



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Statement of Commitment

Here For The Drama Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person who attends our academy.

We believe that every child has the right to:

- Feel safe and protected.
- Be treated with dignity and respect.
- Learn and develop in a positive environment.
- Be listened to.
- Be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every member of staff, volunteer, freelance teacher, assistant, parent helper and visitor shares responsibility for protecting children.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by UK safeguarding legislation and guidance including:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (where applicable)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR

- Human Rights Act 1998
 - Equality Act 2010
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Emergency Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Leads -

Name: Milly Zero & Joshua Ely

Email: milly@hftdacademy.co.uk / josh@hftdacademy.co.uk

Deputy DSL

Name: Olivia Grimwood

Email: olivia@hftdacademy.co.uk

The Six R's of Safeguarding at HFTD

All staff are provided with safeguarding training, including our Six R's framework for responding to safeguarding concerns and disclosures.

1. RECEIVE

- Stay calm and listen carefully without showing shock or disbelief.
- Take what is said seriously and acknowledge their feelings.
- Make brief, factual notes of what is said.

2. RESPOND

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in speaking up.
- Be honest about the next steps and do not make promises you cannot keep.
- Avoid promising confidentiality – explain that information must be shared

with those who can help.

3. REACT

- Respond only as necessary to clarify, but do not press for further details.
- Avoid leading questions – instead, use T.E.D. questions: Tell me, Explain

to me, Describe to me.

- Do not express negative opinions about the alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what will happen next and who needs to be informed.

4. RECORD

- Write down the disclosure as soon as possible, using the child's exact words.
- Record the date, time, location, and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
- Keep all original notes and submit them to the DSL.

5. REMEMBER

- Inform the DSL immediately.
- The DSL will assess the situation and contact the appropriate authorities if

necessary.

6. RELAX

- Seek support if needed – safeguarding can be emotionally challenging.
- Staff will have access to safeguarding supervision and guidance.

Staff Responsibilities

Every member of staff must:

- Read this policy.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Never investigate concerns themselves.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Promote children's welfare.

Raising a Safeguarding Concern

If a teacher or staff member has concerns about a child's welfare, they must report it immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

- If the concern involves a safeguarding officer, the report must be made to an alternative senior staff member.
 - All concerns must be recorded in the Cause for Concern Form, which will then be reviewed by the DSL.
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Responding to an Urgent Concern

If there is immediate risk of harm to a child, urgent action must be taken:

- Contact emergency services on 999 if the child is at immediate risk of harm.
 - If a child is in danger returning home, contact the police and local safeguarding services for guidance before allowing them to leave.
 - The DSL or Deputy DSL must be informed immediately so appropriate steps can be taken.
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Reporting a Concern That Is Not Immediate

If a concern is raised but the child is not in immediate danger, the following steps will be taken:

- The staff member must complete our equivalent to a Cause for Concern Form (we use an online log system for this) and submit it to the DSL or Deputy DSL.
 - The DSL / Deputy DSL will review the information and determine the most appropriate course of action.
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Actions Following a Cause for Concern Report

Once the DSL / Deputy DSL has reviewed the report, they will decide on the next steps:

Option 1: Monitoring the Situation

- If the concern does not require immediate intervention, the child's well-being will be monitored over an agreed period.
- The teacher or staff member will provide regular updates to the DSL.
- A confidential safeguarding report will be created and securely stored.

Option 2: Speaking to the Parent/Carer

- The teacher or DSL may decide to speak to the parent/carers if appropriate.
- The conversation will be handled sensitively, ensuring the child's safety remains the top priority.

Option 3: Escalating to External Agencies

- The DSL may consult with local safeguarding authorities, social services, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to seek advice.
 - If necessary, a formal referral will be made to the relevant child protection services.
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HFTD Anti-Bullying Policy

At Here for the Drama (HFTD), we have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in any form. We are committed to ensuring that all children and young people feel safe, supported, and respected in our learning environment. Bullying is unacceptable and will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

A. What is Bullying?

Bullying is any repeated behaviour intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate another individual. It can be physical, verbal, emotional, or occur online (cyberbullying).

Types of Bullying:

- Physical: Hitting, pushing, kicking, or any form of physical aggression.
- Verbal: Name-calling, insults, threats, teasing, or making hurtful remarks.
- Emotional: Exclusion, humiliation, spreading rumours, manipulating friendships.
- Online (Cyberbullying): Sending harmful messages, sharing personal content

without consent, making threats, or using social media to harass someone.

- Discriminatory Bullying: Targeting individuals based on race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

B. How HFTD Prevents and Responds to Bullying

We take all reports of bullying seriously and have clear procedures for prevention and intervention.

Prevention Measures:

- Educating students about kindness, respect, and inclusivity through activities and discussions.
- Encouraging a speak-up culture where students feel safe to report concerns.
- Ensuring staff remain vigilant and proactive in identifying any bullying behaviour.
- Promoting a supportive and inclusive environment where differences are respected.

Response to Bullying:

If bullying is reported, HFTD will take the following steps:

1. Listening and Recording:

- The child will be listened to in a safe and supportive manner.
- Details will be documented accurately, ensuring the child's words are recorded.

2. Investigation:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will gather information by speaking with those involved.
- The issue will be assessed objectively to determine the most appropriate course of action.

3. Support for the Victim:

- The child will be reassured that they are being taken seriously.
- Steps will be taken to ensure they feel safe and supported in class.

4. Action Against the Perpetrator:

- The child engaging in bullying behaviour will be spoken to in a structured and supportive way.
- Appropriate sanctions will be applied, which may include:
 - A formal warning.
 - A meeting with parents/guardians.
 - Temporary suspension from classes if behaviour does not improve.
 - Permanent exclusion in extreme cases.

5. Parental Involvement:

- Parents of both the victim and the perpetrator will be informed where necessary.

- HFTD will work with families to ensure appropriate support is in place.

6. Referral to External Agencies:

- If bullying is severe and persistent, we may involve external safeguarding agencies for further intervention.

C. Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Bullying is a form of peer-on-peer abuse and will always be treated as a serious safeguarding concern. Staff will never dismiss bullying as “just children being children.”

The following situations require immediate attention:

- Sexual abuse or harassment between peers (including inappropriate touching, sexting, coercion).
- Power imbalance: If one child is significantly older, stronger, or in a position of control over the other.
- Targeting vulnerable children: Children with disabilities, learning difficulties, LGBTQ+ children, or those from minority backgrounds are more likely to be targeted.

If peer-on-peer abuse is suspected, standard safeguarding procedures will be followed, and external agencies may be contacted if necessary.

D. Online Safety and Cyberbullying

With the increasing use of digital communication, online bullying is a growing concern. HFTD promotes safe online behaviour and educates children about the risks of digital platforms.

Key measures include:

- Encouraging students to use social media responsibly.
- Teaching children about privacy settings and online safety.
- Advising students never to share personal details or inappropriate content online.
- Encouraging children to report any online harassment immediately to staff.

If cyberbullying is reported, HFTD will take action both within the organisation and with external agencies if needed.

E. Consequences of Bullying

If a student is found to be engaging in bullying behaviour, consequences may include:

- A verbal warning and discussion about the impact of their actions.
- A formal written warning issued to both the student and their parents.
- A meeting with parents/guardians to discuss the behaviour.
- Temporary suspension from classes if behaviour continues.
- Permanent removal from HFTD in cases of repeated or severe bullying.

F. Support for Students and Families

We understand that bullying can have a lasting impact, and we ensure support is available for both children and parents.

Support for Children:

- Children will be reassured that they are not to blame.
- They will have access to trusted adults who will listen to their concerns.
- They will be encouraged to seek support from Childline or similar services.

Support for Parents:

- Parents will be provided with guidance on how to support their child if they are experiencing bullying.
 - If a child is found to be bullying others, parents will be involved in the intervention process to help correct the behaviour.
 - Information on external organisations offering support will be shared where needed.
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Safer Recruitment

The Academy is committed to following safer recruitment practices to help ensure that all staff working with children and young people are suitable for their roles.

All relevant staff will be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS check, with details of these checks securely recorded by the Academy. Any additional background or suitability checks will be carried out where appropriate.

Where possible, staff are recruited through trusted recommendations and referrals, alongside appropriate checks to assess their suitability, experience and ability to work safely with children and young people.

The Academy operates a regular **cover pool** for cover teachers, helping to ensure that those providing cover are known to the Academy, familiar with our expectations and safeguarding procedures, and have experience working alongside other members of the team.

Where a new cover teacher is introduced, we will aim to provide an induction or supported first session, with a manager or established member of staff present wherever practicable. This allows the Academy to communicate relevant policies and procedures, observe working practices and ensure that appropriate safeguarding and professional standards are understood and maintained.

HFTD Venue Safety and Location Procedures

Here for the Drama (HFTD) takes reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that the venues used for our classes are suitable and safe for children, young people and staff.

HFTD primarily operates from established schools, community venues and other professionally managed premises. As a hirer of these spaces, we work alongside venue management and follow the relevant safety and emergency procedures in place at each location.

A. Venue Suitability and Safety

- HFTD aims to use established and reputable venues that are suitable for the age groups and activities taking place.
- Before commencing regular classes at a new venue, an appropriate member of the HFTD team will consider the suitability of the space and identify any significant risks relevant to our activities.
- For regular HFTD locations, key venue and safety information will be recorded and made available to relevant staff.
- Staff should remain alert to hazards or safety concerns during sessions and report any concerns to HFTD management and/or venue staff as appropriate.
- Where a significant change, incident or new concern arises, HFTD will review the suitability of the space and take appropriate action.

B. Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures

HFTD staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the emergency exit routes relevant to the areas they are using and follow the venue's emergency procedures.

- Lead teachers should be aware of the nearest appropriate emergency exit and, where provided by the venue, the designated assembly point.
- Registers should be readily accessible during sessions so that students can be accounted for in an emergency.
- In the event of an evacuation, staff will supervise students, leave the building using the safest available route and follow instructions provided by venue or emergency personnel.
- New or unfamiliar staff, including cover teachers, should be given relevant practical information about the venue where reasonably possible.
- Any concerns regarding fire safety or emergency arrangements should be reported promptly to HFTD management and/or the venue.

C. Entry, Exit and Supervision

HFTD takes reasonable steps to maintain appropriate supervision and safe handover arrangements during its sessions.

- Attendance is recorded for each class using an HFTD register.

- Children should be dropped off and collected in accordance with the arrangements established for their HFTD location.
- Students remain under the supervision of HFTD staff during their scheduled class.
- Staff should remain aware of people entering or accessing the teaching space and should challenge or report unfamiliar or unauthorised individuals where appropriate and safe to do so.
- Visitors attending specifically in connection with an HFTD session should be known to or approved by an appropriate member of staff.
- Where HFTD has control over access to the teaching space, reasonable measures will be taken to prevent children from accessing unsupervised or inappropriate areas.
- Where access and security are controlled by the venue, HFTD staff will follow the venue's procedures and raise any concerns with venue staff.

D. Staff Responsibility at Hired Venues

All staff have a responsibility to remain vigilant and take reasonable action where they identify an immediate safety concern. Staff are not expected to undertake technical building inspections or assess matters that fall within the responsibility of the venue operator.

Any significant accident, hazard, security concern or safeguarding issue relating to a venue should be reported to HFTD management so that appropriate action can be taken and, where necessary, raised with the venue.

Code of Conduct

All adults working with children must:

- Treat children equally.
 - Use appropriate language.
 - Respect privacy.
 - Avoid favouritism.
 - Never be alone with a child where it can be avoided.
 - Never exchange inappropriate messages.
 - Never transport children without parental consent.
 - Never give alcohol, cigarettes or drugs.
 - Never engage in inappropriate physical contact.
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Physical Contact

Drama training sometimes involves physical guidance.

Physical contact should always be:

- Appropriate
- Necessary
- Explained beforehand
- Age appropriate
- Respectful
- With the child's consent

Children may decline physical guidance at any time.

Toileting

For children requiring assistance:

- Parents should inform staff of needs.
 - Two adults should be aware where assistance is required.
 - Appropriate dignity and safeguarding procedures must be followed.
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Photography and Filming

Parents must complete a media consent form.

No child will be photographed or filmed without appropriate consent.

Images will:

- Be stored securely.
- Never include unnecessary personal information.
- Be used only for agreed purposes.
- May be used for social media promotion (if consented).

Mobile Phones and Camera Usage Policy

To maintain a safe environment, HFTD enforces strict guidelines on the use of mobile phones and cameras.

- Staff may only use mobile phones for contacting parents in emergencies or for taking promotional photos, always with parental consent.
 - Parents/guardians are not permitted to take photos or videos during classes without prior permission.
 - All photos and videos taken by HFTD are stored securely and used only for educational and promotional purposes, as agreed in the membership terms.
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Online Safety

Staff must:

- Use academy communication channels.
- Avoid personal messaging with students.
- Never communicate privately through personal social media.
- Report any online safeguarding concerns.

Students should be encouraged to behave respectfully online.

Attendance

Registers will be taken at every session.

Any concerns regarding repeated absences or unexplained collection issues should be reported to the DSL.

Collection of Children

Children under the academy's independent leaving age (as determined by the academy and parental consent) must only leave with:

- Parent
- Authorised adult
- Approved collection arrangements

Staff will verify unknown adults collecting children.

First Aid

At least one qualified first aider will be on site at every HFTD class.

Accidents will be recorded.

Parents will be informed of any injuries on site.

Access to Emergency & Medical Information

- Class Registers are managed through ClassForKids, where all staff members have access to:

- Emergency contact details for every student.
- Medical conditions, allergies, and special requirements.
- Any other essential information relevant to the child's safety and well-being.

- If necessary, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately in the event of an emergency or health-related concern.

Reporting Concerns

If a child discloses abuse:

Do:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Believe the child.
- Reassure them they have done the right thing.
- Record exactly what was said.
- Report immediately to the DSL.

Do Not:

- Promise confidentiality.
 - Ask leading questions.
 - Investigate.
 - Delay reporting.
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Record Keeping

Safeguarding records will:

- Be factual.
 - Be dated.
 - Be signed.
 - Be stored securely.
 - Be accessible only to appropriate safeguarding personnel.
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Confidentiality

Safeguarding information will only be shared where necessary to protect a child or comply with legal obligations.

Whistleblowing

Staff should report concerns regarding:

- Unsafe practice
- Professional misconduct
- Abuse by staff
- Failure to follow safeguarding procedures

No individual will suffer detriment for raising genuine safeguarding concerns.

Allegations Against Staff

Any allegation against a staff member will be taken seriously.

The DSL (or appropriate senior leader if the allegation concerns the DSL) will follow local safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

Health and Safety

The academy will:

- Maintain safe premises.
 - Monitor equipment.
 - Maintain emergency procedures.
 - Keep emergency contact information up to date.
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Equality and Inclusion

We welcome children of all backgrounds.

No child will be discriminated against because of:

- Race
- Religion
- Disability
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Family circumstances

Safeguarding arrangements apply equally to every child.

Staff Training

All staff will receive:

- Safeguarding induction.
- Regular safeguarding updates.
- Prevent awareness (where appropriate).
- Online safety guidance.

DSL training should be refreshed in line with current guidance.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or safeguarding guidance changes.

Working with Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs)

A Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is a professional responsible for managing and overseeing allegations made against adults who work with children. LADOs ensure that concerns about safeguarding are dealt with appropriately, fairly, and in accordance with legal procedures.

How HFTD Works with LADOs:

- If an allegation is made against a staff member, the DSL will immediately inform the relevant LADO.
- We will follow their guidance on investigation procedures and liaise with appropriate agencies.
- If necessary, we will implement interim safeguarding measures to ensure the safety of all children.
- All staff are trained in recognising situations where LADO involvement may be Required.

Council Contacts and LADO Details:

1. Lewisham (Grove Park Branch)
Council Contact: 020 8314 6000
LADO Email: lewishamLADO@lewisham.gov.uk

2. Epping Forest District (Loughton Branch)

Council Contact: 01992 564000
LADO Email: lado@essex.gov.uk

3. Croydon (Purley Branch)
Council Contact: 020 8726 6000
LADO Email: lado@croydon.gov.uk

4. Bexley (Sidcup Branch)
Council Contact: 020 8303 7777
LADO Email: lado@bexley.gov.uk

5. Lambeth (Dulwich Branch)
Council Contact: 020 7926 1000
LADO Email: lado@lambeth.gov.uk

6. Enfield (Enfield Branch)
Council Contact: 020 8379 1000
LADO Email: safeguardingservice@enfield.gov.uk

7. Bury St Edmunds (Bury St Edmunds Branch)
Council Contact: 01284 763233
LADO Email: lado@westsuffolk.gov.uk

8. Bromley (West Wickham & Beckenham Branches)
Council Contact: 020 8461 7775 or 020 8461 7669
LADO Email: LADO@bromley.gov.uk

or Gemma.Taylor@bromley.gov.uk

9. Wandsworth (Balham Branch)
Council Contact: 020 8871 7440
LADO Email: LADO@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

9. Haringey (Crouch End Branch)
Council Contact: 020 8489 0000
LADO Email: LADO@haringey.gov.uk

10. Camden (Hampstead Branch)
Council Contact: 020 7974 3317
LADO Email: LADO@camden.gov.uk

Support Resources For Children & Young People:

- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk
- YoungMinds: www.youngminds.org.uk

For Parents & Adults:

- Mind UK: www.mind.org.uk
- Relate: www.relate.org.uk

For Reporting Abuse:

- NAPAC (Child Abuse Support): www.napac.org.uk

For Online Safety:

- ThinkUKnow: www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org

Thank you for reading our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Together, we will work to keep all children safe. Please don't hesitate to get in touch at info@hftdacademy.co.uk if you have any questions, thoughts or concerns in regard to our Safeguarding policy.

(This policy has been reviewed and updated accordingly on the 11th August 2026 by our Deputy Safeguarding Lead).