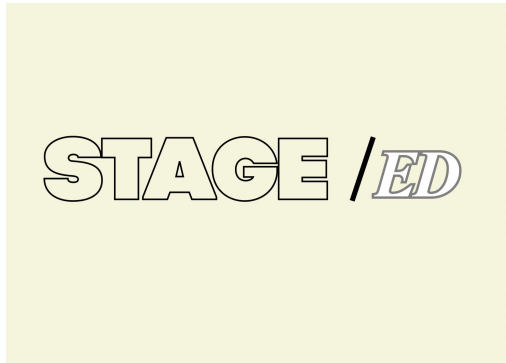


Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Stage Education



Date approved: February 2026

Approved by: Stage Education Directors (Founder/Director: Emma Hobbis)

Date to be reviewed by: February 2027

Important contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Emma Hobbis (Founder/Director)	info@stageworksacademy.co.uk Tel: 07812 957140
Deputy DSL	Sarah Challoner (Assistant Manager)	info@stageworksacademy.co.uk Tel: 07812 957140
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Birmingham	Duty LADO Team	ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk
Children’s Advice and Support Service (CASS) – Birmingham	Front Door (CASS)	Day: 0121 303 1888 Out of hours: 0121 675 4806

1. Aims

Stage Education aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare.
- All staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities with respect to safeguarding.
- Staff and volunteers are trained to recognise, respond to and report safeguarding issues, including those specific to performing arts settings (e.g., physical contact in dance, changing areas, use of images, off-site performances and chaperoning).

2. Legislation and statutory/non-statutory guidance

This policy draws on and aligns with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 (DfE) – principles and safer recruitment elements are adopted where applicable to our out-of-school setting.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) – multi-agency expectations and standards.
- Out-of-school settings (OOSS) safeguarding guidance for providers (updated May 2025) – specific to clubs, tuition and community activities.
- The Children Act 1989/2004; the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR; the Equality Act 2010; the Prevent duty guidance; and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

We adhere to Birmingham multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and escalate concerns to CASS and/or the police where required.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help as soon as problems emerge;
- Protecting children from maltreatment (including online);

- Preventing impairment of health or development;
- Ensuring safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best outcomes.

Child protection is the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect. See Appendix 1 for types of abuse and indicators.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

4. Equality statement

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice. All children have the same protection regardless of barriers they may face due to disability, SEND, health, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexuality, language, or social circumstances. We give special consideration to children with SEND, young carers, those absent from education, and looked-after children.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all Stageworks staff, volunteers, visiting professionals and chaperones.

All Staff and Volunteers will:

- Read and understand the sections of this policy relevant to their role and receive annual safeguarding training (including online safety).
- Know how to report concerns to the DSL/Deputy DSL immediately.
- Maintain professional boundaries, including appropriate physical contact in classes and backstage, and follow Stageworks' Code of Conduct.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): The DSL (Emma Hobbis) leads on child protection and wider safeguarding. The DSL ensures training, advises staff, liaises with external agencies (e.g., CASS, police, LADO) and oversees record-keeping. When absent, the Deputy DSL (Sarah Challoner) covers.

Directors/Management Team: Ensure safeguarding and child protection underpin all operations; approve policies; ensure safer recruitment; and that suitable supervision, chaperoning and risk assessments are in place for all activities and performances.

6. Confidentiality

All safeguarding information is confidential and shared on a 'need to know' basis in line with UK GDPR and DPA 2018. Do not promise confidentiality to a child. Information may be shared without consent where there is risk of harm. Records are stored securely.

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

If a child is at immediate risk or you believe harm is likely: contact the police (999) and/or make a referral to CASS immediately. Anyone can make a referral, but inform the DSL as soon as possible.

If a child discloses to you:

- Listen, reassure, avoid leading questions; explain you must share the concern; record the disclosure promptly in the child's words; and report to the DSL.

FGM: Teachers have a statutory duty to report to police if they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. All staff must escalate to the DSL if there is risk or suspicion.

Extremism/Prevent: Raise concerns with the DSL; emergency threats should be reported to police (999).

Mental health: Concerns that amount to safeguarding should be escalated as above.

Child-on-child abuse: Never dismiss as 'banter'. Follow procedures; DSL will assess and liaise with appropriate agencies.

8. Performing arts specific safeguards

We recognise specific risks in performing arts settings and will:

- Use clear consent and boundaries for physical contact (e.g., dance corrections), explaining technique before any contact and offering alternatives.
- Provide supervised, separate changing areas; implement rules for costumes and quick changes to protect dignity.
- Use licensed, trained chaperones for performances and off-site events; maintain ratios and sign-in/out.
- Risk assess venues, travel, backstage and technical areas; ensure safe equipment use (e.g., aerial silks/hoops, props).
- Manage photography/filming with parental consent; control image sharing on social media; never allow personal devices in changing areas.
- Plan for overnight stays and trips with appropriate supervision, safeguarding plans and parental consent.

9. Online safety and mobile technology

We educate pupils and families about online safety; set rules for device use; and take action on content, contact, conduct and commerce risks. Staff must not photograph children on personal devices. We will have appropriate filtering/monitoring on any Stage Education -managed IT used by children.

10. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, concerns will be discussed with parents/carers by the DSL. If this would increase risk, we will consult CASS/police before notifying parents.

11. Children with SEND, disabilities or health needs

Children with SEND or certain health conditions may face additional barriers. We offer reasonable adjustments, extra pastoral support and communication-friendly approaches; staff receive training to recognise and respond to additional needs.

12. Children with a social worker

The DSL will liaise with social workers and consider this status in decisions about attendance, support and safeguarding.

13. LGBTQ+ children

We provide a safe space and zero tolerance for bullying based on sexuality or gender. We will seek clinical advice and work with families when supporting gender-questioning children, considering wider vulnerabilities.

14. Complaints, concerns and whistle-blowing

Safeguarding complaints against staff will follow the LADO process. Other complaints follow Stage Educations Complaints Policy. Whistle-blowing is encouraged; concerns can be raised to management, DSL or directly with external agencies.

15. Record-keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and rationales must be recorded securely. We maintain individual child protection files and retain records in line with our retention schedule. Where a child moves settings, we will transfer records securely.

16. Training

All staff/volunteers receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction and at least annually (including online safety and Prevent awareness). DSL/Deputy DSL complete enhanced training every 2 years and update knowledge at least annually.

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Directors/Management Team and updated in line with national/local guidance.

18. Links with other policies

- Behaviour/Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment
- Health and Safety
- Online Safety and Mobile Phone Use
- Equality and Diversity
- Data Protection and Privacy Notices
- Trip/Performance Management and Chaperone Policy
- First Aid and Medical
- Photography and Use of Images

Appendix 1: Types of abuse (indicators)

Summarises physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect; includes signs and risk factors.

Appendix 2: Safer recruitment and DBS checks – policy and procedures

We follow safer recruitment including advertising, application scrutiny, references, interview, identity verification, right to work, qualification checks and enhanced DBS (with barred list where engaging in regulated activity). Additional checks for those who have lived/worked overseas; volunteers risk-assessed and checked as appropriate; contractors and third parties provide written assurance of checks. Single central record maintained.

Appendix 3: Allegations/concerns about staff and volunteers (including low-level concerns)

We manage allegations that meet the harm threshold via LADO and may consider suspension based on risk assessment. Low-level concerns are recorded, reviewed for patterns and addressed proportionately. Confidentiality maintained; records retained in line with guidance.

Appendix 4: Specific safeguarding issues

Includes child-on-child abuse; online harms (including sharing of nudes and semi-nudes); FGM and so-called honour-based abuse; forced marriage; radicalisation; serious violence; missing children; child sexual/criminal exploitation; absent from education warning signs; identity/suitability of visitors; non-collection of children.

Stage Education

Unit 2, Onkar House, Winster Grove, Great Barr, Birmingham, B44 9EG

Tel: 07812 957140 | Email: info@stageed.co.uk