

# SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY DRAMA SOCIETY

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

### *The purpose and scope of this policy statement*

The overall aim of Sheffield University Drama Society (SUDS) is to produce and perform plays in a spirit of support, comradeship and education. SUDS is a not-for-profit society.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to facilitate the protection of children and young people who participate in, or attend, activities of SUDS;
- to provide society officers and members and all those participating in society productions, including children and young people and their families, with information about our approach to child protection.

This guidance applies primarily to children under 16 who require a licence or a licence exemption from the local authority to perform with us; however SUDS also accepts a duty to be aware of the potential vulnerabilities of 16 - 18 year olds and of any adult deemed to be vulnerable by reason of a physical or mental disability.

### *Legal framework*

In drawing up this policy we have taken into account relevant legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from [nspcc.org.uk/childprotection](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/childprotection). This policy statement should be read alongside our relevant policies, procedures and guidance, as noted in appendix A at the end of this policy statement.

### *We recognise that:*

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind;
- the welfare of children and young people who take part in our productions is of paramount importance in how we prepare and perform and in the decisions we take;

- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies (where appropriate) is essential in safeguarding the welfare of children and young people who take part in our productions;
- all children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.

*We will seek to keep children and young people in our productions safe by:*

- valuing, listening to and respecting them;
- appointing a lead committee member for safeguarding and a nominated child protection lead and deputy for any SUDS production in which a child or young person is involved;
- ensuring that all our society members involved in a production and people working with us are aware when the production involves a child or young person;
- appointing as a chaperone for each child to whom this guidance applies a parent or guardian or their appointee, or a local-authority registered child chaperone;
- providing guidance and instruction about the Drama Studio and the production to chaperones to enable them to perform their duties effectively and safely;
- making sure that parents, children and young people know where to go for help if they have any concerns;
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children and young people by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

*Contact details:*

**Committee lead for safeguarding and child protection**

Name:

Phone/e-mail:

*Reviewing this Policy*

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on (Date)

Signed (Committee Safeguarding Lead)

# APPENDIX A

## *Safeguarding Officers*

The committee lead for safeguarding and child protection will normally be the Chair of SUDS committee, or a designated deputy. The nominated child protection lead for a production will usually be the production manager and the deputy will usually be from the cast or crew.

*The role of the committee safeguarding lead will be:*

- to deal with disclosures or concerns about a child or young person;
- to record concerns;
- to organise retention and storage of records related to any safeguarding issue;
- to liaise with parents or guardians as appropriate in consultation with the production child protection lead;
- to share information as appropriate with external agencies in consultation, as far as is reasonably possible, with parents or guardians;
- to ensure that this policy is reviewed and kept up to date.

*The role of the production child protection lead will be:*

- to ensure that the director discusses safeguarding and chaperoning with the parent/guardian at the audition;
- to manage safeguarding issues during rehearsals and performances;
- to be available for any chaperone or member of cast and crew for reporting of any safeguarding concern;
- to liaise with parents and children/young persons in conjunction with the committee safeguarding lead;
- to obtain appropriate licence or licence exemption certificates from the local authority;
- to regulate photographing and filming and ensure that appropriate consent has been obtained from parent/carer in writing or in the body of an email;
- to manage complaints and whistleblowing initially;
- to ensure adequate adult to child supervision ratios;
- to ensure a child chaperone is one or both of the parents/guardians, or a carer designated by the parent, or that the chaperone is a local-authority registered child chaperone;
- to ensure that, for under 16s, the parent/guardian is the e-mail, phone and WhatsApp contact;
- to issue a safeguarding risk assessment for the production;
- to ensure that the safeguarding policy and risk assessment are brought to the attention of all cast, crew, SUDS committee and venue staff, as well as appropriate parents or guardians;
- to liaise with the committee about general safeguarding issues;
- to liaise with the committee safeguarding lead about specific safeguarding concerns and complaints.

*The role of the production deputy child protection lead will be:*

- a second person to be available for any chaperone or member of cast and crew for reporting of any safeguarding concern.

### *Risk Assessment*

A general risk assessment for each production will be compiled by the stage manager, as the designated safety officer, and will be distributed to all cast and crew before get-in, as well as being posted on the wall of the fireman's room at the Drama Studio.

### *Safeguarding Risk Assessment*

A separate safeguarding risk assessment will be compiled by the Production Manager. It will be distributed to all cast, crew and chaperones before get-in as well as being posted on the wall of the Fireman's room in the Drama Studio. An example is contained at appendix B.

### *Disclosure*

When an event requiring investigation is brought to our attention we will take time to listen, and show that what is being said is taken seriously. It is important to maintain an unbiased approach, and to keep accurate and detailed notes, to include the child's details (name, age, address), what was said or done to give cause for concern and any information the child has given about the alleged abuse.

### *Confidentiality*

In the event of a concern or complaint, none of the leads must give an absolute promise that the information will not be shared, for instance, from safeguarding lead to committee lead, or to an external agency, as considered appropriate. The information is not to be shared with the committee other than that there has been an event - it is strictly on a need-to-know basis.

### *Information Sharing*

Timely sharing is key, but there must always be a clear and legitimate purpose for sharing. A record must be kept of why the information is being shared, the process used to arrive at the decision, including any necessary consents, and with whom the information is shared. Sharing must not put a child's welfare and safety at risk.

### *Consent*

Always seek consent to share. If consent is not given, it will still be right to share information with relevant agencies under certain circumstances, e.g. protecting a child from significant harm. We will contact the NSPCC helpline for advice if necessary.

## *Review*

Any event will be reviewed by all interested parties to try to determine why it happened and how it might have been avoided, and to recommend any appropriate amendment to this policy.

This guidance and policy must be reviewed:

- following a safeguarding incident; and
- for each production involving a child/children, but no more than annually, unless there is a clear reason to do so.