



# Members Handbook

Amended November 2014



Welcome to Blaenau Gwent Young Stars Musical Theatre Company, we hope you enjoy your time with us.

This handbook contains some useful contact numbers, but most importantly the societies constitution, which in simple terms is the rules of the society.

Please take the time to read the constitution so that you understand how the society operates and what is expected of everyone.

You will also find further information, notices of events and productions on our website [www.bgys.homestead.com](http://www.bgys.homestead.com).

Your first point of contact will be the societies secretary, in addition to this your producer will normally share their contact details with you. We use a texting service to update members, the sender ID is BGYS. The society also has a mobile phone number which is 07930690032

**Secretary**

Mrs Carol Webb  
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Tel 01495 301049

**Chairman/Stage Manager**

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**Vice Chairman**

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**Ticket Secretary**

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**Patron Secretary/Assistant Ticket Secretary**

Delyth Evans  
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**Funding/Grants Secretary**

Mary Scott  
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## **Important information**

### **Drop off and pick up of children**

When dropping off children please do not drive off without first checking that someone from BGYS has actually arrived at the rehearsal venue.

We have had occasions when children have been dropped off at the wrong place or time and the child being left alone with no way of contacting anyone.

Also when dropping off you will need to confirm the time you are required to collect your child and ensure you do so at the allotted time.

### **Contributions.**

Contributions are payable weekly and are currently £3:00 per week and are subject to the conditions laid out in the societies constitution. (clause 7)

### **Uniforms**

The society has a uniform which all members are required to wear. New members will be expected to purchase this uniform upon joining the society.

### **Constitution.**

The societies constitution is contained within this handbook.

Please take the time to read it as these are the rules of the society that everyone is expected to abide by and comply with the conditions contained within it.

### **Child protection policy.**

The societies child protection policy is available on request from the Management Committee.

## **Important Information for Parents/Carers**

### **Blaenau Gwent Young Stars Safeguarding Policy**

Due to current law about safeguarding children the society has clear guidelines to ensure the health, safety and well being of its members are maintained at all times.

The society accepts and stresses that the principle of the Children Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount in all circumstances.

A full copy of the Safeguarding Policy is available on request.

For the purpose of this information – a designated person is a person over 18 who is appointed by the Blaenau Gwent Young Stars Management Committee.

## **Guidelines for Rehearsals for Parents/Carers**

1. On attending the first rehearsal, Parents or Carers will be issued with a copy of the Starter Handbook which contains this leaflet and other relevant information.
2. Parents / Carers will be required to complete an enrolment form and provide all relevant medical information. **YOU MUST INFORM US OF ANY MEDICAL CONDITIONS/ALLERGIES OR ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS.**
3. Enrolment and medical forms will be kept by the secretary. An additional copy will be stored in a locked cabinet at the Blaenau Gwent Young Stars premises and will only be available to designated persons. Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring the society is informed of any changes to their child's records.
4. Children **MUST** be collected at the end of a rehearsal by their parent/carer. If their parent/carer wishes their child to go elsewhere after rehearsal or to walk home alone, these arrangements must be communicated to the designated person.
5. An attendance and fire register will be kept at each rehearsal. Fire drills will take place regularly.
6. A minimum of 2 designated adults will be present at each rehearsal, ensuring an appropriate mix of sexes. The adults will be responsible for the children for the entirety of the rehearsal.
7. No adult will be left alone in sole charge of members. As far as possible no adult will be left alone with a child or young person in a place or a room which cannot be observed easily by others.
8. The society operates a system of mutual respect. Parents/carers will be kept informed of any issue relating to their child.
9. A First Aider will be present at each rehearsal and any incident or injury will be recorded on the accident book and reported to the parent/carer.

## **Guidelines for Engagements for Parents/Carers**

1. Prior to any engagement, a letter will be issued to parents/carers giving details of the event and a consent form completed asking for availability and commitment to the engagement.

2. On arrival at the engagement, members will report to one of the designated adults to confirm their arrival. A register will be kept at each engagement and will be checked at the end of the event to ensure all members have been collected safely.
3. A parent/carer **MUST** arrive with and collect their child at the agreed time and destination. This will be communicated to the parent/carers by letter and verbally when the member arrives at the venue.
4. Blaenau Gwent Young Stars operates a strict policy regarding photographic and video productions. Only designated parties are permitted to photograph or video any part or the whole of a rehearsal or production. Parents will be offered an opportunity to give consent for their child to be photographed or videoed. Audience members will be reminded of this fact at the start of all performances.

### **Additional Information**

1. A risk assessment will be carried out for any member with any medical condition/allergies or any other additional/special needs in consultation with parents/carers.
2. The Blaenau Gwent Young Stars have guidelines for dealing with disclosure, suspicion or discovery of abuse. These are available from the secretary should you wish to view them.
3. The name of the societies designated Safeguarding Officer will be displayed at the Blaenau Gwent Young Stars premises.
4. Additional support can be obtained from Child Line 0800 1111

## **BLAENAU GWENT YOUNG STARS** **MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY**

### **CONSTITUTION**

#### **Amended 2014**

*As agreed and passed by the Membership present at the Annual General Meeting 2014, The following rules cancel and supersede all previous rules appertaining to the above named society.*

1. The society shall hereby be known as the Blaenau Gwent Young Stars Musical Theatre Company
2. The objectives of the society are:
  - a) That the society is democratic in its decision making.
  - b) That the society aims to introduce young people aged 4 to 29 to the world of Musical Theatre and drama through staging a number of productions throughout the year.
  - c) The society aims to be a stepping stone for young people to progress into adult societies when they reach adulthood.
  - d) To support local community and charitable organisations.
  - e) The society will be made up of three sections:
    - Primary Section: aged 4 to 8.
    - Junior Section: aged 9 to 14
    - Senior Section: aged 14 to 29
  - f) Transfers between sections when age limits are reached will take place twice per year during January and July, with an optional transition period at 13 years between Juniors and Seniors.
3. A copy of the society constitution and child protection policy will be given to every member of the society on enrolment. It will be signed for by a parent or guardian and witnessed by a Management Committee Member.
4. As stated in the objectives, the society is for young people between the ages of 4 and 29, children must have reached the age of 9 by the day of enrolment into the Junior Section. However a member who has their 29th birthday during rehearsals or production will be permitted to perform until the performance has been staged. Junior members must have

reached 14 by the first rehearsal for the senior show, however this is at the discretion of the Management Committee

5. Any adult over the agreed age to perform on stage will only be involved in the management, backstage, advisory or fund-raising capacity, unless in special circumstances, at which point the decision rests solely with the Management Committee
6. The societies membership is open to all within the age group of the society, each new member will serve a probationary period of three months. All members are subject to the following conditions of membership, which are:-
  - a) Regular attendance at rehearsals.
  - b) Good Conduct at all times.
  - c) Regular payment of subscriptions.
  - d) Commitment if successful in gaining a lead role, anyone with a lead role who fails to commit fully to the role will be liable to lose their part, this is at the discretion of the production team and Management Committee.
  - e) Members who fail to attend on a regular basis will only be allowed re-entry at the discretion of the management committee.
  - f) The society supports a number of local, charitable and promotional events during the year, all members are expected to take part in these events.

The Management Committee have the right to terminate membership if any of the above conditions are not met

7. Each member will pay a weekly subscription, which will be reviewed at the Annual General Meeting, any missed payments will be made up on the member's return. Subscriptions shall still be paid even if a member is absent for any reason, including holidays. The only occasions when subscriptions will not be charged is by agreement of the Management Committee, or if the Production Team or Management Committee cancels rehearsals. All subscriptions should be received by the last rehearsal prior to the production. The Management Committee have the right to refuse entry should subscriptions fall into arrears.
8. If a member leaves for any reason, money paid in will not be refundable unless an advanced payment has been made.
9. All current members are required to re-enrol on an annual basis during September they will be required to fill out the appropriate forms, which should be returned before the first rehearsal. If a member has left they will only be allowed to re-enrol following a written application to, and agreement of the Management Committee. The re-enrolment application must state the reasons for leaving and wishing to re-enrol. Re-enrolment will also only be possible if places are available after enrolling from the waiting list.

10. New members will be required to complete and return the relevant application forms. Any applications which have any additional needs will require the application to be approved by the Management Committee before attending any rehearsals.

11. The Management Committee holds the right to refuse entry.

12. If a member wishes to take leave of absence for any reason, it must be done so by agreement with the Management Committee & by filling in the appropriate forms, otherwise the management committee could assume that the member has left altogether and their places could be filled.

13. Ideally the maximum number of members in each section shall total 40 at any one time, although this is at the discretion of the Management Committee. This will be considered before an enrolment night is set. Following re-enrolment of current members any available places will first be filled by enrolling from the waiting list, then on a first come first served basis. Any remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list if they so wish.  
Former members who have left and are subject to the terms of rule 9. are not permitted to put their name on the waiting list.

The Primary Section is separate to this, with a limit of 30 children on the books. Any available places will first be filled from the waiting list and then on a first come first served basis. Any remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list if they so wish.

14. The society will consist of the following committees:

a) **Management Committee**

Made up of the following officers:-

- Chairperson
- Vice Chairperson
- Secretary
- Publicity Officer
- Treasurer
- Funding/grants secretary
- Patron Secretary
- Ticket Secretary
- A maximum of six regular committee members  
(Two of whom shall be assigned as auditors)

If there are more nominations than posts, they must be democratically elected at the Annual General Meeting, by way of a secret ballot.

The minimum age to serve on the Management Committee is 18 years

b) **Selection Team**

This team is made up of:-

- Producer
- Musical Director

- Choreographer
- Chairman
- Stage Manager
- Wardrobe Mistress

The role of this team is to choose the most appropriate show for each section of the group to perform throughout the year.

c) **Building Committee:-**

Three members will be allocated from the management committee to be part of the building committee.

15. The society will also have a production team who are invited to sit at Management Committee meetings, this team is made up of:-
- Producer / Director
  - Musical Director
  - Choreographer
  - Accompanist

Payment for the above posts will be made at the discretion of the Management Committee. As these posts are specialist jobs they will be appointed by the Management Committee.

The roles of the prompter, Stage Manager and Wardrobe Mistress shall be chosen by the Producer.

16. a) Purchases of any description on behalf of the society shall not be made without prior authorisation of the Chairman.
- b) Out of pocket expenses will only be paid if it has been agreed by the Management Committee and subject to valid receipts.
17. There will have to be a quorum of 50% of the society officers and Committee in attendance before a meeting can take place.
18. Members of the committee may record one vote each on all decisions made. Except for the Chairperson who will have the casting vote.
19. An AGM will be called annually which is made open to all our members and parents; this is where the officers and Committee members get elected to serve the society for the forthcoming year. All nominee's must be present at the AGM in order to accept the nominated post or send a letter of apology for absence, which also includes written acceptance of the post if elected prior to the AGM.

Any amendments made to the societies constitution can only be made at the Annual General Meeting, or by calling an extraordinary meeting. Written notice must be given to the societies secretary twenty-eight days prior to the AGM, the letter must state any changes and amendments proposed. Also that a nominations list be presented and displayed, so that Officers and Committee members can be nominated for election, at least four weeks prior to the AGM.

Notification of an AGM will be given to all members at least 4 weeks prior to the meeting taking place.

A nominee, proposer and seconder signatures are required along with the acceptance signature of the nominee.

20. Should an officer or committee member resign an extraordinary meeting will be called to elect a replacement officer. In the case of a committee member the need to call an extraordinary meeting will be at the discretion of the Management Committee. 4 weeks notice of an extraordinary meeting must be given to society members. A nomination sheet must be posted on the notice board within the building 4 weeks prior to the extraordinary meeting seeking nominations for the replacement officer/s. A nominee, proposer and seconder signatures are required along with the acceptance signature of the nominee.
- 20a. **Criminal Records Bureau.**  
Persons wishing to become an officer of the society or assist the society in any way as a volunteer may at any time, be subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check. The decision to carry out any such check will be,  
a. Subject to current legislation.  
b. Subject to the requirements of the societies Child Protection Policy.  
c. At the discretion of the Management Committee
21. If the society disbands, all its remaining assets will be given to local charitable organisations.
22. It is parents responsibility to ensure that their children arrive and are collected from the rehearsal or concert venue safely.
23. Only committee members and production team are allowed to attend rehearsals, and must be in compliance with clause (20a), unless they have been engaged to assist in some way, eg; Choreographer, Vocal Coach, Prompter etc.
24. The Producer & Musical Director have the final word in all matters concerning the Productions being staged, including the material used, the inclusion / exclusion of solos, costumes, scenery, band, lighting etc.
25. The Producer & Backstage Manager have the final word on who helps out behind the scenes, and have the right to refuse if a problem occurs.

26. All senior and junior sections will be required to audition for major roles for productions within their own group, any member not auditioning will be given minor or chorus roles at the discretion of the producer, (excluding Revues). A team of four people will sit on the panel, comprising of the Producer and 3 others. The 3 others must not be related to members auditioning. Parts will be given to the person who the panel believe performed the best at the time of auditioning, and their decisions will be supported fully by the Management Committee
27. The Society will be affiliated to the National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA).

28. **PERSONAL HARASSMENT& BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**A) INTRODUCTION**

1. Many people in society are victimised and harassed as a result of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, political opinion or affiliation, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age or disability.
2. Personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse. Whatever form it takes, personal harassment is always taken seriously and is totally unacceptable.  
Bullying is also taken seriously and is totally unacceptable.
3. We recognise that personal harassment/bullying can exist within Blaenau Gwent Young Stars Musical Theatre Company as well as outside, and that this can seriously affect members personal lives by interfering with their performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant environment.

**B) POLICY**

We deplore all forms of personal harassment and bullying and seek to ensure that the societies environment is sympathetic to all our members.

**C) COMPLAINING ABOUT PERSONAL HARASSMENT/BULLYING.**

**1. Informal complaint**

If you are the victim of minor harassment you should make it clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the harasser to stop.

If the member feels they are unable to do this they should approach a member of the Management Committee to do this on their behalf.

**2. Formal complaint**

Where the informal approach fails or if the harassment is more serious, you should bring the matter to the attention of a Committee Member as a formal written complaint.

The person assigned to deal with the complaint will carry out a thorough investigation in accordance with our constitution. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be dealt with accordingly.

When the investigation has been concluded, the findings will be presented to the Management Committee, who will decide the appropriate action to be taken. In serious cases this could lead to dismissal from the society.