



## Pitchy Breath Theatre Company: Health and Safety Policy

### Overview

Pitchy Breath Theatre Company takes very seriously the health and safety of its performers and audience members. Our aim is to create an inclusive and safe environment for everyone when taking part in our activities.

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility. This policy is intended to ensure that all reasonable measures are taken by you, as company members and participants in Pitchy Breath activities, to minimise hazards in order to:

- Protect yourself and others from injury and illness
- Prevent damage to property
- Protect audience members from foreseeable risks, so far as they have reason to come into contact with Pitchy Breath or its activities.

This policy should be read alongside our **Safeguarding Policy** and **Diversity and Inclusion Policy**.

### Key principles

Pitchy Breath will take all reasonably practical steps to:

- Provide a safe place to carry out our activities, including performances, rehearsals and workshops
- Review and revise this policy as necessary to deal with changing circumstances, including COVID-19, and to comply with health and safety regulations
- Ensure items supplied are safe and provide information, instruction and training to members as necessary
- Appoint a designated Health and Safety Officer (HSO) and Deputy, and a trained First Aider and Mental Health & Wellbeing Officer (MHWO) to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our participants (whether regular or one-off) at all times.

The Health and Safety Officer (HSO) and Deputy will monitor this policy and help ensure the Company maintains appropriate standards. You must abide by any instructions given by the HSO. Pitchy Breath reserves the right to exclude any members who fail to follow instructions from rehearsals, performances or other Pitchy Breath activities.

### Member information

You are asked to provide the HSO with any information that might be relevant to your health and safety or that of others (for instance, disability, illness, pregnancy, or conditions which you believe may put you at increased risk from COVID-19). This information will be treated as confidential unless indicated otherwise by you, and handled in accordance with our **Privacy Policy**. Due to the nature of some productions, classes or other activities may



require special consideration. You should raise any special requirements with the HSO as soon as possible.

## **Rehearsal and performance venues**

To help us all manage health and safety risks, all Pitchy Breath members must:

- Report to the HSO all matters which you consider to be a hazard to health and safety
- Take reasonable care for your health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions
- Co-operate with the HSO in all matters of health and safety, including complying with the latest Government guidance on COVID-19.

This includes a requirement that company or audience members must not attend in-person rehearsals, performances, workshops or other activities if:

- you or someone in your household has symptoms, even if these are mild (these include a cough, fever, or change in taste/smell);
- you or someone in your household has had a positive COVID-19 result, or
- you have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

Further measures relating to COVID-19 are set out below.

- Work safely with props, and refuse to use any that are, in your reasonable opinion, unsafe – this includes not standing on makeshift rostra such as plastic nesting chairs or fold-up tables
- Wear suitable loose-fitting clothing and nonslip footwear to rehearsals
- Familiarise yourself with the location of all fire extinguishers, fire exits and assembly point(s); obey fire drill instructions; and not obstruct fire exits or equipment in or outside of any premises being used by the Company
- Not interfere with or misuse any measures or instructions provided for health and safety
- Not consume alcohol or drugs during any rehearsal, backstage or on stage
- Comply with no smoking policies in all buildings used by Pitchy Breath for rehearsals and performances
- Use a sign-in and sign-out register for performance and rehearsal venues
- Keep performance and rehearsal spaces tidy and clear of personal belongings
- Seek prior approval for any use of personal electrical equipment at venue or rehearsal spaces.

## **In case of emergencies**

- You must follow instructions given by the HSO or Deputy, and will report to the HSO or Deputy at the assembly point. When at performance venues, members will follow



- instructions given by the Theatre staff, and will report to the Front of House Manager at the assembly point.
- The HSO will liaise with theatre staff, in particular Theatre Technicians, to agree the responsibility for safety in the theatre and to identify any particular hazardous areas or situations that need to be addressed.
- The HSO will inform the cast and backstage crew of all safety matters that need to be notified to them.
- The HSO will ensure a risk assessment is undertaken of the activities and situations that present, or could present, themselves in performance or rehearsal venues.
- Where the theatre has carried out its own risk assessment, then the HSO will liaise closely with the theatre.

## **Accidents**

In the event of an accident beyond the ability of a First Aider present to deal with, an ambulance should be called.

An Accident Book will be used to record all incidents that require first aid, however trivial, that happen during Pitchy Breath events. The book will be maintained and stored by the HSO when not in use. Performance venues may also record all incidents.

If an unsafe system of working has been identified or an incident has occurred, the HSO will investigate the cause(s), report to the committee, and institute procedures to minimise the risk of it occurring again.

## **Hazardous equipment or props**

Some Company members may be required to work with working at height equipment. Pitchy Breath is aware that one of the major causes of injury is falls from height. Only members who have been authorised by the HSO or Deputy may use this type of equipment.

Safe use of other equipment or props will be considered as part of the production risk assessment.

## **Risk assessment**

Dedicated risk assessments will be undertaken by the HSO or Deputy and production Producer/Director to assess the risks of every set prior to production rehearsals and performances and the check list will be kept on file by the HSO.

Risk assessments will be based on the [HSE's template](#) and consider:

1. What could go wrong?
2. How likely is such an event?
3. What could happen if such an event occurred?



4. What are the associated risks?
5. How can the risks be reduced?
6. Who is responsible for taking action to reduce risk?

Risks assessments will include specific measures to determine and mitigate against risks associated with COVID-19, in accordance with [Government guidance](#) (see also, below).

The HSO will report to the Committee at quarterly intervals on action/s which have been taken and how risks have been removed/reduced.

## COVID-19

COVID-19 precautions are everyone's responsibility.

Pitchy Breath will ensure that its shows and other activities (such as rehearsals, auditions and workshops) are conducted in a COVID-19 secure way, and in accordance with the [latest Government guidelines](#) for professional and non-professional performing arts organisations, as it applies at that time.

Risks associated with COVID-19 will be assessed as part of the overarching risk assessment process, overseen by the HSO.

All Pitchy Breath business is currently (at August 2021) operating virtually. In advance of resuming any face-to-face interaction between members, a full COVID risk assessment will be undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures put in place.

### Workshops, auditions, rehearsals and performances

In the past, performers have lived by the mantra that "the show must go on" – but times have now changed! **We do not want you to attend any Pitchy events if you are unwell**, putting others (and the production as a whole) at risk.

If you are taking part in face-to-face performances, rehearsals, auditions, workshops or other activities, you:

- **must not attend** if:
  - you have any COVID-19 symptoms, including a new, persistent cough; a high temperature; or loss/change to your sense of taste or smell
  - you or someone in your household has had a positive COVID-19 result, or
  - you have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.
- are asked to take a lateral flow test on the day of the activity and register the result at <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>, and **must not attend** if the result is positive
- email [pitchybreath@gmail.com](mailto:pitchybreath@gmail.com) no later than two hours before the activity is scheduled to start to confirm your lateral flow test is negative (attach a copy of the NHS confirmation generated after registering your result) and that you do not have symptoms
- are encouraged to wear a facemask when indoors, unless you are exempt



- use hand sanitiser, which will be provided at each venue.

The HSO and other Pitchy Breath committee members shall ensure that any venues used for future in-person rehearsals or performances comply with government guidance and are COVID secure. This includes ensuring that all rooms/venues where activities will take place are well ventilated.

If you test positive with COVID-19, or you have been told to isolate by the NHS Test and Trace, after attending a face-to-face activity, **you must inform the HSO immediately.**

### **Policy review**

This policy is a working document which will be reviewed and updated regularly to make sure that our health and safety objectives are achieved and maintained. All Covid-19 health and safety measurements will be kept under review and updated in line with the Government's latest guidance, and in advance of Pitchy Breath returning to face-to-face activities.

Date of last review: August 2021

### **Contact us**

If you have any questions about health and safety, or wish to raise any concerns as outlined above, please email one of our Officers, as below:

Designated Health and Safety Officer: Rachel Duke

Email: [pitchybreath@gmail.com](mailto:pitchybreath@gmail.com)

Deputy Health and Safety Officer: Liam Cooper

Email: [pitchybreath@gmail.com](mailto:pitchybreath@gmail.com)

Designated Mental Health and Wellbeing Officer: Sara Hussein

Email: [pitchybreath@gmail.com](mailto:pitchybreath@gmail.com)

Deputy Mental Health and Wellbeing Officer: Tim Fifield

Email: [pitchybreath@gmail.com](mailto:pitchybreath@gmail.com)