

SADDLEWORTH MUSICAL SOCIETY: SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A. POLICY

Saddleworth Musical Society (the society) recognises its duty of care under the law. We recognise that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. The society is committed to practice which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm. All members of the society are encouraged to accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children and vulnerable adults harm.

The society believes that:

- The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount
- All children and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All members of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately

The society will endeavour to ensure that:

- All children and vulnerable adults are treated equally and with respect and dignity
- The duty of care to children and vulnerable adults are always put first
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust is built which empowers the children and vulnerable adults to share in the decision-making process
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback is given rather than negative criticism
- Bullying is not accepted or condoned
- All adult members of the society provide a positive role model for dealing with other people
- Action is taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- It keeps up-to-date with health & safety legislation
- Relevant development and training is undertaken
- It holds a register of every child and vulnerable adult involved with the society and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies

The society has child and vulnerable adult protection procedures which accompany this policy (below). This policy should be read in conjunction with the society's Equal Opportunities Policy, Health & Safety Policy and GDPR Policy.

The society has a named child and vulnerable adult Safeguarding Leader and a Deputy, who are in charge of ensuring that the child/vulnerable adult safeguarding policy is adhered to:

Safeguarding Leader:[Name].....

Deputy Safeguarding Leader: [Name].....

Saddleworth Musical Society is committed to a regular review of its policies and procedures to ensure they continue to promote the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. This policy, its procedures and Safeguarding Leaders will be reviewed prior to any proposed engagement of children in the society's concerts/shows. This policy has been written in accordance with published NODA and the NSPCC advice.

Date: December 2022



Signed (Chairman)

B. PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of the Society

At the outset of any concert/production involving children and/or vulnerable adults the society will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for safeguarding.
- Engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children and/or vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that children and/or vulnerable adults are supervised at all times.
- Maintain a register of children and/or vulnerable adults whilst they are engaged in a production (establishing health and medical requirements, emergency contacts and agreed pick up arrangements and parental permission for appropriate photography).
- Produce a rehearsal schedule with dates and times and will notify parents/carers of any changes to this.
- Foster a partnership with parents/carers and encourage them to be involved in the activities of the society and to share responsibility for the care of children and/or vulnerable adults.
- Provide parents with a copy of the society's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Know how to report concerns.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing the society with the information required for the successful registration and care of their child(ren).
- Delivering and collecting their children/vulnerable adults for rehearsals or performances in accordance with agreed arrangements.

Unsupervised Contact

The society will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children/vulnerable adults. If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with an open door.

Physical Contact

All adults will:

- maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children/vulnerable adults.
- only touch children/vulnerable adults appropriately when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- seek the consent of the child/vulnerable adult prior to any physical contact, making the purpose of the contact clear.

Managing Sensitive Information

Permission will be sought from the parents/carers for use of photographic material featuring children/vulnerable adults for promotional or other purposes. The society's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.

The society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures. (see Privacy Notice – GDPR)

Suspicion of Abuse

If anyone sees or suspects abuse of a child/vulnerable adult while in the care of the society, they must:

- Inform the Safeguarding Leader. If the Safeguarding Leader is the source of the problem the Chair must be notified.
- Make a factual note of what has been witnessed and the steps taken to report the matter. This information may be called upon in any follow up investigation.

If a serious allegation is made against any member of the society, chaperone, venue staff etc., that individual will be immediately excluded from the society's activity and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children/vulnerable adults in the production until the matter is investigated and resolved.

Disclosure of abuse

If a child/vulnerable adult confides that abuse has taken place. The person hearing the disclosure must:

- Remain calm and in control and take action immediately.
- Listen carefully to what has been said, allowing the child/vulnerable adult to explain at their own pace and asking questions only for clarification (i.e. not leading questions, expecting a particular answer).
- Not promise to keep it a secret. Make it clear to the child/vulnerable adult that the information they have disclosed will need to be shared with others but only with people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child/vulnerable adult that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child/vulnerable adult what they are going to do next.
- Speak (a direct conversation) immediately to the Safeguarding Leader who has the responsibility to liaise with the Local Authority in the first instance.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, a note of what was said should be made, using the child's/vulnerable adult's own words and including the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who the information was passed to. The note should also be dated and signed.

Records

In all situations, including those arising from a disclosure made in confidence and/or cases that subsequently are proven to be unfounded, the details of an allegation or reported incident must be recorded. An accurate note shall be made of

- the date and time of the incident or disclosure
- the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom
- any action taken to investigate the matter.

Any further action taken should also be recorded e.g. 'suspension' of an individual, the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported to and if the matter was not referred to a statutory agency why not. The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation. Records must be kept for 7 years.

Rights & Confidentiality

Both the alleged abuser and the child/vulnerable adult who is alleged to have been abused have the right to confidentiality. Any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released. The alleged abuser will only be informed of the allegation following advice from the Local Authority/Police.

Accidents and First Aid

To avoid accidents, chaperones and children/vulnerable adults will be advised of “house rules” regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children/vulnerable adults will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the activity that will be undertaken. If a child/vulnerable adult is injured while in the care of the society, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the society’s accident book. This record will be counter-signed by the Safeguarding Leader. If a child/vulnerable adult joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be countersigned by the Safeguarding Leader. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later and will also be a record that the child/vulnerable adult did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

Criminal Record Disclosures

If criminal record disclosures for chaperones or other personnel are required, details of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required will be clarified before checks are made. An enhanced disclosure (6mths old or less) will be required for anyone with unsupervised access to children / vulnerable adults. All chaperones will be asked to provide evidence of a basic check undertaken within 6 months. The society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is kept confidential to the vetting process. All child protection records will be kept in a confidential manner and retained for 7 years.

Chaperones

Chaperones will be appointed by the society for the care of children/vulnerable adults during the production process. By law the chaperone is acting in loco parentis and should exercise the care that a good parent/carer might be reasonably expected to give to a child/vulnerable adult. The maximum number of children//vulnerable adults in the chaperone’s care shall not exceed 12. Potential chaperones should be known to the Society e.g. members of the society or parents/guardians/carers of child/vulnerable adult members, or experienced ‘hired’ chaperones (in which case two references and photographic evidence of identity will be required). See also the requirement for criminal record disclosures above.

Chaperones will:

- Be made aware of the society’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Healthy and Safety and First Aid procedures.
- Not usually have unsupervised access to children/vulnerable adults in their care.
- Inform the Safeguarding Leader of any dissatisfaction with the conditions for the children in their care (including any unsuitable activity e.g. heavy lifting, working from height)
- Inform the Producer and, if necessary, the Safeguarding Leader if a child/vulnerable adult is unwell or too tired to continue.
- Meet the children/vulnerable adults in their care and sign them into the building.
- Keep their children together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Be aware of where the children/vulnerable adults are at all times.
- Ensure children/vulnerable adults do not leave the venue or rehearsal rooms unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parent/guardian/carer
- Ensure children/vulnerable adults are adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets
- Ensure children/vulnerable adults do not enter the adult dressing rooms.
- Be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue and will ensure that children/vulnerable adults in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the society.
- Adhere to the agreed parent/carer collection arrangements for children/vulnerable adults after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent/guardian/carer to confirm the new arrangements.
- Ensure children are signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.

- Stay with a child if it becomes necessary for their parent/guardian/carer to make suitable alternative arrangements for their collection.