



Safeguarding Policy – Stewartby Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society (SAODS)

V3 – 24th March 2025

Overview

Commitment to safeguarding: SAODS believes that a child, young person or adult at risk should never experience danger of any kind. Safeguarding concerns include but are not limited to, abuse, harm, neglect, and where identified, a need for a greater level of pastoral care. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk. We are committed to safeguarding the well-being of all individuals at risk with whom we come into contact, and to protect them from harm.

About this policy

- This policy applies to; all members, staff (whether employees or freelancers), volunteers and anyone working on behalf of SAODS or taking part in SAODS activities.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide members, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of all vulnerable people
- This policy recognises vulnerable people as:
 - Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
 - Adults aged over 18 at risk as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. This might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or reduced physical or mental capacity. This policy also recognises risk is determined by the activity an adult is taking part in and not solely on the personal characteristics or circumstances of the adult, as such any adult can be at risk, and the risk can be temporary.
- This policy aims to:
 - Protect children, young people and adults at risk who are; members of, receive services from, or volunteer for, SAODS, whilst they are undertaking Society activities.
 - Ensure members, staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults at risk are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with.
 - Ensure that safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk is a primary consideration when SAODS undertakes any activity, event or project.

How SAODS might work with vulnerable people: membership is open to those over 16 years of age. We run regular rehearsals for members and put on concerts for the general public. As such our involvement with vulnerable people might include, but is not limited to:

- Members of the group who attend rehearsals and concerts
- Relatives and friends of members who attend rehearsals and concerts in a volunteering capacity
- Audience members at public concerts

Named Safeguarding Person: Jessica Hallett has responsibility for safeguarding issues, with Gordon Hodges as Deputy Safeguarding Officer. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to Jessica Hallett in the first instance, or to Gordon Hodges, should the Safeguarding Officer be unavailable. All reports made to the Safeguarding Team (named persons above) will be handled with appropriate discretion and confidentiality, and within GDPR regulations.



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Any projects, events or other activities that will involve vulnerable people must be planned with the involvement of Jessica Hallett and in line with established procedures and ground rules (see below).

Details of named Safeguarding Officers, along with their contact details, will be announced at the Annual General Meeting and emailed around to members along with current policies.

An Incident Log will be kept by the Safeguarding Team, and will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Team, and any patterns or issues arising presented confidentially to the Committee and at the society Annual General Meeting.

Policy review: This policy will be reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis by the Safeguarding Team, and presented to the Committee for review and approval. Any relevant changes will be advised to Members at the society Annual General Meeting. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Ground rules, ways of working and procedures:

This document includes:

- Recruitment practices around safeguarding
- Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people
- Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse
- Procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new member, staff member or volunteer will be working with vulnerable people as part of the SAODS activities, the appropriate level of training will be undertaken, and their consent to adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and Constitution obtained.

The Safeguarding Officer will keep a list of members holding current DBS certificates and will have seen evidence of these certificates, for purposes of appropriate attendance at meetings & activities.

Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of vulnerable people

When SAODS organises an activity or event where they will be responsible for vulnerable people they will ensure:

- Planning is carried out in line with this policy and procedures.
- The event is attended by an appropriate number of DBS checked adults – this will be a minimum of one but more when practically possible. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer to ensure this is adhered to.
- Where practically possible the total number of adults in attendance (not necessarily DBS checked) compared with the total number of children will be in line with the ratio table below - as per Ofsted recommendations.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day - this will be an individual who has been DBS checked. This will be SO or DSO by default, unless specified for a particular event, in which case it will be announced beforehand.
- The main contact has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g.



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information about picking up arrangements for vulnerable people).

- A vulnerable person is not to be left alone with an adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.
- With regards situations where members are required to change or try costumes on, for example, the Safeguarding Team is responsible for ensuring under 18s and vulnerable adults are allocated designated space to accommodate their needs.
- One Committee Member, plus one other (ideally one of these will be a DBS-checked adult), should be the last to leave a venue once the activity has finished and will be responsible for ensuring vulnerable people get home safely.

Child to adult ratio table

Childs age	Number of adults	Number of children
0-2	1	3
2-3	1	4
4-8	1	6
9-12	1	8
12-18	1	10

Working with parents/guardians: If a vulnerable person wishes to take part in SAODS activities written permission (email is fine) should be obtained from parents/guardians where appropriate, and before the activity takes place. Written permission should include: emergency contact details of any relevant pick-up arrangements – including permission for another adult to pick up the vulnerable person after the activity has finished. Permission for photographs to be used in publicity media should also be obtained when a young person (under 18) becomes a member.

Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

- If any member, staff or volunteer in SAODS witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected safeguarding concern they should immediately report it to the named safeguarding officer; Jessica Hallett.
- If the named person is not available, or is involved in or connected to, the abuse, it should be reported to Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Gordon Hodges, or the group chair, Chris Hodges.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should report it to the named safeguarding officer or an individual they trust.

Procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

The Named person (or person reported in their absence) will first make a decision based on the immediacy of the concern and the following two factors:

1. If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention – call the police and/or ambulance service.
2. If the person at the centre of the allegation is working with vulnerable persons at the current time – remove them, in a sensitive manner, from direct contact with vulnerable people and follow the procedures below.
3. If a Health & Safety incident/injury occurs, this should be attended to by designated First Aider.

If none of the above applies, the named person will:



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- Make a note of the concerns reported to them.
- Add the incident to the Safeguarding Incident Log
- The Safeguarding Team will make a decision as regards the nature of the safeguarding concern.
- For cases of suspected/witness abuse, the Safeguarding Team will adhere to the following:
 - Speak with committee members to decide how to handle the reported abuse. Excluding any committee members who of involved in the incident.
 - Escalate the report by either:
 - Raising concerns with the police – for serious or possible criminal offences.
 - Requesting an assessment by the local authority social care department about whether a vulnerable person is in need of protection.
 - An internal investigation – for less serious incidents where they feel internal mediation will be successful.
 - Where cases are escalated the committee will cooperate with the police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident.
- Where a Health & Safety incident/injury has occurred, the First Aider/Committee will review the relevant risk assessment of that activity to mitigate similar incidents in future.
- Where the incident is of a Pastoral Care nature, measures will be taken to help with this concern and move to achieve a suitable outcome. This may include individual aftercare, contacting relatives, or medical services if applicable.
- Where an internal investigation takes place, the committee will:
 - Inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible.
 - Inform the family/guardians of the person reported as being abused of the incident.
 - Arrange separate meetings with both parties within 10 days of the reported incident. A joint meeting may be arranged if appropriate.
 - Both parties should be given the chance to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.
 - Meetings will be attended by the named safeguarding officer and at least one other committee member.
 - All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting.
 - Once meetings have taken place the committee will decide on next steps and communicate them to all parties in writing within 5 days. They will be either:
 - Escalate the incident to the relevant authority.
 - Further investigation – with established procedures and timelines to work towards a resolution.
 - A decision or resolution.

Resolution and disciplinary action

- If abuse is found to have taken place any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interest of the person who has suffered the abuse and the best interests of SAODS.
- Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the SAODS constitution.