

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

MX Masterclass Limited

Approved: 1 September 2026 | Next review due: 1 September 2028

1. Introduction

- 1.1 MX Masterclass Limited is a for-profit organisation providing musical theatre training to children and young people. It is run by Michael Xavier.
- 1.2 MX Masterclass Limited operates from: Old Diorama Arts Centre, 201 Drummond Street, London NW1 3FE.
- 1.3 MX Masterclass Limited is managed by a management team (“the Team”). One member of the Team, Debra Morgan, holds particular responsibility for safeguarding children as the organisation’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) — sometimes also referred to as a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- 1.4 The Team has adopted this safeguarding children policy and expects every adult working or helping at MX Masterclass Limited to support it and comply with it. This policy applies to all staff, managers, directors, volunteers, students, contractors and anyone working on behalf of MX Masterclass Limited.

2. Purpose of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy is intended to protect children and young people who receive any service from us, including the children of adults who receive services from us.
- 2.2 We believe that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm, and we are committed to the protection of children and young people. This policy provides guidance and overarching principles to everyone who represents us as a volunteer or member of staff, and sets out our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

3. Recognising the Risks to Children

The great majority of children grow up in safe and happy environments, and it is important not to exaggerate or overestimate the dangers they face. Nevertheless, there are situations and forms of harm from which children need protection, including:

- **Physical abuse** — causing physical harm, including hitting, shaking or otherwise hurting a child.
- **Emotional abuse** — persistent emotional maltreatment that affects a child’s emotional development.
- **Sexual abuse** — forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including via the internet.
- **Neglect** — the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs.
- **Grooming** — including online grooming, where an adult builds a relationship with a child to exploit or abuse them.
- **Domestic abuse** — children witnessing or being affected by abuse between adults in their household.

- **Bullying and cyberbullying** — including peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse, and acts of violence or aggression between children.
- **Child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation** — including exploitation linked to ‘county lines’ activity.
- **Radicalisation and extremism** — exposure to views or influences that draw a child towards extremist behaviour.
- **Inappropriate supervision** — by staff, volunteers or other adults.
- **Self-harm** — and other indicators that a child may be struggling with their wellbeing.
- **Unsafe environments and activities** — including inadequate risk management at venues or during activities.
- **Crime and victimisation** — including a child being a victim of, or exposed to, criminal activity.

4. Equal Protection for Every Child

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount;
- all children have an equal right to protection from harm, regardless of race, gender or gender identity, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation or age, in line with the Equality Act 2010;
- some children are more vulnerable to harm as a result of their circumstances, prior experiences, communication needs, additional needs or disability, or level of dependency; and
- working with children, young people, their parents and/or guardians, carers and other agencies is essential to protecting their wellbeing.

5. Safeguarding Children at Events and Activities

- 5.1 There are three kinds of events or activities: (a) those open to adults and children of all ages; (b) those for children accompanied by a parent or guardian; and (c) those for unaccompanied children, which are sometimes run alongside other events or activities.
- 5.2 At events and activities open to all ages, children under 16 must be accompanied throughout by an adult aged 18 or over who both brings the child and takes the child home afterwards. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring written consent and a mobile telephone number for one of their parents or guardians.
- 5.3 At events and activities for children accompanied by a parent, children under 16 must be supervised throughout by an adult aged 18 or over who both brings the child and takes the child home afterwards. If one adult brings more than one child, those children must stay together so that the adult can supervise them all. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring written consent and a mobile telephone number for one of their parents or guardians.
- 5.4 At events and activities for unaccompanied children, children under 16 must be enrolled by a responsible adult before being left with the event leader. The enrolment must record the child’s name, age and address, the names and addresses of the child’s parents or guardians, and the parents’ or guardians’ mobile telephone numbers. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring written consent and a mobile telephone number for one of their parents or guardians.

- 5.5 'Events' and 'activities' are defined broadly to include any occasion on which MX Masterclass Limited provides a service.

6. Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks

- 6.1 MX Masterclass Limited offers musical theatre training in singing, acting and dancing, including showcase performances, to children and young people.
- 6.2 Some of our activities require adult participants or leaders to undergo Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and/or police checks under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The required level of check (if any) will broadly reflect the degree and frequency of unsupervised access given to other people's children.
- 6.3 The Team takes very seriously any allegation of impropriety on the part of anyone working or volunteering for MX Masterclass Limited. Anyone who discovers anything of concern should get in touch immediately with Michael Xavier and/or Debra Morgan.
- 6.4 The Team will review any allegation and the likely risk to children and, if appropriate, will consider suspending or barring the individual from future events, or revoking their involvement with MX Masterclass Limited, in full accordance with our rules and procedures, and will inform the Disclosure and Barring Service or the local authority designated officer (LADO) where required.

7. Health and Safety Aspects of Safeguarding

- 7.1 Before any event for unaccompanied children, the Team will carry out a risk assessment and take steps to minimise all risks to health and safety. Parents and children will be made aware of any particular risks and the steps taken to minimise them. The Team will keep a record of all risk assessments.
- 7.2 Sufficient adults must be present at any event for unaccompanied children to allow one adult to deal with an emergency while another supervises the remaining children.

8. Preventing Bullying

We will not tolerate the bullying of children, whether by adults or by other children, including cyberbullying and peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse. If an incident of bullying between children arises at an MX Masterclass Limited event, those involved will be separated immediately and the parents or guardians of the children involved will be asked to help resolve the matter. The Team will review all incidents of bullying between children and assess the likely future risk to children. Where appropriate, the Team will consider banning a child from future events, but only in full accordance with the rules and procedures of MX Masterclass Limited. Allegations of bullying by adults towards children will be dealt with under paragraph 6.3 above.

9. Reporting Concerns and Responding to Disclosures

- 9.1 If anyone at MX Masterclass Limited is concerned about a child's welfare, they should tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Debra Morgan. Any concerns will be kept confidential and discussed only with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Director, Michael Xavier, who will make a referral to the child's local authority children's social care team and, where appropriate, to the NSPCC

Helpline (0808 800 5000, Monday to Friday, 10am–4pm; help@nspcc.org.uk) or, in an emergency, the police (999, or 101 for non-emergencies).

- 9.2 If a child tells us they are experiencing abuse, we will reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling us, and make sure they know that abuse is never their fault. We will never promise a child that we will keep what they have told us secret. We will explain that we need to share what they have told us with someone who can help.

10. Photography, Filming and Images

No photographs, video or other recordings will be taken or published of any child attending an event or activity — including on social media — unless prior written permission has been given by a person with parental responsibility. Any images used will be stored and processed in line with our obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Anyone with concerns about a person taking photographs or recordings at an event or activity should contact MX Masterclass Limited immediately.

11. Managing Behaviour, Discipline and Acceptable Restraint

- 11.1 Adults supervising children at MX Masterclass Limited events must never use any form of corporal punishment. If physical restraint is absolutely necessary to prevent injury to any person or serious damage to property, only the minimum restraint necessary may be used, and only for that purpose.
- 11.2 Unacceptable behaviour at events for unaccompanied children will generally be addressed by separating the children involved from each other and from the group. They will be suitably supervised and returned as soon as possible to the care of their parents or guardians.
- 11.3 MX Masterclass Limited may apply a further disciplinary sanction, namely banning a child from one or more future events for up to 18 months.
- 11.4 A parent or guardian who is unhappy with such a ban may appeal to MX Masterclass Limited, who will hear the views of all relevant persons. The decision of MX Masterclass Limited following an appeal is final.

12. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy has been drawn up with reference to the following legislation and statutory and non-statutory guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), ratified by the UK in 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (Department for Education / Department of Health and Social Care)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Out-of-School Settings: code of practice (Department for Education)
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (HM Government)

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Team at least every two years, or sooner if there is a change in legislation, statutory guidance or our activities, or following any safeguarding incident.

Approval

This policy was approved by Michael Xavier, Director, on 1 September 2026, and is due for review by 1 September 2028.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Debra Morgan

Director: Michael Xavier