require a member to withdraw from rehearsals or performances or other NMTC activities.

#### **3. INFORMATION**

- **Member's Information**

We ask that members provide us with any information that they feel may be relevant to the health and safety of themselves or others. For example; the H&S Officer/Deputy or any other Board member should be made aware of any disability, illness or pregnancy (this information will be treated as confidential unless indicated otherwise by the member).



Due to the nature of some productions, especially when a historical context is relevant, glasses or other aids may require special consideration. A member should raise any special requirements with the H&S Officer/Deputy or any other board member as soon as possible.

- **Alcohol and Smoking**

No alcohol may be consumed during any rehearsal or performance, or in the Theatre either backstage or on stage. All buildings/venues that NMTC uses for rehearsals and performances have no smoking policies that must be followed.

## 4. CHILDREN

NMTC defines a child as a person up to the age of 16 years of age. Under normal circumstances no child under 5 will take part in NMTC activities, unless the Board of Directors should so decide. The Board of Directors appoints a specific person to oversee children in accordance with the NMTC Safeguarding Policy.

The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for telling children about our H&S procedures.

Adult members are reminded of the need to exercise special care and attention when performing with children.

## 5. SIGN-IN SIGN-OUT

NMTC uses a sign-in and sign-out register at its performance venue. Each member is required to sign-in and sign-out. Sub-contractors, such as lighting, sound personnel, orchestra etc. are also asked to sign-in and sign-out.

## 6. REHEARSAL REQUIREMENTS

- **Rehearsals**

The H&S Officer/Deputy (or in their absence the Production Manager) is responsible for checking that props and staging are safe. Members must work safely with props, and refuse to use any that are, in their reasonable opinion, unsafe.

In particular members are forbidden to stand on makeshift rostra such as plastic stacking chairs or fold-up tables.

Members are asked to attend rehearsals wearing suitable loose-fitting clothing and footwear that is non-slip.

For some productions all or some of the cast will be required to wear special footwear such as tap shoes. In these circumstances special footwear should only be worn when required.



Members must know the location of all the fire extinguishers, the fire exits and the assembly point(s).

Members must obey fire drill instructions. Members are asked not to park in front of fire exits or place any obstruction in front of fire exits, outside or inside the building.

In the case of emergencies, everyone will follow instructions given by the H&S Officer/Deputy, and will report to the H&S Officer/Deputy at the assembly point.

- **Theatre**

The H&S Officer/Deputy will liaise with theatre staff, in particular the Theatre Stage Manager, to agree the responsibility for safety in the theatre and to identify any particular hazardous areas or situations that need to be addressed.

The H&S Officer/Deputy or Production Manager will inform the cast, orchestra and back stage crew of all safety matters that need to be notified to them.

## 7. DRESSING ROOMS

- **Dressing Room Tidiness**

All members are asked to keep their dressing room tidy.

The Wardrobe Manager will supervise the storage of costumes/packing cases.

- **Dressing Room Faults**

If there is a fault with the tannoy, tell the stage manager so it can be dealt with by Theatre staff.

- **Dressing Room Allocation**

This will be completed prior to the week of performance by the Board of Directors and should not be altered due to fire and safety regulations stipulated by both us and the Theatre Management.

## 8. ON-STAGE AND IN THE WINGS

The Stage Manager is responsible for stage crew. The H&S Officer/Deputy will liaise with him/her on the relevant procedures.

Any special arrangements will be written down as amendments to these procedures for use in any specific circumstances.



NMTC recognises that the stage and its wings can be hazard areas. The H&S Officer/Deputy will ensure a risk assessment is undertaken of the activities and situations that present themselves or could present themselves in the areas concerned.

Where the theatre has carried out its own risk assessment, then the H&S Officer/Deputy will liaise closely with the theatre.

All members attending a performance venue for the first time will be given a tour of the building.

In the case of emergencies, cast and crew will follow instructions given by the Theatre staff, and will report to the Stage Manager/H&S Officer/Deputy at the assembly point.

## 9. FRONT OF HOUSE

The NMTC Front of House Manager manages the NMTC front of house team and liaises with the theatre staff so that each has identified themselves to each other and each party has understood the respective roles of the parties concerned.

In the case of emergencies, the NMTC front of house team will follow instructions given by the Theatre staff, and will report to the NMTC Front of House Manager at the assembly point.

## 10. ORCHESTRA PIT

The H&S Officer/Deputy will inform the Musical Director about health and safety procedures. The MD must check that the orchestra is familiar with the procedures.

No unauthorised members of the Company should enter the orchestra pit.

In the case of emergencies, the MD and orchestra will follow instructions given by the Theatre staff, and will report to the Stage Manager/H&S Officer/Deputy at the assembly point.

## 11. SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORKING

The Board of Directors is aware that members are often working under pressure and time restraints to put on a production.

Members should rest regularly.

If an unsafe system of working has been identified or an incident has occurred, the H&S Officer/Deputy investigates the cause(s), reports to The Board of Directors, and institutes procedures to minimise the risk of it occurring again.

## 12. ACCIDENT BOOK & RECORDS

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NMTC keeps records and uses an Accident Book to record all incidents, however trivial, that happen during NMTC events. Performance venues may also record all incidents.

Each book is maintained and stored by the H&S Officer/Deputy when not in use. The H&S Officer/Deputy records the details of any incident that requires first aid, however trivial, in the accident book.

### **13. ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

All electrical equipment owned by NMTC is subject to annual inspection and testing by a competent authority. At the conclusion of each inspection and test the equipment is then labelled to show its inspected status.

Any equipment that fails to pass the inspection will be removed and quarantined to prevent use.

Equipment will be stored and maintained in a safe working condition between inspections.

Any person who wants to use his or her own electrical equipment must seek prior approval from the H&S Officer/Deputy or The Board of Directors.

### **14. LADDERS AND SCAFFOLDING**

Some of NMTC's members may be required to work with, working at height equipment. NMTC is aware that one of the major causes of injury is falls from height. Only members who have been authorised by the H&S Officer/Deputy or The Board of Directors may use this type of equipment.

### **15. USING SUB-CONTRACTORS**

The H&S Officer/Deputy will inform all contractors of the relevant procedures set out in this Policy. Contractors are instructed to work in accordance with this Policy and any relevant Health and Safety Executive's Information Sheets.

This Policy will be regularly monitored by The Board of Directors and will be subject to regular review.

Next Review Date: January 2022