

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY



GUIDELINES AND ROUTINES FOR CHILD PARTICIPANTS

Our operation

Within our operation, we should pursue an active and goal-oriented HR policy with the aim of working towards equal rights and opportunities, taking advantage of and developing our employees' multi-faceted skills and creating an overall good work environment.

In our decisions and measures affecting child participants, our work processes take into account the children's best interests and the fact that they have a right to have their voice heard on issues that affect them based on their age and maturity.

All employees at Malmö Opera have a responsibility to take part in and to follow the Child Safeguarding Policy.

Background

This policy is based on the Swedish Work Environment Act (Arbetsmiljölagen), the Swedish Discrimination Act (Diskrimineringslagen), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (law from 2020 onwards), and Skåne Region's Policy for Rights of the Child (*Policy för barnets rättigheter 2020-04-29*). Its foundation is the four core principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Non-discrimination, Best interests of the child, The right to survival and development, Respect for the views of the child).

A SAFE AND SECURE WORK ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN

Systematic work environment work

The Swedish Work Environment Authority's (Arbetsmiljöverket) rules for minors are observed

During preparatory production work, Malmö Opera applies for a work permit from the Work Environment Authority. References from guardians and school principals are enclosed. For soloist roles, a specific agreement is made between guardians and the school, with support from Malmö Opera.

Working hours

Rehearsal times are planned for outside of school hours as far as possible. However, for certain rehearsals such as dress rehearsal, orchestra rehearsal etc. this is not possible.

Opportunity to rest and relax

A quiet room is provided for breaks and for waiting between rehearsals.

Children's Officer – the child's representative

The Children's Officer is the production's representative whose job it is to monitor the safety and security of the child. Read more under Children's Officer.

Zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment

The child must not be subject to discrimination on the grounds of circumstances which concerning the child or their parents. Our Ethics Policy on Equal Rights and Responsibilities applies to all employees, including child participants.

Health and safety

Risk assessments are carried out before each production. For productions involving children, a special assessment is carried out on the basis of the children's best interests. A separate risk review is conducted with the children. For safety and security reasons, children are never left unattended.

A special safety officer is appointed for the children:

- The choir's safety officer if the choir is involved in the production;
- The chief safety officer for other productions.

Involvement and communication

We are receptive to views and feedback from child participants. The Children's Officer is the children's representative in the production and is responsible for the children's involvement and right to express their views, i.e. for raising the children's questions and taking them further within the organisation. An evaluation is carried out after every production where the children's perspective is taken on board.

- Information on the production and how we work at Malmö Opera is communicated through parent meetings, as well as in writing to guardians and children. Study visits are held before rehearsals start.
- The child has the right to refuse to take part in activities, scenes etc. if they do not want to.
- The Children's Officer leads the children's activities, and through smaller groups with only children present creates an environment where the children feel safe to talk.
- Feedback must always be given to the children concerning decisions taken and how the children's views have been taken into account in order to protect their right to their views.
- Accessibility is adapted in the best interests of the children in terms of physical accessibility, adapted information and an inclusive social work environment.
- Guardians are welcome to ask the Children's Officer questions during rehearsals.

Marketing

When marketing productions involving children, the children's age and maturity is taken into account and a special assessment is performed to ensure minimal exposure on social media and other marketing channels both for the individual child and for all the children involved as a whole.

Marketing is also governed in the written contracts.

Focus on the best interest of the child

At Malmö Opera, all children and young people:

- must acknowledge the Ethics Policy and feel comfortable reporting any incidents directed towards themselves or others;
- are respected and listened to, and given support, praise and encouragement;
- must feel safe in the workplace and experience a positive environment;
- are shown respect for their private spaces, e.g. during lunch breaks but also during other working hours;
- are given the opportunity to take breaks and rest between rehearsals;
- work with adults who act as positive role models;
- are addressed using appropriate language (verbal and body language);
- are given clear guidelines on unacceptable behaviour;
- must be given constructive feedback where necessary.

ROLES WITH RESPONSIBILITY

Producer and/or production coordinator

— for children involved in soloist roles, ensembles and as extras.

The producer/production coordinator:

- is responsible for planning the work schedule based on the above perspective and the permit from the Work Environment Authority;
- observes the perspective of the child in preparatory work with the artistic team;
- is the point of contact for guardians during the planning phase and up until the start of rehearsals, after which he/she supports the Children's Officer;
- arranges information meetings/study visits for guardians and children before the start of production.
- coordinates information with children's choirmaster where necessary.

Children's choirmaster

— for children involved in the choir.

The children's choirmaster

- is responsible for planning the work schedule based on the above perspective and the permit from the Work Environment Authority;
- is the point of contact for guardians during the planning phase and up until the start of rehearsals, after which he/she supports the Children's Officer;
- arranges information meetings/study visits for guardians and children before the start of production.
- coordinates information with producer where necessary.

Wardrobe Manager

- is responsible for resource planning and for ensuring that the Children's Officer has the opportunity to conduct and carry out their work according to the Children's Policy;
- represents the children's best interests at production meetings, and during risks assessments, evaluations etc;
- coordinates with the Children's Officer and ensures that the children's voices are heard within the organisation.

Children's Officer

- is the production's representative whose job it is to monitor the safety and security of the child;
- follows the child at all times whilst they are on-site, and through all activities from the start of rehearsals;
- passes on the children's views to the Wardrobe Manager, and gives the children information and feedback on decisions;
- is the point of contact for guardians during the rehearsal and staging period.

Costume, wig and makeup workshops

At least two workshop employees must be present at all times when fitting costumes, wigs and makeup. The first time, information is given to the children and their next-of-kin regarding the workshop, employees and how the fitting works.

- Before the start of rehearsals
 - Guardians/next-of-kin are welcome to attend the fitting/measuring sessions for costumes, wigs and makeup.

- During the rehearsal period
 - The Children’s Officer is the on-site point of contact.
- The fitting/measuring sessions for the Children’s choir are performed together with choir rehearsals where the children’s choirmaster is the point of contact. Workshop employees who conduct fittings introduce themselves during a rehearsal before the actual fitting.

Stage manager

- gives the children the necessary information on policies and routines, safety regulations, emergency situations and evacuation, unacceptable behaviour etc;
- carries out a separate risk review with the child and the Children’s Officer during the first day of rehearsals on set;
- is receptive to the children’s wellbeing and where necessary adapts breaks during ongoing rehearsals;
- takes extra care to monitor and resolve any unacceptable behaviour during rehearsals.

COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING

Policies and processes which take into account children’s perspectives are reviewed and updated after measures taken during the productions’ evaluation work.

The artistic team is informed and reads through the children’s policy.

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