

Disciplinary Policy for The Company of Four

Introduction

The Company of Four is committed to creating a professional, respectful, and supportive environment for all. This policy outlines our expectations for behaviour and conduct, the procedure for addressing concerns, and the steps that may be taken in cases of misconduct.

By adhering to this policy, we aim to promote a positive, inclusive, and creative environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved in any capacity with The Company of Four. It covers all activities related to The Company of Four, including but not limited to, rehearsals, performances, meetings, social events, and communication platforms and social media platforms.

Expected Behaviour

Individuals involved in The Company of Four are expected to:

- Treat others with respect and dignity always, both in-person and online.
- Be punctual and prepared for all rehearsals, meetings, and performances including wearing the appropriate clothing and footwear for the rehearsals.
- Maintain a high level of professionalism and work ethic in all aspects of theatre production.
- Abide by the Company's health and safety guidelines and code of conduct.
- Communicate openly, constructively, and with courtesy.
- Adhere to any relevant legal, ethical, or safeguarding requirements.

Unacceptable Behaviour / misconduct

The following types of behaviour are unacceptable:

- Harassment, bullying, discrimination, or any form of offensive or abusive behaviour.
- Repeated lateness or absence without prior notice or valid explanation.
- Breach of confidentiality, including the sharing of confidential or sensitive information without permission.
- Disrespecting the work of others or undermining team spirit.
- Any other behaviour that is deemed by the committee to be detrimental to the wellbeing of an individual, a group or the success and ongoing activities of the Company.

Gross misconduct may lead to immediate suspension while being investigated: Acts that constitute gross misconduct might include the following:

- Theft, fraud or deliberate falsification of records;
- Physical violence;
- Serious bullying or harassment;
- Sexual harassment or assault;
- Serious insubordination;
- Serious incapability brought about by alcohol or substance misuse;

- Endangering others through deliberate breach of Health & Safety procedures

Reporting Misconduct

Anyone involved with The Company of Four who experiences or witnesses unacceptable behaviour should report it as soon as possible. Concerns can be raised with the following:

- The Secretary

Stella Mitchell via email: Cof4secretary@gmail.com

- The designated Safeguarding Lead (if applicable)

Vicky Fosker email: safeguarding@cof4.co.uk

The Company will ensure that all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with promptly. (For timeframes, please see our complaints policy)

When you report a concern please tell us:

- Clearly what happened and include the date, time and location, if it concerns an incident;
- Why you are making the complaint?
- What is your desired outcome (if known)?
- Your full name, email address and contact phone number and how you would like us to contact you?
- and if appropriate, please send us any documents that support your complaint.

Procedure for Addressing Misconduct

When a concern or report of misconduct is raised, the following steps will be taken:

1. Informal Resolution:

In most cases, if appropriate, the first response will be an informal discussion between the person raising the concern and the individual accused of misconduct with a mediator present. This can often be resolved through open dialogue and understanding.

2. Formal Investigation:

If informal resolution is not possible, a formal investigation will be initiated. The Trustees will conduct a thorough review of the situation, gathering statements and evidence where appropriate. If a trustee is involved or deemed too closely related to the situation, an alternative member of the committee will be asked to take their place.

3. Disciplinary Hearing:

If the investigation confirms that misconduct has occurred, the individual involved may be invited to attend a disciplinary hearing. At the hearing, the person will be given the opportunity to explain their actions. A decision will be made regarding the appropriate course of action. The person may bring a companion and does not need to be a Company of Four member.

Disciplinary Actions

Subsequent to the investigation the following actions (or others) may be taken as deemed appropriate by the Trustees:

Verbal Warning: A formal verbal warning, detailing the misconduct that is unacceptable, and setting expectations for future conduct.

First Written Warning: If the infringement is regarded as more serious, the individual will be given a formal written warning, giving the details of the misconduct, the improvement required, the timescale allowed for this. The warning will also state that a final written warning might be considered if the desired change doesn't occur.

Final Written Warning: Where there is failure to improve the behaviour, or an infringement which is considered sufficiently serious, the individual will be given a final written warning. This will include details of the misconduct and that failure to improve may result in suspension or termination of membership.

Suspension: In cases of gross or repeated misconduct, the individual may be suspended from the Company for a specified period.

The Trustees reserve the right to suspend any individual prior to an investigation where any of the following scenarios are present:

- Where children are at risk;
- Where the person needs protection themselves;
- Where the allegations amount to gross misconduct;
- Where the society's reputation might suffer unduly;
- Where the presence of the person may impede investigation.

Termination of Involvement/membership: If all other measures fail and there is no improvement or if the act of misconduct is determined to be severe the Trustees may terminate membership and/or exclude the individual from future participation in the Company altogether. Termination of the membership will result in the forfeiture of any remaining paid-up membership.

Appeals Process

If an individual feels that a disciplinary decision is unfair or inappropriate, they have the right to appeal the decision. The appeal should be made in writing to the Chair of the Company within 14 days of the decision, who will arrange an impartial review of the case.

Confidentiality

All disciplinary matters will be handled with confidentiality to respect the privacy of all involved parties. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in the investigation or disciplinary process. However, in cases of serious misconduct, it may be necessary to inform external authorities (e.g., safeguarding bodies or law enforcement).

Records

The Company of Four will keep a record of all disciplinary matters. However, any disciplinary action taken (other than termination of membership) will be disregarded after a period of time.

- Warnings for minor offences will be held for a minimum of 12 months

- Final warnings will remain relevant for a minimum period of 12 months

Once this period is passed, warnings will be disregarded in any further disciplinary proceedings. These records will be kept confidential and retained in accordance with the Company's data protection policy (since they will amount to personal information covered by data protection legislation).

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed no less than once per annum to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Updates or amendments may be made as necessary, with the most current policy published on the website.

By virtue of your involvement with The Company of Four, individuals acknowledge their understanding and acceptance of this disciplinary policy.

Date:

Approved by: