Vulnerable Persons Protection Policy

Policy Category	Safeguarding
Policy Reference Number	DMTC-VPP-SG
Date Effective From	**November 2026**
Last review completed	**September 2026**
Applicable to	All committee members, volunteers, members and individuals acting on behalf of the Company
Policy Owner	Committee Board Members
Policy Author	Catherine Finn - Committee Librarian
Approved by	Committee Board Members
Next review of policy due	**November 2027**
Distribution	**Internal:** All committee members, volunteers and members. Communicated via email, rehearsals and/or shared online platforms (e.g. Google Drive, WhatsApp groups, DMTC web page or equivalent) **External:** Policies available on request where appropriate
Key search terms	Data Protection; GDPR; Membership; Committee; Auditions; Casting; Confidentiality; Safeguarding; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Complaints

- Please avoid relying on printed or stored copies of this policy. The most up-to-date version will be held by the Committee.
- Members should contact the Committee for clarification or the latest version where required.

1.0 Policy Statement

At Durham Musical Theatre Company we are committed to creating a safe, supportive, Inclusive and welcoming environment. Whereby everyone can enjoy theatre, develop their talents and participate without fear or harm, discrimination or exclusion.

We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity, kindness and respect, regardless of their age, disability, race, religion, belief, sex, gender identity or any other characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010.

1.1: Purpose of This Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance to everyone involved within the theatre company and ensure that everyone understands their role in keeping everyone safe.

1.2: Who We Safeguard

We at DMTC recognise that it is our responsibility to safeguard:

- Children and young people under 18
- Adults at risk
- Anyone who may be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination

2.0 Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all individuals below, however everyone involved with the theatre company is expected to play their part in helping keep people safe.

2.1: Who This Policy Applies To

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Trustees and committee members
- Freelancers and contractors
- Chaperones
- Activity leaders
- Production teams
- Audience members
- Cast members
- Parents, carers and guardians
- Anyone acting on behalf of the organisation

2.2: Activities Covered by This Policy

This policy applies whenever individuals are involved in:

- Rehearsals
- Performances
- Workshops

- Social events
- Training activities
- Meetings
- Digital communications
- Any activity organised or delivered by the organisation

3.0 Definitions

3.1: Child or young person

For the purpose of this policy, a child or young person is anyone under the age of 18

3.2: Adult at Risk (Sometimes called Vulnerable adult)

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who many need support or care because of age, illness, disability, mental health needs, learning difficulties, temporary circumstances or other factors which could make them more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm.

Being an adult at risk is not a permanent label. A persons circumstances may change over time, and everyone can become vulnerable at different stages of their life.

3.3: Safeguarding

Safeguarding means the actions we take to prover children's and adults health, wellbeing and human rights, and enable them to live free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

4.0 Types of Abuse

Abuse may include:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional or Psychological Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Financial or material Abuse
- Discriminatory Abuse
- Harassment or Coercive behaviour
- Bullying and Digital/Online Abuse

5.0 Expected Standards of Behaviour

We ask everyone connected with the theatre company to:

- Treat others with respect and consideration

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Behave in a way that promotes safety and wellbeing
- Follow safeguarding and health and safety procedures
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour where safe to do so
- Report concerns promptly

We will not tolerate:

- Physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying, including cyber bullying
- Harassment or victimisation
- Discrimination
- Intimidation or threatening behaviour
- Inappropriate contact with children or adults at risk
- Retaliation against anyone who raises a safeguarding concern

6.0 Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

6.1: Committee/Trustees

- Ensure safeguarding arrangements are in place.
- Review safeguarding policies annually.
- Promote a safeguarding culture throughout the organisation.

6.2: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The organisation will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for:

- Receiving concerns.
- Maintaining records.
- Providing advice and guidance.
- Liaising with external agencies where required.
- Monitoring safeguarding practices.

Name: Katy Haggart
Contact email: admin@dmtc.co.uk
DMTC Contact form: https://dmtc.co.uk/contact-us/

6.3: Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

- Read and comply with this policy.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Attend training when required.

- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Never ignore safeguarding concerns.

If you would like more detailed information regarding Durham Musical Theatre Companies Safeguarding procedures, please see our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, which is also available to view on our website.

7.0 Code of Conduct

All adults working with children or vulnerable adults must:

Always

- Treat people with dignity and respect.
- Work openly and transparently.
- Ensure activities take place in appropriate environments.
- Follow sign-in and sign-out procedures.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour.

Never

- Be alone unnecessarily with a child.
- Develop inappropriate personal relationships.
- Exchange private contact details.
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact.
- Use abusive, discriminatory or sexualised language.
- Share inappropriate content online.

Please see the safeguarding risk assessment for the current production for further information regarding Code of Conduct.

8.0 Membership and Safeguarding Requirements

Membership of the Society is open to individuals who successfully complete the Society's audition process and comply with its rules, policies, and safeguarding requirements.

8.1: Safeguarding Checks

To protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults participating in Society activities, certain safeguarding checks may be required based on the nature of an individual's involvement. These may include:

- Completion of membership forms
- Emergency contact details
- DBS checks for members, volunteers, or production team members working directly with children or vulnerable adults

- Any additional safeguarding checks considered necessary by the Committee

8.2: Safeguarding Decisions and Disclosures

The Society is committed to ensuring that safeguarding decisions are made fairly, consistently, and confidentially. A disclosed conviction will not automatically prevent someone from participating in Society activities, and each case will be considered on its individual circumstances and any potential safeguarding risks.

9.0 Photography, Social Media and Online Communication

We recognise that safeguarding extends to online spaces.

When using photography, video recordings, social media, messaging platforms we will

- Respect privacy and consent requirements
- Follow appropriate permissions processes for children and young people
- Use communication methods that are transparent and appropriate
- Avoid private or unnecessary one to one communicate with children and young people
- Address any concerns relating to online behaviour promptly and appropriately.

10.0 Speaking up and Whistleblowing

We encourage everyone to raise concerns about safeguarding, welfare or conduct, even if they are unsure. No one who raises concerns will suffer a disadvantage for reporting a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith. All concerns will be handled sensitively, respectfully and appropriately.

10.1: Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

Anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding concern must:

1. Ensure immediate safety.
2. Record factual information.
3. Report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
4. Contact emergency services if a person is in immediate danger.

11.0 Safeguarding and Emergency Contacts

11.1: Safeguarding Contacts

Non-Emergency Police	**101**
Child Welfare Concerns (Public)	Call First Contact at **03000 267 979**

Professional Child Safeguarding	Submit written referrals via the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership form to firstcontact@durham.gov.uk
Adult Safeguarding Concerns	Call Social Care Direct 24/7 at **03000 267 979** or submit via the Durham County Council Adult Safeguarding reporting portal.

11.2: Immediate Danger

Police	**999**
Ambulance	**999**

12.0 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding concerns will be treated with care and sensitivity.

Information will only be shared with people who need to know in order to keep someone safe or where required by law. We cannot guarantee complete confidentiality where there is a safeguarding risk.

13.0 Record Keeping and Data Protection

All safeguarding concerns will be:

- Recorded promptly.
- Stored securely.
- Accessed only by authorised persons.
- Retained in accordance with data protection requirements.

14.0 Safeguarding Training

Durham Musical Theatre Company will ensure that their Safeguarding Officer will receive:

- Safeguarding awareness training.
- Refresher training as required.
- Guidance on recognising and responding to concerns.

15.0 Policy Review

This policy is not contractual and will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- Legislation changes.
- Best practice guidance changes.
- A safeguarding incident highlights the need for review.