

Moat Players – Youth Safeguarding & Protection Policy

Adopted: February 2026

Next Review: February 2027

1. Introduction & Purpose

The Moat Players is an independent community amateur dramatics society based in Solihull. This policy sets out how the society safeguards and promotes the welfare of children and young people involved in rehearsals, performances, workshops, social events, and any other activities organised by the society.

This policy applies to **all members, volunteers, committee members, chaperones, and any other adults** involved with The Moat Players.

A **child/ children** is defined as anyone up to the age of 16. For the purposes of theatre performance regulations, additional requirements apply to children up to the age of 16 (including those turning 16 during the academic year).

A **young person/ young people** is defined as anyone from the age of 16 to 18.

For clarity within this policy:

- **Children:** under 16 (including those turning 16 during the academic year).
- **Young people:** 16–18 (including those turning 18 during the academic year)

2. Safeguarding Purpose

The Moat Players recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and is committed to providing a safe, positive, and inclusive environment.

We believe that:

- All children and young people have the right to feel safe, valued, and respected
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- The welfare of the child /young person is paramount

The society adopts a **preventative, proportionate, and transparent** approach to safeguarding, consistent with best practice across amateur dramatic organisations.

3. Legal Context

This policy is informed by, and operates in accordance with, the following legislation and guidance:

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2023)
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963 and associated Performance Regulations
- Charity Commission Safeguarding Guidance (2023)
- Equality Act 2010
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Online Safety Act 2023

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Committee

The Committee has overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place, including the appointment of safeguarding leads and regular review of this policy.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL will be appointed by the Committee.

They are responsible for:

- Acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Receiving, recording, and managing safeguarding disclosures or allegations
- Liaising with parents, local safeguarding partners, and statutory agencies as required
- Ensuring safeguarding records are kept securely and confidentially
- Promoting good safeguarding practice within the society

Adult Members and Volunteers

All adult members and volunteers must:

- Follow this policy and the Code of Conduct
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Report any safeguarding concern, disclosure, or low-level concern promptly to the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Cooperate fully with any safeguarding process

DBS checks are required only where roles meet the legal definition of regulated or supervisory activity.

Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring safe arrival to, and collection from activities

- Informing the society of any relevant medical, behavioural, or safeguarding information
- Communicating absences or concerns promptly

Chaperones

Where required, licensed chaperones will be engaged in accordance with local authority regulations. Chaperones are responsible for the care and supervision of children during performances and related activities.

5. Code of Conduct

All members must:

- Treat all children and young people with dignity, respect, and fairness
- Promote a positive, inclusive, and supportive environment
- Avoid being alone with a child or young person wherever possible
- Maintain appropriate physical, emotional, and professional boundaries
- Use appropriate language and behaviour at all times

Physical Contact

Physical contact should be avoided unless necessary for the activity (e.g. stage safety or positioning). Where contact is required:

- It must be minimal and appropriate
- The child's or young person's consent must be sought
- The purpose of the contact must be clearly explained

Supervision

- Children and young people must not be left unsupervised during organised activities
- One-to-one situations should be avoided; where unavoidable, they should take place in open or observable spaces

Transport

- The society does not arrange or supervise transport for children or young people
- Any transport provided by another member is a private arrangement between adults and must not be represented as a Moat Players activity

Changing Areas

- Separate changing facilities will be provided where required
- Privacy and dignity must be respected at all times

Other

- Never engage in favouritism, ridicule, or physical punishment.

- Promote inclusivity and positive role-modelling.

6. Young People Aged 16-18

Young people aged 16–18 fall outside the statutory chaperone system. The Moat Players recognises the need to balance safeguarding with developing independence.

Accordingly:

- Separate changing areas will be provided
- Travel to and from rehearsals may be self-managed unless parents indicate otherwise
- Young people may leave the venue during breaks unless parents indicate otherwise
- Young people may not act as supervisors or guardians for younger children

In all other respects, young people are safeguarded in line with this policy.

7. DBS and Safer Recruitment

The Moat Players adopts a proportionate approach to safer recruitment:

- Committee members will hold an appropriate DBS check.
- Adults in supervisory or leadership roles with children will hold an appropriate DBS check
- DBS checks will be funded by the society

DBS checks alone do not replace the need for good safeguarding practice and supervision as all other members do not require a DBS check.

8. Online and Digital Safety

- All online conduct must reflect the same standards as face-to-face interaction
- Adults must not engage in private one-to-one messaging with children or young people.
- Group communications should include at least two adults and, where practicable, parents/guardians
- Images or recordings of children or young people will only be used with prior written parental consent
- Requests to remove images will be respected. This is both off websites and any social media.

9. Health and Safety and Accidents

- Children and young people will be informed of “house rules” hazards, and appropriate clothing
- Any accident or injury will be recorded in the society’s accident book
- Where a child or young person arrives with a visible injury, this will also be recorded. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.
- Accident records will be countersigned by the DSL or Deputy DSL

10. Inclusivity, Equality & Respect

The Moat Players is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation will not be tolerated. Reasonable adjustments will be made to support participation wherever possible. All members share responsibility for promoting a culture of inclusion and respect.

11. Data Protection

Personal data relating to children and young people will be:

- Collected only where necessary
- Stored securely
- Accessed only by those with a legitimate need
- Handled in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018

12. Reporting and Managing Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be taken seriously.

Records will include:

- Date and time of incident or disclosure
- Names of those involved
- Factual account of what was said or observed
- Actions taken to explore concerns
- Any further action taken e.g. contacting a statutory child protection agency, suspension of an individual.
- Justification detailing why these decisions were made e.g. why referral was made/not made

Records will be stored securely and shared only on a need-to-know basis.

External Reporting (Solihull)

- **Solihull MASH:** 0121 788 4300
- **Out of Hours:** 0121 605 6060
- **Emergency:** 999

Alternatively, use the Inter-Agency Referral Form at www.solihull.gov.uk/safeguarding.

These details will be displayed at rehearsal and performance venues.

13. Reporting and Managing Concerns

- DSLs and youth leaders must complete appropriate safeguarding training
- Safeguarding awareness will be promoted among all members
- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes

14. Whistleblowing

Any member who is concerned about unsafe or inappropriate behaviour is encouraged to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. Concerns may be raised with the DSL, Deputy DSL, Committee, or relevant external agencies.

15. Policy Approval

This policy was approved by the Committee of The Moat Players and is binding on all members and volunteers.

16. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Adult Member	Any member aged 18 or over who participates in group activities but does not have formal supervisory responsibility for youth members.
Child / Children	Any member up to the age of 16, including those who turn 16 that academic year
Child Protection	Specific actions taken when a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
Confidentiality	Ensuring that personal or sensitive information is shared only with those who need to know, for legitimate safeguarding purposes.
DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)	A criminal record check used to help assess whether individuals are suitable to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults. Required only for those in supervisory or leadership roles.
Deputy DSL	A nominated committee member who supports the DSL and acts in their absence.
DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)	The lead person responsible for safeguarding within the group. The DSL is the main contact for reporting and managing safeguarding concerns.
Low-Level Concern	A behaviour by an adult that does not meet the threshold for formal investigation but may indicate a pattern of risk or poor judgment.
MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)	The Solihull team that receives and assesses referrals about children or young people who may be at risk of harm.
Online Safety	Measures taken to protect youth members from harm when communicating, rehearsing, or sharing materials digitally.
Regulated Activity	Work that involves teaching, training, supervising, or caring for children frequently or unsupervised, as defined by law. Only these roles require a DBS check.
Safeguarding	The action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, abuse, or neglect.
Safeguarding Partners	The local authority, police, and health organisations that work together to coordinate safeguarding arrangements in Solihull.
Whistleblowing	The act of reporting a concern about unsafe or inappropriate behaviour within the group, including by other adults.
Young Person	Any member between the age of 16 and 18 years of age, including those who turn 18 that academic year.

Youth Leader	An adult volunteer who directly supervises or supports youth members during rehearsals, performances, or other activities.
Youth Member	Any member of the Moat Players who is under the age of 18.