

KATS Respect Policy January 2023

Kennet Amateur Theatrical Society (KATS) is committed to promoting appropriate behaviour within the Society to ensure that membership of KATS is a fun, happy and safe environment for all to enjoy. The purpose of this Policy is to outline what is considered as acceptable behaviour and conduct for the Society and individuals who conduct roles, either paid or voluntary within the Society. KATS do not expect that any member or volunteer should endure offensive, intimidating, or bullying behaviour and KATS will not tolerate harassment amongst our membership or supporting volunteers. KATS wants to ensure a clear message that these behaviours are not acceptable.

2.0 SCOPE: This Policy applies to the following: KATS membership, Committee and all Volunteers filling supporting roles for a show (i.e. chaperones, backstage and front of house).

Definitions:

- KATS membership = all members who have paid a yearly subscription to KATS
- Volunteers = anyone who is not a paying member of KATS but has kindly volunteered to perform a function (irrelevant of description) on behalf of KATS
- Committee = The elected committee members for KATS – details and contact numbers of the committee can be found on KATS website (www.kats.org.uk)

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES: It is the responsibility of every member or supporting volunteer of KATS to help achieve an inclusive and supportive environment and promote good relations between members by having respect for all and be tolerant of differing levels of musical theatre knowledge, experience and skill. All members and volunteers should ensure that their conduct does not cause offence or misunderstanding; this is difficult to quantify and define in terms of acceptable or unacceptable behaviour, however it is important to understand that even behaviour which is not intended to cause offence or distress to another individual may do so. Difference in attitude, age, and culture can mean that what may seem like harassment or abuse to one person may not seem like it to another. The Committee will evaluate any complaints made and will investigate appropriately to ensure fairness. The following behaviours are considered unacceptable:

- Abuse verbal or physical: (including bullying) defined as any offensive, abusive, intimidating malicious or insulting behaviour to a recipient.
- Abuse of power (by cast, crew, or volunteer) which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable.
- Personal Harassment: (which includes: sexual, racial, disability and age harassment) defined as behaviour taking place over a period of time or a single incident, but in all cases it involves an unwelcome, unwanted or uninvited act which makes the recipient feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, humiliated and causes loss of dignity

The above behaviours will be investigated based on 'any incident which is perceived to be abusive (or any of the above determined categories) by the victim or any other person'. It should be noted that the perception of any form of threat or harassment will be made more acute when several people are involved, as the very feeling of being outnumbered is threatening. When in a conflict situation, it is easy for others to come in to support one side of a dispute, without perceiving they have inadvertently become an opposing group. Group

threat is significantly more concerning, because the opposing group may not perceive how threatening the situation is to the other party. If any situation is reached where abuse, harassment or threat is felt, or it is clear that any party is finding the situation stressful, members are advised to step away from the situation and speak to another member or committee member for advice in diffusing the situation.

4.0 CODE OF CONDUCT: KATS expects all members (cast and crew) whilst participating in any KATS organised occasion to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner. Any member who turns up to rehearsals or a performance drunk or under the influence of recreational drugs will be asked to leave the premises. Strictly no alcohol will be allowed during rehearsals or back stage during performances and anyone found bringing alcohol into the premises will be asked to leave. KATS cannot support cast and crew members on stage who are drunk or under the influence of recreational drugs due to health and safety reasons for not only the individual but the rest of the cast and crew.

Any internet sites, social media groups (public or private), social media conversations or invitations which are either created for a KATS event or maintained by any of the membership in relation to a KATS event should be properly maintained and kept free of any inappropriate comments, foul language or controversial personal views which may be viewed by either younger members/Friends of KATS or the general public. With the growth in usage of social media and its popularity, members should be very aware of how they are communicating with others on such platforms. Often comments, posts, photos, reactions etc are visible to all and though it may feel like a private conversation, it is in fact very public. When engaging with KATS content or matters on social media, members should treat it like being together in a rehearsal or performance so as not to inadvertently offend, upset or aggravate, and to maintain a positive, encouraging view of KATS in the public domain. Members should make sure to keep personal views, thoughts and communications separate from those to do with KATS to uphold the integrity and reputation of the society. Members should always aim to be inclusive in their behaviour on social media and look out for their fellow KATS.

KATS expects that all members will conduct themselves appropriately during KATS organised events, rehearsals, and performances. Swearing, lewd behaviour, inappropriate joke telling, sexist and racist behaviour can also be considered offensive behaviour to others therefore appropriate respect and consideration should be shown to fellow members.

5.0 ESCALATION PROCESS: Should any member or volunteer feel that they have experienced any form of unacceptable behaviour from a fellow member or volunteer of KATS, whilst engaging with KATS matters, or believe that a person's code of conduct is not acceptable, then a complaint should be escalated to a Committee Member. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that a safe and harmonious environment is maintained for all KATS members or supporting volunteers, whilst engaging with KATS activities, and any complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner. All complaints will be investigated, and persons will be held accountable for their conduct during their affiliation with KATS and KATS activities.

Should anyone raise or witness something inappropriate on or off-stage during performances this should be escalated directly to either the Director or Stage Manager and they will escalate

as appropriate to the Committee. During rehearsals and performances, the responsible personnel are the Director, Assistant Director (if present), Producer and the Stage Manager. No other personnel should be dealing with or offering opinions on cast or crew conduct. For Front of House members any escalation that may be deemed necessary should be addressed to the Director, Assistant Director (if present), Producer, Stage Manager or Committee member as appropriate. During either the rehearsals or the week of the show should a person be clearly under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs and an immediate decision needs to be made regarding dismissal from the premises, the decision will lie with the Director. The Director will subsequently inform the Committee of any action taken. Should any behaviour be deemed unacceptable members may be asked to leave KATS or will be banned from attending rehearsals or performances, and this will be ultimately decided by the Committee.

Thank you for your understanding, co-operation and assistance in keeping KATS a respectful, enjoyable and fun society for all.

By signing below, I am agreeing to the above.

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....