



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy statement

Melksham Music and drama (MMAD) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote best practice and to protect the welfare of theatre members and visiting public from harm, physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and exploitation. Children and young people are defined as under the age of 18. We also acknowledge our responsibilities in respect of adult members or visitors who might be deemed to be 'at risk' because they are 'vulnerable'. (A Vulnerable Adult is defined in accordance with The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2002 as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type: (i) a substantial learning or physical disability; (ii) a physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or (iii) a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity. MMAD will encourage the development of an ethos that embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of all children, young people and adults, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, sexuality, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or gender identity. MMAD acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

The persons with lead responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation are:

Designated Safeguarding lead:

Name: Justin Haggett

Phone/email: 07793594101

Deputy Safeguarding officer:

Name(s): Joanne Londors

Phone/email: 07557343675 treasurer@mmad.org.uk

Policy aims

We aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults by working with their parents, guardians or support workers to:

- protect them from discrimination or maltreatment.
- ensure they can engage in enjoyable, creative and collaborative activities in an environment consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

This policy applies to all official activities which are organised and approved by the committee. All members of the society known as Melksham Music and Drama should make it a priority to safeguard any children and vulnerable adults involved in our productions.

There is a legislative requirement in certain circumstances for children and young people to have a licence to perform if cast in a production. The requirement is set out in Appendix 2. If you are directing a play where children are to be performing, you should speak to the committee's safeguarding officer before casting.

Responsibilities The Management Committee will:

- Develop best practice in relation to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff, members, and visitors and promote a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.
- Ensure that members working with children and vulnerable adults understand their legal and moral obligations to protect them from harm, abuse, and exploitation.
- Ensure that members understand their responsibility to work to the principles detailed in the theatre's Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policies and procedures.
- Ensure that the designated Safeguarding Officer understands his/her responsibility to refer any concerns to the statutory agencies (i.e., the Police and/or Social Care)

- Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that members understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about a child/young person/vulnerable adult, or a members' conduct towards them, to the theatre's designated person for Safeguarding.
 - Take seriously any allegation or suspicion of abuse, and deal with it appropriately following agreed procedures.
 - Ensure that all procedures relating to the conduct of members are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
 - Review and update Safeguarding policies and procedures annually.

Guidance when working with children and young people

Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of children/young people and vulnerable adults, who could be vulnerable by virtue of disability, special educational needs, homelessness, refugee/asylum seeker status, the effects previous abuse, being young carers and those who are in the care system. Children/young people See Appendix Below for Child protection Policy

Vulnerable adults Harm to vulnerable adults includes –

- Discriminatory abuse: such as racist, sexist, disability related.
- Situational abuse: arising when pressures have built up and/or because of difficult or challenging behaviour.
- Emotional/Psychological abuse: arising through the action, or inaction, of others that causes distress or mental anguish, including mocking, coercion, denial of privacy, bullying, demeaning, intimidating, harassing, threatening harm, humiliating, slurs, excessive or unwanted familiarity, shouting, swearing, name-calling, being disrespectful, making e.g., racist, sexist, or sarcastic comments.
 - Financial abuse: usually associated with the misuse of money, valuables, theft, fraud, exploitation.
 - Physical abuse: any physical contact that results in discomfort, pain, or injury; hitting, slapping, pushing, shaking.
 - Sexual abuse: ranging from sending inappropriate messages via emails or social media, inappropriate touching, to coercion or force to take part in sexual acts. All members are in a position of trust and must ensure that the relationships they form with children/ young people and vulnerable adults are appropriate. All members are responsible for adhering to the Safeguarding Policy and should act upon any concern no matter how small or trivial it may seem; reporting instances of actual or suspected abuse to the Designated Person(s) with responsibility for Safeguarding.

The guidance given here is of particular relevance for all directors, production managers and organisers of MMAD events, although each and every member of the society should make themselves aware of what the following guidance includes and report any concerns to the safeguarding officer.

We should ensure that:

- A minimum of two adults are present during sessions with children or vulnerable adults.
- Wherever possible, a parent or guardian or support worker is present.
- Work takes place in an open environment (e.g. a hall, rather than a smaller room or someone's home)
- We treat all children, and vulnerable adults with equal respect as any other member of MMAD.
- We give positive and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- We model appropriate conduct, excluding any bullying, shouting, racism, sexism or sectarianism.

Safeguarding Officer

The current safeguarding officer designated annually by the committee will be the first contact point for the children and young people, parents/carers or any other adults who have questions, concerns.

It is this officer's responsibility, not to make a judgement, but always to take action following any concerns reported in good faith by, in the first instance, contacting the appropriate authorities for advice as necessary. (A concern regarding a child must be reported to the Children's Services Department of the borough in which he/she lives - see referral numbers below)

It is also this officer's responsibility to inform the parents/carers of the child or young person, unless that will increase the risk of harm to the child or young person, or unless advised not to by Children's Services personnel.

Police Checks

As a voluntary organisation we do not come under any recognized body for registration, however NODA is registered with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) as an umbrella organisation, and in consequence is obliged to abide by the DBS's Code of Practice (a copy of which is available upon request) It is also obliged to keep an updated written record of the names of all people (whether in their organisation or outside) to whom they have revealed any Disclosure information. So as an affiliated society we will inform you in a Disclosure will be requested.

Photography and the Internet

There have been increasing concerns about the risks posed by the Internet to children and young people through the use of social media and photographs on websites. To reduce this risk, we ensure:

- If someone is named, avoid using their photograph
- If a photograph is used, avoid using the full name of the actor
- Parent/carer and personal consent is always obtained prior to use or publication of images

Advice to adults on the appropriate response to a child or young person making a disclosure of possible abuse

- Stay calm.
- Listen to what is said.
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Give reassurance that the right thing has been done by telling.
- Explain what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said as soon as possible, in the exact words used, – note the date and time, to whom the information was given – and ensure the record is signed and dated.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of possible abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional Safeguarding agencies (Children's Social Care), following a referral from the Designated Safeguarding (child protection) Officer.

What to do if you are concerned that a child or adult is being abused

If a child or adult with care needs is at immediate risk or needs medical attention, contact the police or call an ambulance on 999.

Always address immediate risks first before referring to Wiltshire Council

To report your concerns to Wiltshire Council

During office hours 8:30- 17:00:

CHILDREN:

If you are concerned about a **child** or a disclosure is made to you-

1. Inform the MMAD safeguarding officer or lead of the disclosure
2. Complete safeguarding alert form

Consult with/refer to children's social care based in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) during office hours – **0300 456 0108** Out of hours: **0300 456 0100**

ADULTS:

If abuse of an **adult** is discovered/suspected or a disclosure is made to you

1. Inform the MMAD safeguarding officer or lead of the disclosure
2. Complete safeguarding alert form

Call the Wiltshire Council adult social care customer advisors

Tel: **0300 456 0111** Text phone: 01225 712501

Other useful links

[Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership \(SVPP\) - Home page \(wiltshiresvpp.org.uk\)](http://wiltshiresvpp.org.uk)

[PWLD Wiltshire Intensive Support Service :: Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust \(awp.nhs.uk\)](http://awp.nhs.uk)

APPENDIX 1 SAFEGUARDING ALERT FORM

Details of person at risk	
Name	
DOB	
Address	
Reason for alert	
Date of incident	
Have police been alerted? Yes/ No	
Date	
Crime no.	
Police officer	
Was medical intervention required? Yes / No	
Details	
Date	
Witness details	
Name	
DOB	
Address	
Phone no.	
Details	
Details of person completing the form	
Name	
Role in MMAD	
Date completed	
DOB	
Address	
Phone no.	
signature	

Please retain a copy of this word document securely for your records.

Please note: In certain circumstances it may be necessary in the interests of the prevention or detection of crime or to further the function of protecting children and vulnerable adults to make the contents of this document available to the civil and criminal courts, solicitors, psychiatrists, other local

authority social workers or other professionals involved in the care and support of the vulnerable adult.

APPENDIX 2 CHILD PERFORMANCE LICENCES

If a person aged 18 or less is cast in a MMAD production, it may be necessary to obtain a licence to perform.

A licence is not required if performances take place over a period of four days or less, which is the case with the majority of MMAD productions. However, if a young person has or is taking part in any additional performances, over the period of the past six months, it is likely that a licence to perform will be required.

The licence should be completed and sent at least 21 days before the first performance to the local authority in which the child or young person lives and needs to be completed by both the director and the parents or carers of the young person.

A chaperone, which would be expected to be the child or young person's parent or carer, must also be nominated on the form and must be available for all performances. The chaperone may not be a parent or carer who is taking part in the production.

Guidelines and application forms can be found on the local authority websites.

[Child employment and performance - Wiltshire Council](#)

Government guidance on this subject can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-performance-and-activities-licensing-legislation>

APPENDIX 3 CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Melksham music and drama Society recognises that it has a duty of care to its members, performers, backstage and front-of-house volunteers, audience and supporters. That duty of care is especially important in relation to young people. This policy is based on safeguarding principles that are informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child, relevant legislation and guidance, and by the society's values, behaviours and understanding of best practice. The society recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The society is committed to practice which protects children from harm. All members of the society accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause children harm.

The society believes that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, 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 and employees of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

The society will ensure that:

- All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity.
- The duty of care to children will always be put first.
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children to share in the decision-making process.
- Enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism.
- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned.
- All adult members of the society provide a positive role model for dealing with other people.
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- It will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation.
- It will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children.

- It will hold a register of every child involved with the society and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

The society has child protection procedures which accompany this policy. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the society's Equal Opportunities Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

The society has a dedicated Child Protection Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the child protection policy and procedures are adhered to. That person's name is
 and he/she can be contacted on
 This policy will be regularly monitored by the Committee of the society and will be subject to annual review.

Date:

APPENDIX 4 CRIMINAL RECORDS & DISCLOSURE CODE OF PRACTICE

CRIMINAL RECORDS & DISCLOSURE CODE OF PRACTICE

NODA is registered with the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) as an umbrella organisation, and in consequence is obliged to abide by the DBS's Code of Practice (a copy of which is available upon request) It is also obliged to keep an updated written record of the names of all people (whether in their organisation or outside) to whom they have revealed any Disclosure information.

This imposes a responsibility for ensuring that Disclosure information is stored and handled in such a way that it is not open to abuse. Registered bodies are also obliged to have a written policy that outlines their commitment to non-discriminatory recruitment practices and equality of opportunity for all staff and service users. NODA is committed to equality of opportunity and is non-discriminatory in the recruitment of its staff. It believes that its members should also be non-discriminatory in the recruitment of volunteers. Both the Society and NODA are responsible for ensuring the security of Disclosure records.

This should be achieved as follows:

1. Affiliated Societies wishing NODA to act as the counter-signatory on Disclosure applications will be required to provide NODA at the outset with a designated contact and written confirmation (to be signed by two officers of the Society eg. Chairman and Secretary) that they have obtained a copy of and are capable of abiding by the DBS's Code of Practice, including the security, storage and disposal of Disclosure information. They are also required to provide their own written policy outlining their commitment to non-discriminatory recruitment practices and equality of opportunity for all members and service users, including people who have been convicted in the past. A sample policy can be obtained from the DBS. The Society should also adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children, plan its work so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur, and appoint an independent person in whom children can confide. These policies should be communicated to all members of the Society.
2. Societies should inform volunteers with responsibility for children that a Disclosure will be requested and that a previous conviction will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining the position. They should provide them with a copy of their written policy and make a copy of the DBS's Code of Practice available on request. The volunteer must be assured that the Disclosure information will be used fairly and confidentially.
3. Societies should satisfy themselves of the identity of the person for whom they wish to obtain a Disclosure. This should (if possible) take the form of at least one item of photographic

evidence (eg. current passport or photocard UK driving licence) plus two items of address-related evidence (eg. a utility bill or bank, credit card or mortgage statement).

4. Applicants should send to the Society their completed application form. If NODA is to counter-sign the application, please complete Section X of the application form and ensure that Section Y is left blank (as it can only be signed by a registered person approved by the DBS). The application should then be sent to Richard Hutchinson at NODA in a sealed envelope marked 'Private & Confidential', ideally at least six weeks before the Disclosure is required by the Society. Each application should be accompanied by a £10 administration fee cheque per application (made payable to 'NODA').

If the application relates to a paid position eg. Director, a fee of £26 for a Standard Disclosure or £44 for an Enhanced Disclosure, made payable to 'NODA', should be attached, plus the £10 administration fee. The application will then be checked, counter-signed and forwarded to the DBS, usually within two days. The society's DBS contact should make a note of each applicant's application reference number, their full name and date of birth. These are the fields required for when they wish to track a person's application online.

5. The Disclosure will be sent by the DBS to the applicant only, normally within two-four weeks. A copy of the same Disclosure will no longer be sent to NODA. It is up to the applicant to show the society their disclosure for the society's record. If the applicant claims to have not received the disclosure the society can check on the online tracker to see if it has been completed and dispatched.

6. The designated contact of the Society may only disclose Disclosure information in the course of his/her duties and to another officer of the Society. Passing information in any other circumstances may be a criminal offence. If Disclosure information is disclosed to a person and constitutes an offence under the terms set out above, that person commits an offence if he/she then divulges the information to any other person.

7. The Society should consider:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question,
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed,
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred,
- whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour or other relevant matter,
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or other relevant matters, and
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

8. The Society should discuss any matters revealed by the Disclosure with the individual before making a recruitment decision.

9. The Society must ensure that, in line with the DBS's Code of Practice, the Disclosure (if the applicant is happy for the society to keep the Disclosure on their files), or any record of information regarding the disclosure, is kept in a secure cabinet to which only the designated person will have access and that the Disclosure or any information regarding the disclosure is destroyed by shredding, pulping or burning no later than six months after a decision on the person has been made.

10. The Society must not make and retain any photocopy or representation of the Disclosure. But it is advisable to keep a record of the date of the Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and the recruitment decision taken.

11. If the Society loses Disclosure information it must immediately inform NODA so that the loss can be reported to the DBS.

12. NODA reserves the right to inspect the security arrangements of the Society and to satisfy itself that the Disclosure has been destroyed. The DBS may also carry out assurance checks and if dissatisfied withdraw access to Disclosure information not just for the Society but for NODA members in general. So, it is vital that the rules are followed to the letter, for the good of all. Societies should be aware that the unauthorised disclosure of information about a spent conviction is illegal. Unauthorised disclosure is where an official with access to information about a person's criminal record discloses this information other than during their official duties.

Serious misuse of a person's criminal record could result in a prison sentence of up to six months or a fine of up to £1000, or both.

National Operatic and Dramatic Association,
15 The Metro Centre, Woodston, Peterborough, PE2 7UH

Tel 01733 374790

Email

info@noda.org.uk

Website

www.noda.org.uk



Be inspired by amateur theatre

Registered charity number 1171216 Registered company number 241572

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[Amendments](#)