

POLICY

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

How we keep every HFTD student safe

Reviewed October 2026

Reviewed every year



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This policy sets out how Here For The Drama Academy keeps children and young people safe, and what every member of our team must do. If you are ever worried about a child, act immediately: make sure they are safe, record what you know, and tell a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

1 OUR COMMITMENT

Here For The Drama Academy (HFTD) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person who trains with us. Every child has the right to:

- ◆ feel safe and protected;
- ◆ be treated with dignity and respect;
- ◆ learn and develop in a positive, supportive environment;
- ◆ be listened to and taken seriously;
- ◆ be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We act on every concern, and we keep a written record of what we do and why.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to everyone who works with HFTD students — Lead Teachers, cover teachers, assistants, management, volunteers and anyone working on our behalf — at every HFTD academy and at every HFTD activity, including weekly classes, 1-2-1 coaching, filming days, workshops and events.

3 KEY CONTACTS

Role	Name	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Milly Zero, Managing Director	milly@hftdacademy.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Joshua Ely, Co-Director	josh@hftdacademy.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Olivia Grimwood, Operations Manager	olivia@hftdacademy.co.uk

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputy hold **Level 3 safeguarding** training. If a child is in immediate danger, always call **999** first. Local authority and LADO contacts for every academy are listed in Appendix A.

4 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is informed by UK legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- ◆ Children Act 1989 and 2004
- ◆ Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- ◆ Working Together to Safeguard Children
- ◆ Human Rights Act 1998
- ◆ Keeping Children Safe in Education (where applicable)
- ◆ Equality Act 2010

5 SAFER RECRUITMENT AND STAFF CHECKS

Role	Checks and training
Lead Teachers	Enhanced DBS check, Level 2 Safeguarding Children training and a valid First Aid qualification (see section 6).
Cover teachers	Enhanced DBS check. Cover teachers come from our established cover pool or through trusted recommendation, and wherever possible a member of management is present at their first session.
Assistants	Enhanced DBS check.
DSLs and Deputy DSL	Level 3 safeguarding training.

Records of DBS checks, safeguarding certificates and First Aid qualifications are kept centrally and securely.

6 TRAINING STANDARDS

All three of the following are **mandatory** for every HFTD Lead Teacher. HFTD arranges and funds the required training; full details are in our Lead Teacher Safeguarding Training Policy.

Requirement	Standard
Enhanced DBS check	Issued within the last three years, or verified through the DBS Update Service (registration must normally be completed within 30 days of a certificate being issued). If a DBS check expires, the teacher's Lead Teacher role is paused until it is renewed.
Level 2 Safeguarding Children	Completed online course. Certificate held on file by HFTD.
First Aid	A valid qualification suitable for working with children and young people. Certificate held on file by HFTD.

Lead Teachers are responsible for keeping their checks and qualifications up to date, and HFTD contacts staff when renewals are due. All staff receive a safeguarding induction, regular updates and online safety guidance, and every member of staff reads this policy when they join and again every year.

7 RECOGNISING A CONCERN

A safeguarding concern is anything that makes you worried about a child's safety or welfare. This includes:

- ◆ **Physical abuse** — such as unexplained injuries or a child who flinches.
- ◆ **Emotional abuse** — such as a child who is constantly put down, fearful or withdrawn.
- ◆ **Sexual abuse** — including age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour.
- ◆ **Neglect** — such as a child who is often hungry, unwashed or not collected.
- ◆ **Bullying and peer-on-peer abuse**, in person or online.
- ◆ **Online harm**, including harassment or the sharing of inappropriate content.
- ◆ A **disclosure** from a child, or a sudden change in their mood, behaviour or attendance.
- ◆ Any concern about **an adult's behaviour** towards a child, including a colleague's.

8 RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE — THE SIX R'S

All staff are trained in our Six R's framework for responding when a child tells them something.

1. Receive	Stay calm and listen carefully, without showing shock or disbelief. Take what is said seriously.
2. Respond	Reassure the child they have done the right thing. Never promise to keep a secret — explain that you will need to share it with people who can help.
3. React	Only ask what you need to clarify, and never ask leading questions. Use T.E.D.: <i>Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me</i> . Don't give opinions about the person involved.
4. Record	Write it down as soon as possible, in the child's exact words, with the date, time, location and any non-verbal behaviour. Keep your original notes.
5. Remember	Report to a DSL immediately. Do not investigate yourself.
6. Relax	Safeguarding can be emotionally difficult. Ask for support if you need it.

9 REPORTING AND RECORDING

All safeguarding concerns and incidents are logged on our **central online safeguarding system**, where they are reviewed by a DSL and dealt with promptly. Every decision and action is recorded in writing.

If a child is at immediate risk

- ◆ Call **999**.
- ◆ Inform a DSL or the Deputy DSL straight away.
- ◆ If a child would be in danger going home, contact the police and local safeguarding services for guidance before allowing them to leave.

If the concern is not immediate

- ◆ Log the concern on the central safeguarding system and inform a DSL or the Deputy DSL.
- ◆ If the concern involves a DSL, report it to the other DSL or another senior member of staff.

What happens next

The DSL reviews every report and decides on the most appropriate action, which may include monitoring the child's wellbeing (with regular updates from the teacher), speaking sensitively with the parent or carer, or seeking advice and making a referral to children's services, the LADO or the police.

10 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND WHISTLEBLOWING

Any allegation that an adult working with HFTD has harmed a child, or may pose a risk to children, is taken seriously. The DSL (or another senior leader, if the allegation concerns a DSL) will contact the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), follow their guidance and put interim safeguarding measures in place where needed.

Staff must report unsafe practice, professional misconduct, abuse by staff or any failure to follow safeguarding procedures. No one will suffer for raising a genuine concern.

11 CODE OF CONDUCT

Everyone working with HFTD students must:

- ◆ treat every child equally, without favouritism;
- ◆ use appropriate language and behaviour;
- ◆ respect children's privacy;
- ◆ avoid being alone with one child in group settings wherever possible;
- ◆ never exchange inappropriate messages;
- ◆ never transport a child without parental consent;
- ◆ never give a child alcohol, cigarettes or drugs;
- ◆ never engage in inappropriate physical contact.

Minis classes always have a Lead Teacher and an assistant in the room.

Physical contact

Drama training sometimes involves physical guidance. Any contact must be appropriate, necessary, explained beforehand, age-appropriate, respectful and with the child's consent. A child may decline physical guidance at any time.

Toileting

Minis and Juniors go to the toilet accompanied by an assistant. Wherever possible, assistants take children in groups of two or more, to avoid one-to-one situations. With very young children, the assistant waits outside and only steps in if there is an emergency.

Parents tell us about any child who needs help with toileting. Where help is given, two adults are aware, and the child's dignity is always protected.

1-2-1 sessions

HFTD offers 1-2-1 coaching, and every part of this policy applies to it. When a session takes place at a student's home, the parent or carer may leave with their agreement. For new and younger students,

we recommend the parent or carer stays on the premises. Sessions are arranged through HFTD channels, and any concern is reported in the same way as in class.

12 PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMING AND MOBILE PHONES

Filming is at the heart of our screen acting training, so every child is filmed – in self-tapes, on-camera exercises and scene work.

- ◆ **Media consent** is recorded on ClassForKids. Families can change their choice at any time by contacting us.
- ◆ Children whose families have **opted out** still take part fully in filming and self-taping, on cameras or phones. Their footage is never used on social media or for promotional purposes.
- ◆ **Social media is run by HFTD management only.** Before anything is shared, management checks each child's media consent on the register, and nothing featuring a child without consent is ever shared or used for promotion.
- ◆ Teachers film on HFTD phones and cameras or on their **own phones**. Footage taken on a personal phone must be uploaded to HFTD's central Drive and deleted from the device – including any recently deleted folder and cloud backup – **within 48 hours**. Student footage must never be kept, shared or posted personally.
- ◆ Parents and visitors may not photograph or film classes without prior permission.

13 ONLINE SAFETY AND COMMUNICATION

- ◆ Staff communicate with families through HFTD's official channels only.
- ◆ Staff never message students privately or contact them through personal social media.
- ◆ Any online safeguarding concern is reported in the same way as any other concern.
- ◆ We encourage students to behave respectfully online and to tell a trusted adult about anything that worries them.

14 REGISTERS, ATTENDANCE AND COLLECTION

- ◆ A register is taken at every session on ClassForKids, where any collection instructions are shown against the student's name.
- ◆ **Minis and Juniors** leave only with a parent, an authorised adult or an approved collection arrangement, and staff stay with them until they are collected. Staff check any adult they do not know.
- ◆ **Pros** may leave independently, unless a parent or carer has emailed HFTD to say their child must wait to be collected at the studio door. That instruction is recorded on the student's ClassForKids profile so it appears on the register.
- ◆ Once a Pro has left the premises, they are no longer in HFTD's care. Staff do not need to wait with a Pro for a late parent unless the student or parent asks them to, or there is a cause for concern.
- ◆ Repeated late collection is reported to management, who follow it up with the family. Any safeguarding concern about absence or collection is reported to a DSL.

15 MEDICAL INFORMATION AND FIRST AID

- ◆ Emergency contacts, medical conditions, allergies and other essential information for every student are held on ClassForKids and available to the teaching team.
- ◆ Every Lead Teacher is required to hold a valid First Aid qualification.
- ◆ Accidents and injuries are recorded on our central system, and parents are informed.
- ◆ In an emergency, staff call 999, then inform management and the parent as soon as possible.

16 FIRE SAFETY

Details of the emergency exits for each of our venues are held on our central systems, and our teachers know them.

17 ANTI-BULLYING

HFTD has a **zero-tolerance** approach to bullying in any form — physical, verbal, emotional, online or discriminatory. Bullying is a form of peer-on-peer abuse and is always treated as a safeguarding concern, never dismissed as "just children being children".

- ◆ Any child who reports bullying is listened to, taken seriously and supported.
- ◆ The DSL looks into every report and involves parents where appropriate.
- ◆ Consequences may include a warning, a meeting with parents, suspension from classes or, in serious or repeated cases, removal from HFTD.
- ◆ Sexual harassment between peers, or bullying involving a power imbalance or a vulnerable child, receives immediate attention and may be referred to external agencies.

18 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

We welcome children of every background. No child is discriminated against because of race, religion, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation or family circumstances, and our safeguarding arrangements apply equally to every child.

19 RECORDS, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Safeguarding records are factual, dated and stored securely, and are accessible only to those with safeguarding responsibility. Information is shared only where it is necessary to protect a child or where the law requires it, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

20 POLICY REVIEW

This policy was reviewed in **October 2026** by HFTD's Designated Safeguarding Leads. It is reviewed every year, or sooner if legislation or guidance changes. Every member of staff reads it on joining and again each year, and it is always available on our staff Notion. Questions or concerns about this policy are welcome at info@hftdacademy.co.uk.

A LOCAL AUTHORITY AND LADO CONTACTS

Allegations about adults working with children are referred to the LADO for the area where the academy is based, within one working day. Where no direct LADO line is published, the number given is the authority's children's services front door, which handles LADO referrals. Details checked against each authority's official website in October 2026.

Academy	Local authority	LADO email	Phone
Grove Park	Lewisham	LewishamLADO@lewisham.gov.uk	020 8314 7280
Dulwich	Lambeth	LADO@lambeth.gov.uk	020 7926 4679
Balham	Wandsworth	lado@wandsworth.gov.uk	020 8871 6622 (MASH)
Sidcup	Bexley	LADO@bexley.gov.uk	020 3045 5440 (MASH)
Purley	Croydon	LADO@croydon.gov.uk	020 8255 2888 (MASH)
Beckenham, West Wickham	Bromley	LADO@bromley.gov.uk	020 8461 7373 (Children & Families Hub)
Loughton	Essex County Council	lado@essex.gov.uk	03330 139 797
Enfield	Enfield	SafeguardingService@enfield.gov.uk	020 3821 1701
Bury St Edmunds	Suffolk County Council	LADO@suffolk.gov.uk	0300 123 2044
Bethnal Green	Tower Hamlets	LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk	020 7364 0677
Crouch End	Haringey	LADO@haringey.gov.uk	020 8489 2968
Hampstead	Camden	LADO@camden.gov.uk	020 7974 4556

B SUPPORT AND ADVICE

For	Service
Adults worried about a child	NSPCC Helpline — 0808 800 5000
Children and young people	Childline — 0800 1111 · The Mix (themix.org.uk) · YoungMinds (youngminds.org.uk)
Parents and adults	Mind (mind.org.uk) · Relate (relate.org.uk)
Adult survivors of childhood abuse	NAPAC (napac.org.uk)
Online safety	ThinkUKnow (thinkuknow.co.uk) · Internet Matters (internetmatters.org)