

LETCHWORTH ARCADIANS MUSICAL SOCIETY (LAMS) SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY – JAN 2026

Safeguarding is the action you take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding means:

- **protecting children from abuse and maltreatment**
- **preventing harm to children's health and development**
- **providing support to meet children's needs when problems emerge**
- **ensuring children grow up with safe and effective care, within their family where possible**
- **taking action to make sure that all babies, children and young people have the best outcomes.**

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes child protection procedures detailing how to respond to concerns about a child.

Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society – LAMS (henceforth referred to as the Society) recognises its duty of care and commitment to safeguarding all individuals regardless of age, ability, or background.

Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society works in accordance with relevant UK legislation and guidance, including but not limited to:

- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- Child (Performances) Regulations 1968
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest guidance)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

We, the Society, recognise that abuse can take many forms, whether it is physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. We are committed to a practice that protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. All society members accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that could cause harm. Adults at risk as defined by The Care Act 2014 are those with care and support needs who are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect and are unable to protect themselves. The Act focuses on circumstances, covering 10 main categories: physical, sexual, psychological, financial, neglect, organisational, discriminatory, domestic abuse, modern slavery, and self-neglect.

For the purposes of this policy the term child/children refers to a minor who is under the age of 16, the terms young person/young people refers to those up to the age of 18 years and the term

vulnerable adult(s) refers to someone aged 18+ who may need care or support due to disability, illness, or circumstances.

We believe that:

- The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount
- All people, 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 volunteers of the society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

We will ensure that:

- All children, young people and vulnerable adults will be treated equally and with respect and dignity
- The duty of care to children young people and vulnerable adults will always be put first
- A balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children, young people and vulnerable adults 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
- We keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation
- We keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- We undertake relevant development and training
- We will hold a register of every child, young person and vulnerable adult involved with the society and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

The society follows National Child Protection guidelines, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety guidelines.

We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead & Child Protection Officer, who is in charge of ensuring that the safeguarding & child protection policy and procedures are adhered to.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead & Child Protection Officer (DSL) is **Mary Driver** and her contact telephone number is **07876 437213**

Our deputy Designated Safeguarding lead (DDSL) is **Rachel Bloomfield** and her contact number is **07876 744625**

If concerns are raised about the DSLO this should be referred to The President – **Margaret Dinmore** and her contact number is: **07970 875532**

Annual Safeguarding training for Designated Safeguarding lead and Deputy is undertaken through an online course from HSQE at HSQE.co.uk

All committee members are expected to undertake An Introduction to Safeguarding and Child Protection from NSPCC Online training package.

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Committee of Letchworth Arcadians and will be subject to annual reviews. Review Date: **Jan 2027.**

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

Responsibilities of Letchworth Arcadians (the Society)

At the outset of any production involving children, young people and vulnerable adults the Society will:

- Undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process.
- Identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.
- Engage in effective recruitment of chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children under 16 years of age including appropriate vetting (if necessary in consultation with the local education authority).
- Ensure that children under 16 years of age are supervised at all times.
- Know how to get in touch with the local authority social services, in case it needs to report a concern.

Parents

- The Society believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the Society. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the Society and to share responsibility for the care of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All parents will be given a copy of the Letchworth Arcadians Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of the Society to take children home.

Unsupervised Contact

- The Society will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- If possible there will always be two adults in the room when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area, or in a designated room with a door open.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, he or she may be required to obtain a DBS.

Physical Contact

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Adults will only touch children, young people and vulnerable adults when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child, young person or vulnerable adult prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

Managing sensitive information

- The Society Arcadians has requested parental consent for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of their children, young people and vulnerable adults for promotional purposes.
- The Society's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- The Society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as disclosures and barring documentation.

Suspicion of abuse

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult while in the care of The Society, please make this known to the DSL. If you suspect that the DSL is the source of the problem, you should make your concerns known to the President.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of The Society, chaperone, venue staff etc., that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children, young people or vulnerable adults in the production.

Disclosure of abuse

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult confides in you that abuse has taken place:

- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.
- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow them to tell you about their worries at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Do not ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with the DSL. Make it clear to the child/young person/vulnerable adult that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child/young person/vulnerable adult that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child/young person/vulnerable adult what you are going to do next.
- Speak immediately to the DSL. It is that person's responsibility to liaise with the relevant authorities, usually social services and/or the police.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child/young person/vulnerable adult's own words. Note the date, time, named people who were involved or mentioned and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

Recording

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken eg. Suspension about an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- Where a disclosure occurs, This is risk assessed by the DSL on a case-by-case basis determine next steps. The outcome is recorded on the disclosure forms and countersigned by Deputy Safeguarding lead (DDSL)
- Where content is disclosed on a DBS this is shared with DSL who conducts a risk assessment. This is recorded and countersigned by DSL. Any actions taken will be shared with the President and if necessary, the production team.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Rights & Confidentiality

- If a complaint is made against a member of the Society, he or she will be made aware of his rights under the society's disciplinary procedures.

In the case of a child or young person making an allegation about a member of the society, their parent or carer will be informed immediately

- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the child/young person/vulnerable adult who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.
- During the period of allegations, the balance of probability must be considered. All parties have a right to be kept safe and contact is removed until the investigation has been completed.
- Where necessary the DSL will refer to the President and if necessary contact the police.

Details of External Agencies to contact in an Emergency are as follows:

Herts Children's Services – 0300 123 4043

Herts Adult Social Care – 0300 123 4042

Police – 999

NSPCC – 0808 800 5000

Accidents

- To avoid accidents, chaperones and children, young people and vulnerable adults will be advised of "house rules" regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children, young people and vulnerable adults will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.
- If a child/young person/vulnerable adult is injured while in the care of The Society, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the society's accident book. The DSL will countersign the accident record. The society will notify the parents/carers and share the accident report with them. They will sign it to acknowledge this.
- If a child/young person/vulnerable adult joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. The DSL will countersign the record. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later and will also be a record that the child/young person/vulnerable adult did not sustain the injury while participating in the production.

Criminal Record Disclosures

- The Society will obtain DBS certificates for chaperones or other personnel. Individuals will be informed of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required. A Standard disclosure will apply for anyone with supervised access to children. An Enhanced disclosure will be required for anyone with unsupervised access.
- The Society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

Chaperones / Supervising Adults (supervising children under 16 years of age)

- The Society subscribes to guidance from Hertfordshire County Council for supervising adults during the production process.
- Chaperones are appointed by the Society, for the care of children during the production process. Chaperones can either be licenced chaperones, helpers with DBS or the children's own parents. By law these adults act in loco parentis and should exercise the care that a good parent might be reasonably expected to give to a child. The maximum number of children in the chaperone's care shall not exceed 12.
- Potential chaperones will be required to supply photographic proof of identity (eg. passport, driving licence) and two references from individuals with knowledge of their previous work with children, unless already well known to the company. They will also be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children.
- Chaperones will be made aware of this Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and

Procedures.

- Chaperones will not usually have unsupervised access to children in their care.
- If unsupervised access is unavoidable, or if this is a requirement of the local authority, a criminal record disclosure will be sought.
- Where chaperones are not satisfied with the conditions for the children, they should bring this to the attention of the producer. If changes cannot be made satisfactorily, the chaperone should consider not allowing the child to continue.
- If a chaperone considers that a child is unwell or too tired to continue, the chaperone must inform the producer and not allow the child to continue.
- Under the Dangerous Performances Act, no child of compulsory school age is permitted to do anything, which may endanger life or limb. This could include working on wires or heavy lifting. Chaperones should tell the producer to cease using children in this way and should contact the local authority.
- During performances, chaperones will be responsible for meeting children at the stage door and signing them into the building.
- Children will be kept together at all times except when using separate dressing rooms.
- Chaperones will be aware of where the children are at all times.
- Children are not to leave the theatre unsupervised by chaperones unless in the company of their parents.
- Children will be adequately supervised while going to and from the toilets.
- Children will not be allowed to enter the adult dressing rooms.
- Chaperones should be aware of the safety arrangements and first aid procedures in the venue, and will ensure that children in their care do not place themselves and others in danger.
- Chaperones should ensure that any accidents are reported to and recorded by the society.
- Chaperones should examine accident books each day. If an accident has occurred, the producer is not allowed to use that child until a medically qualified opinion has been obtained (not just the word of the parent or child).
- Chaperones should have written arrangements for children after performances. If someone different is to collect the child, a telephone call should be made to the parent to confirm the arrangements.
- Children should be signed out when leaving and a record made of the person collecting.
- If a parent has not collected the child, it is the duty of the chaperone to stay with that child until they are collected.

Reviewed Feb 2026

Reviewed party Rachel Bloomfield

Signed

