



Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society

Safeguarding Policy

Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults

participating in

Performing Arts Activities at HD&OS

**August 2025
(Updated)**

Key Personnel

Chair of Trustees: Clive Bell

Chair of Production Committee: Julie Markey

Designated Safeguarding Lead : Annie Gaudencio

Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer: Call 0300 123 4043 at any time

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For additional supporting documents to be read in conjunction with this policy, please refer to the HD&OS Document: “Procedures to Inform Safeguarding Policy”, which contains the following:

- Safeguarding Children – Including Physical Contact
- Digital Safety within HD&OS
- Safe Practice for Children During Performance Weeks
- The Role of Chaperones
- The Six Rs – Safeguarding Procedures
- Recognising Abuse
- The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- NNCEE Restrictions on Children’s Performing Hours
- HD&OS Practices – Raising a Concern
- Terminology
- Safeguarding Disclosure Report Form

HD&OS Designated Safeguarding Lead

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Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer: Call 0300 123 4043 at any time



Aims of our Policy and Philosophy

Policy Statement

This is the Safeguarding Policy of Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society (HD&OS). It has been compiled with regard to legislation, guidance and advice set out in Appendix A and is designed to meet HD&OS's legal safeguarding duties, alongside its aims and philosophy.

Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society (HD&OS) is committed to protecting children and vulnerable groups and ensuring that their welfare is paramount in every production and activity it runs and every aspect of its mission.

HD&OS expects all members, creative teams, suppliers, cast, crew and volunteers to share in this commitment to safeguarding.

This policy applies to anyone under the age of 18 (referred to as "children") along with vulnerable adults.

This policy applies whenever children or vulnerable adults are involved in a production or activity, whether in Bentley House or at another location, and to all participants (members, cast, creative teams, crew and suppliers) outside of designated rehearsal and activity sessions.

By adopting this policy we aim to:

- a) keep children and vulnerable adults safe whilst participating in HD&OS activities
- b) protect children and vulnerable adults at risk from abuse
- c) ensure that cases of suspected abuse are referred to the appropriate bodies
- d) ensure consistency in understanding our safeguarding procedures and expectations across all members and participants involved in the society in any capacity
- e) provide the appropriate duty of care
- f) protect HD&OS participants from unjustified allegations regarding their actions

We believe that:

- all children and members of vulnerable groups participating in HD&OS activities whatever their culture, gender, disability, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and sexual orientation have the right to protection from harm or abuse
- parents have a right to feel that their child is safe when entrusting them to HD&OS
- HD&OS must provide an environment and ethos in which children feel safe, secure, valued, respected and confident
- all members of and participants within HD&OS should recognise the importance we attach to safeguarding and that "it could happen here".
- all suspicions and allegations of any form of abuse must be taken seriously and responded to quickly and appropriately in accordance with this policy.

The handling of all complaints will be reviewed by the Trustees

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees and updated as required.

Updated August 2025

Annie Gaudencio DSL on behalf of HD&OS



Keeping Children Safe at HD&OS:

The Role of Members, Participants, Parents, Trustees and Managers

A reminder that, in accordance with the legal definition, “children” refers to all young people who have not yet attained their 18th birthday

The Role of Members and Participants

It is everyone’s responsibility to safeguard children.

It is therefore an expectation and a requirement that all adults will support the aims and philosophy of the HD&OS Safeguarding Policy and will share in our commitment to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe from harm. Adults are expected to comply with the recommended procedures and good practice and to adopt the **Society’s Safeguarding Charter**.

The society will:

- undertake a risk assessment annually of activities involving children and will monitor risk throughout any activity through open discussion and make amendments if required
- engage in effective recruitment of creative teams, crew, chaperones and volunteers with responsibility for, or who have contact with, children, including appropriate vetting of participants
- have clear procedures of how to respond to allegations of any kind and how to contact the HD&OS Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if required
- ensure all adults involved with children have read and understood the society’s policy and procedures, that they understand their safeguarding responsibilities and will commit to helping ensure that children around them feel safe, secure, valued and respected
- take the stance that “it could happen here” and will always put the well-being of children over the demands of the production and ideals of the creative team or crew

The Role of Parents

- Parents are encouraged to be involved in activities of the society and to share the responsibility for the care of children.
- Parents will enter into a contract with HD&OS regarding expectations and behaviour of their child whilst participating in HD&OS activities
- The society’s Safeguarding Policy will be made available to all parents
- Parents are asked to make known any pertinent information that might affect the society’s ability to support and care for their child, including medical and well-being information
- Permission will be sought from parents for the use of photographic material featuring children for promotional and other purposes
- Parents will be asked to provide contact details, including emergency contact details, prior to the commencement of any activity

- All information provided will be stored securely, shared only with those who need to know and will be destroyed when no longer required for the production or activity
- Parents have full responsibility for collecting (or arranging the collection of) their children after any workshop, activity, rehearsal or performance. It is **not** the responsibility of the society to take children home
- Parents should feel they can raise any concerns and know who to contact

Concerns Regarding Abuse or Poor Practice

- Everyone has both the right and responsibility to report concerns, disclosures or allegations. In the first instance this should be made to the DSL. If the issue is believed to lie with the DSL, a concern should be logged with the Chair of Trustees
- Should a concern come to light during a production, the **Production Manager**, FOH Manager or Stage Manager should be alerted and the DSL contacted if not present. *(Refer to The Six Rs Safeguarding Procedures)*

The Role of Trustees

- The Trustees have responsibility for ensuring the Safeguarding Policy is enacted, reviewed annually and updated when needed. They should ensure it is living policy – not just a document on a page.
- Trustees are responsible for appointing the DSL and for ensuring that the DSL remains up to date with Safeguarding Training
- Trustees should be up to date with legislation, procedures and good practice and will schedule training on a regular basis
- Trustees should ensure that all adults within HD&OS are DBS checked if they are involved with “regulated activities”, that everyone remains vigilant and also that adults feel they can enjoy activities which involve children without ever putting a child at risk or in an uncomfortable position, or putting themselves at risk of allegations
- Trustees will ensure that supervision and safeguarding form part of the initial discussions and risk assessments of productions involving children

The Role of Production Managers

- Production Managers should ensure that safeguarding is addressed at the planning stages of a production in consultation with the DSL and Trustees and, in particular, that there are risk assessments for any production, event or activity involving children.
- Production managers should ensure that everyone understands that they are responsible for safeguarding children and that this is taken into consideration when recruiting, auditioning, casting, planning rehearsals and other activities related to the event or production.

HD&OS Safeguarding Charter for Working/Performing Alongside Children

A child refers to any young person who has not attained their 18th Birthday

Appropriate behaviour:

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid showing favouritism
- be mindful of your language
- ensure your contact with children is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children, or that you are within sight of, or can be heard by, others
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible

Inappropriate behaviour

When working/performing with children, do not:

- develop inappropriate relationships
- encourage children to spend time alone with you or enter into an individualised relationship on any platform
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive (sexual, emotional or physical)
- exchange personal contact details with a child (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via personal social media accounts
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to, or in front of, children and young people.

We expect all members to adhere to HD&OS Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in order to protect young people in our society. These are available to read on our website.

A hard copy is available to read in the foyer at Bentley House.

Thank you for helping to keep our children safe and happy.

August 2025 Annie Gaudencio DSL

Appendix A: Legislation and Related Guidance

This HD&OS policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989 and with regard to the following:

- Children and Young Person's Act 1963
- United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014 (Vulnerable adults)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014.
- Review of Sexual Abuse in Schools and Colleges June 2021
- Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (October 2022)
- "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSIE) December 2023
- "Working Together to Safeguard Children" December 2023
- Body of Persons regulations updated October 2024

Further Guidance can be obtained from:

[NNCEE - National Network for Children in Employment & Entertainment](#)

The NNCEE is an association of mostly local authority officers who have responsibility for the licensing of children of compulsory school age who are working or taking part in performances and entertainment.

In England, the Department for Education (DfE) provides advice for local authorities and individuals working with children in all types of professional or amateur performances (PDF) (DfE, 2015).

The National Network for Child Employment and Entertainment (NNCEE) has also produced a guide to child performance licensing in England (PDF) (NNCEE, 2020).

Training for chaperones (and others working with performing children)

The NNCEE interactive e-learning course:

Protecting children in the entertainment industry covers the key statutory guidance that chaperones in the entertainment industry need to know, along with other adults who have responsibility for children in their performance setting.

The learning takes approximately 45 minutes and costs approximately £25 per person.