

Disability Policy

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1. The term “disabled” is applied to a variety of people with many differing characteristics and covers a wider range of disabilities than is generally supposed. The National Advisory Council on the employment of disabled people says that a disabled person is someone who, because of physical, sensory or psychiatric impairment is substantially handicapped in realising his/her potential in the labour market. A preferred definition of disability is: “The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes little or no account of people who have impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities.” (The British Council for Organisations of Disabled People)

1.2. Within the constraints of the artistic direction of the group, we are committed to enabling people with disabilities to participate in and have access to the work of the group.

1.3 Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre will actively collaborate with agencies and organisations specialising in work with young people with special needs, providing expertise and voluntary support where appropriate for drama and other arts events.

2. POLICY STATEMENTS

2.1. Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre is a charity whose constitutional objective is to promote and further the education of young people, in Welsh and English, in the appreciation and practice of Drama in all aspects, in order to promote better knowledge of and widespread interest in the practice of performing arts, whether as actors, directors, costume and property makers, technicians, or any other theatrically related skills. Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre provides opportunities for young people to experience and participate in creative activities, including some productions for public performance, and many other related activities to develop the whole range of theatrical skills of its members.

2.2. In determining its policy, the committee recognises and acknowledges that the opportunity to explore and experience individual and group creativity, through the discipline of the arts, is the prime driver of the activities of the group. The breadth of experience is open to all members, who are expected to contribute to the realisation of the common goal, which is derived from consensus agreement. There are no auditions, either for group membership or performance projects. The necessity to maintain a high quality of individual experience may place temporary limitations on membership numbers at times, when a waiting list will come into effect..

2.3. The management committee is responsible for ensuring that the needs of disabled people are considered in all decision making, and for seeking the advice of organisations for

the disabled.

2.4. The group will perform at accessible venues wherever possible. Where full access is not possible, this will be clearly stated in promotional literature. At least one performance per production will be at a venue which is fully accessible.

2.5. This policy will be subject to annual audit and review.

3. ACTION PLAN

Introduction – ongoing operational policy

Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre provides opportunities for young people to experience and participate in creative activities, including some for public performance and many other related activities, to develop the artistic and performing skills and awareness of its members. In addition to the range of activities mentioned earlier, the group's purpose is to provide a co-operative ethos for personal and interpersonal development and for social and moral growth. This policy recognises all needs of all disabled people. New members with non-visible disabilities, such as anxieties, allergies or diabetes, are asked to make these known to the Director on joining the group. The Director will treat this as confidential information.

ACTION

1. CONSULTATION: The needs of disabled people will be considered in decision-making, through the advice of specialist bodies and other providers, such as Celf o Gwmpas, the Children's Society and Arts Connection.

2. PUBLICITY AND MARKETING : Promotional literature produced to advertise performances and events will include information regarding ease of access. Every effort will be made to ensure that at least one performance per production will be held at a fully accessible venue, which will be clearly identified within the promotional literature.

3. PARTICIPATION IN GROUP ACTIVITIES: The Committee recognises that the opportunity to explore and experience individual and group activity through the discipline of the arts is the prime driver of the group. The breadth of theatrical experience is open to all members of the group, who are expected to contribute to the common goal, which is derived from consensus agreement. Disabled people can participate and contribute to the work of the group on an equal basis within the stated operational policy.

4. ACCESS: There is unrestricted access to the main working areas used by the Youth Theatre. Some performances are held in venues not owned by the group, and access varies considerably from site to site. Every effort will be made to ensure that at least one performance per production will be held at a fully accessible venue, and preference will be given to sites with full access where there is a choice. Where access is not full, restrictions will be identified within promotional literature. Where special services are available (such as an audio loop) this will be clearly stated both before the performance and within the venue.

5. **MONITORING and REVIEW:** Members of the Management Committee in consultation with the Director will be responsible for ensuring that the above actions are implemented. The plan will be reviewed at the first meeting of the Management Committee after the Annual General Meeting.