



Talking Props Theatre Arts Health & Safety Policy

It is the policy of Talking Props to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, safe and healthy working conditions for employees and students. Talking Props aims to ensure any work undertaken by the organisation does not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. Talking Props also aims to provide a safe and healthy environment for participants, audience members, and anyone visiting its premises.

The aims and objectives of the policy are:

- To promote and maintain standards of safety, health and welfare that comply fully with the Health & Safety at Work Act, 1974, other relevant legislation and codes of practice.
- To protect employees, volunteers, participants and others, including the public from foreseeable hazards.
- To provide all employees & volunteers with the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision needed to ensure that safe working practices are adhered to and safety awareness is developed.
- To ensure that employees, volunteers & participants are aware of their responsibilities to take care of themselves and others.
- To encourage consultation and cooperation between employees, volunteers, participants and management on any aspect of health and safety.
- To regulate any risk created by work operations and where necessary consult with outside bodies in order to maintain a safe working environment.

Responsibilities

The Principal

The Principal ultimate responsibility for health and safety. The Board is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that adequate resources are made available, thereby maintaining a suitable, safe working environment.

The Health & Safety Working Party

The Health & Safety working party will meet periodically to review the Health & Safety Policy of the organisation and its codes of practice. The Health & Safety working party will also :-

- Review the implementation of the policy by the organisation
 - Bring to the attention of the Board of Directors all new legislation, codes of practice and other matters affecting health and safety
 - Advise on matters of accident prevention and implementation of Health and Safety Policy within the organisation
 - Review the Accident Book at each meeting
 - Identify training needs in relation to areas of Health & Safety
- Complete risk assessments every 6 months, or more frequently whenever working conditions change



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The Studio Manager

The Studio Manager oversees Health & Safety issues on a day-to-day basis. The Studio Manager, working under direction of the Board, Health & Safety Working party and Principal will :-

- Communicate the Health & Safety Policy to all relevant people
- Delegate the day to day running of the Health and Safety Programme within the organisation
- Receive and action all reports, verbal and written, regarding health and safety issues
- Complete risk assessments every 6 months and delegate action points in conjunction with the Health & Safety Working Party
- Maintain liaison with all individuals connected with health and safety
- Arrange adequate training programmes in relation to health and safety
- Ensure that effective maintenance systems are in place and that all identified maintenance is implemented
- Ensure health and safety aspects are incorporated in all job instructions

First Aiders

Designated First Aiders are responsible for :-

- Administering First Aid to injured employees, volunteers & participants
- Ensuring all accidents are recorded
- Ensuring that all medical equipment and facilities are adequate

Employees, Volunteers & Participants

Employees, Volunteers & Participants should :-

- Make themselves familiar with and conform to the Health and Safety Programme at all times
- Observe all safety rules at all times
- Wear appropriate safety equipment when required
- Must not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health & safety
- Report all accidents, damage and dangerous occurrences to either the General



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Manager or a member of Talking Props staff

- Report all health & safety concerns to the General Manager or a member of Talking Props staff
- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions

Arrangements For Maintaining A Safe And Healthy Working Environment

Talking Props recognises there are a number of hazards throughout the premises that require control to be exercised in order to maintain the health and safety of employees, students, participants and other visitors. These controls and procedures are detailed as follows:

Accident Reporting

A record of all accidents, however minor, should be entered in the accident book. The Accident Book is kept at the reception desk in the new theatre building. All injuries should be reported immediately in order that repeat accidents can be prevented. 'Near Miss' accidents should be reported to the General Manager, or senior member of staff on duty, immediately so that preventative measures can be taken.

First Aid Points

First Aid boxes are located :-

- Reception
- Studio One

Training

All Health & Safety training needs will be identified by the Health & Safety Working Party in conjunction with the General Manager. Training will be provided, where appropriate, in areas of health and safety awareness, first aid, the use of protective equipment and safety devices and manual handling.

Use Of Electrical Equipment

All users of theatre lighting, sound equipment and other electrical items must receive comprehensive instruction before they are allowed to operate the equipment. Training will be given by Talking Props own technician, or by another member of staff. Equipment operators must also demonstrate the ability to adhere to health and safety procedures before being able to operate equipment unsupervised.

Ladders

All ladders shall be regularly checked under risk assessment procedures and any defects noted and reported immediately to the General Manager. Anyone intending to work at height should ensure another member of staff is aware that they are doing so before they start work. Staff should not use



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ladders if they are in the building alone. The technician, or anyone using the ladders in the auditorium, must have a responsible person in the space with them at all times when working at height.

Activities With Young People

- Drama leaders are responsible for leaving the workshop space clear of furniture at the end of every session. Chairs should be safely stacked and fire exits must be left clear of any obstructions
- Leaders must ensure that fire exits remain clear **during sessions** when furniture may be moved around
- Whilst the organisation recognises that the nature of performing arts involves physical activity, young people must be given the option to sit out of activities where they feel unsafe
- Leaders should consider the appropriateness of the activities to the age, ability
- and experience of the young people they are working with in relation to health
- and safety issues
- Young people should be properly instructed in the use of technical equipment

and supervised where appropriate

- Young people should be regularly reminded of their contribution to the health and safety of themselves and others. Disciplinary action will be taken when individuals disregard health and safety rules
- Leaders must always consider health and safety issues in the design, construction and use of a set for performance projects
- Leaders should familiarise themselves with fire procedures and consider all health and safety issues when working at outreach venues

Fire

Talking Props will make every effort to reduce both the likelihood of fire and severity of fire, and consequently asks employees, volunteers and participants to be vigilant and report anything that could be hazardous.

Employees, volunteers & participants should familiarise themselves with the posted fire precautions and drill procedure

For regular workshop sessions, fire drills will take place on the first session of each new term. Workshop leaders should ensure anyone who misses the first session, or joins later in the term, is given a safety briefing the first time they attend.

Fire Evacuation Procedures



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If you discover a fire
If you hear the fire alarm

- raise the alarm
- do not attack the fire

- leave the premises by the nearest available exit
- close all doors behind you
- report to person in charge at the assembly point – the disabled area - staff will check the register

Call the fire brigade if you are the person previously designated to do so.

DO NOT RETURN TO THE BUILDING UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD IT IS SAFE TO DO SO BY EITHER A FIREFIGHTER OR A MEMBER OF YOUR YOUTH THEATRE STAFF

Fire Evacuation Procedures For Performances

Prior to the performance commencing, instructions will be given to :-

- **All Front of House Staff**
- **All Members of the cast**
- **All Stage Staff and Technical Crew**

A designated member of the front of house team will act as 'Fire Marshall'. And will help enforce the evacuation plan. The designated 'Fire Marshall' shall remain in the foyer throughout the performance – and should not undertake any other duties that would obstruct their duties should an evacuation become necessary.

If the fire alarm sounds :-

- Staff and Volunteers should help evacuate all participants, staff and audience members exiting the building via the nearest fire exit
- All participants, staff and volunteers should assemble at the disabled area of the main car park
- The senior technician on duty should ensure all the technical team are evacuated, and the senior member of stage staff should ensure all cast members are safely evacuated
- In the event of an actual fire, the designated 'Fire Marshall' shall follow the fire procedures and call the fire brigade. The 'Fire Marshall' should, if it is safe to do so, facilitate the checking of toilets, kitchen and offices to ensure the building is unoccupied
- Once the all clear has been given, either by a firefighter, or by the 'Fire Marshall' in the case of a false alarm, staff should facilitate an orderly return to the building

General Housekeeping

One of the major contributions towards the maintenance of poor health and safety standards is bad housekeeping. Everyone has responsibility for ensuring that housekeeping is up to standard in the areas in which they work. All areas of the building should be kept tidy and free from clutter. Any potential health and safety issued should be reported immediately to the General Manager or another member of Talking Props staff.



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Employees, volunteers & participants are asked to consult the General Manager if they are in doubt concerning the implementation of safe working procedures or if they consider arrangements to be unsafe.

Employees, volunteers & participants must abide by the rules and regulations in force for the maintenance of a healthy and safe environment as detailed above. When health and safety is disregarded it will be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors where disciplinary action may be recommended.

Monitoring

The General Manager will ensure that working conditions are regularly monitored, ensuring that safe working practices are being followed. The General Manager is also responsible for investigating work-related accidents and is responsible for acting on findings from any such investigations to prevent a recurrence.

(Last Reviewed Feb 2021)