

CHaOS Safeguarding Policy

Version 1.8.1

1. General Principles

- CHaOS has a duty of care to all visitors to our events and must protect, and work in the best interest of, the children and adults at risk with whom we come into contact.
- Most of the visitors to CHaOS events are under 18 years of age, and thus CHaOS owes them a duty of care as children.
- Adults at risk are adults that cannot take care of themselves and need extra care and support. This puts them at greater risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- CHaOS has a number of practices in place to help safeguard visitors, outlined in detail in the rest of this Policy, which are in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Care Act 2014.
- If schools or other hosts require additional measures to those described in this document in order to fulfil their own Child Protection Policies, then CHaOS must be informed of these by the following dates:
 - 1st June if the visit is part of the Summer Roadshow.
 - Two weeks before the date of the visit if it is part of the December Mini-Roadshow or at any other time of year.
- If a school or host requests additional measures to comply with their own Child Protection/Safeguarding Policies, CHaOS will consider whether these requirements can be accommodated before a visit is confirmed.
- The principles set out within this Policy apply equally to both in-person and online events.
- The CHaOS Committee is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is properly implemented and reviewed. This Policy was last reviewed on 21/12/2025 and will next be reviewed before 31/12/2026.

2. DBS Disclosures

- All CHaOS volunteers demonstrating to children at more than 3 events in a 30-day period will be doing regulated activity related to children. These volunteers will have undergone and passed (as defined below) an Enhanced with Children's Barred Lists DBS check within the last 3.5 years before they complete their 4th day volunteering in a 30-day period.
- DBS checks contain personal information, and as such may only be handled by authorised persons. We will store in a password protected file the following information: *Full name, CRSid/email, Date of DBS Certificate Issue, DBS status Certificate Number, Name of Committee Member who has seen the certificate*, for those who have been checked. This data will be kept for up to 4 years after the date of issue. For individuals who have applied for a DBS check with CHaOS, we will keep the following details, *Full name, CRSid/email, Form Reference Number, Date of Application*, for up to six months after date of application. More information about how we store personal data can be found in our Privacy Policy.
- Completed/partially completed forms that are not sent off (for example because of errors in filling them out) are destroyed.
- An individual is considered to have automatically failed a DBS check if they are on the Children's Barred List. Offences recorded in other sections of the DBS disclosure do not necessarily prevent an individual from volunteering with CHaOS – a formal risk assessment will be completed.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

- The CHaOS Safeguarding Officer (Asmita Niyogi) also acts as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) of CHaOS. They are responsible for taking the lead in ensuring that appropriate arrangements for keeping children and adults at risk safe are in place in CHaOS. This includes ensuring individuals volunteering with CHaOS are made aware of, and understand, this Policy and know what to do if they have any concerns about the welfare of a child or an adult at risk.
- The DSL promotes the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk involved in CHaOS activities.
- The DSL undergoes regular training, given yearly by Student Community Action (SCA) at the University of Cambridge.
- Volunteers have a duty, and are strongly encouraged, to report any inappropriate or worrying behaviour to the DSL.
- The DSL and Co-Presidents of CHaOS can be contacted at safeguarding@chaossience.org.uk for all matters related to the safeguarding and wellbeing of event visitors and volunteers.

4. Practical measures to protect children and adults at risk at CHaOS events

- CHaOS ensures as far as possible that volunteers are never alone with children or adults at risk. Precautions ensuring this include:
 - There are at least two demonstrators in any area (including any dark room space) at all times as far as practically possible.
 - Volunteers will only use staff toilets in schools where possible.
 - All volunteers are made aware that they should avoid being alone with children and adults at risk.
 - At school and roadshow events all CHaOS demonstrators are required to wear and, under most circumstances, to display an official bright blue CHaOS t-shirt in order to make them clearly identifiable as affiliated with CHaOS. [NB: One example where we would allow a blue t-shirt to be less visible is if demonstrators request to wear a coat if outside. Another exception is for our annual large event “Crash, Bang, Squelch!”, where volunteers’ t-shirts are purple.]
- School visits: CHaOS requires schools to arrange at least one member of school staff supervising the children, and it is the responsibility of that member of staff to ensure that the children are behaving appropriately. If a CHaOS volunteer feels that a child’s behaviour is disruptive or posing a risk to themselves or others, they should request assistance from a member of school staff immediately. As all CHaOS demonstrators are volunteers, they reserve the right to ask for a child to be removed from the event, or for the event to be stopped entirely if it is felt that poor behaviour is posing risks to the safety of the children or volunteers.
- Public events: Occasionally, unaccompanied children attend CHaOS events. Unless it is believed that they do not have permission to be out alone, this is not necessarily an issue. If their behaviour is disruptive or unsafe, they should be asked to leave, and appropriate assistance should be called (e.g. venue caretaker, police) if this becomes problematic. If all else fails and safety is being compromised, the event should be closed.
- There are often some unaccompanied adult visitors to CHaOS events. In the unlikely event that volunteers consider an adult visitor to be behaving inappropriately, the visitor should be asked to leave. If this becomes problematic, appropriate assistance should be called (e.g. venue caretaker, police), and if all else fails and safety is considered to be compromised, the event should be closed.

5. Allegations against volunteers

- There are occasions when volunteers working with children or adults at risk are accused of abusing people under their care. All such allegations must be taken seriously in the best interests of the child or adult at risk, and the volunteer. The potential of allegations arising is discussed with all CHaOS volunteers, as is appropriate behaviour and conduct to minimise misunderstandings which may lead to allegations, such as:
 - Ensuring that volunteers are never alone with children or adults at risk wherever possible.
 - Avoiding physical contact with children or adults at risk unless in the case of emergency, such as restraint or medical attention.
- In the event of an alleged incident of this nature occurring during a CHaOS event, the volunteer in question would immediately be suspended from the event. The individual would remain suspended from CHaOS activities pending the resolution of the allegations. The DSL should be contacted and is responsible for appropriately escalating the concerns and making third parties, such as the police, aware of alleged incidents when relevant.

6. Photography

- When possible, CHaOS Committee members take photographs at events to use for publicity purposes. CHaOS understands that photography is an important safeguarding issue. CHaOS volunteers are informed of the issues surrounding photography and are advised not to take photographs including children during events unless they are taking them specifically for use by CHaOS in accordance with the guidelines below.
- When visiting schools, permission to take photographs will be obtained from a member of school staff in advance with further confirmation and details obtained on the day of the visit. CHaOS understands that there may be some specific children within a school for whom photography permission is not available, and will avoid taking photographs including these children. Alternatively, it may be more convenient for school staff to take the photographs themselves and subsequently provide us with some images if possible.
- Public events: any volunteer taking photographs including children will carry 'Photography Permission Forms' and, where possible, approach the parent or guardian of children clearly identifiable in any photograph to obtain written and signed consent to use the photographs as described on the form. Notes will be made on the form to link it to specific children/images (and ideally the form photographed with the relevant children to ensure correct identification), and completed forms will be kept on file. Of photographs in which children are clearly identifiable, only those for which consent has been given will be used in publicity

material. Other photographs in which children are clearly identifiable will be deleted.

7. Suspicions and Reporting

- If a volunteer suspects that abuse of a child has occurred (either through disclosure, behaviour, or signs of injury), they must report it to the DSL, or if immediate intervention may be needed, a Committee member at the event. If a volunteer suspects inappropriate behaviour from another CHaOS member that causes or has potential to cause abuse to children or adults at risk, steps should be taken as outlined in section 5.
 - In a school setting, the Committee member will then report the suspicion to a member of school staff.
 - In a public event setting, reports of suspected abuse can be made either to the local social services, or to the NSPCC telephone/email/online helpline. It is not essential to know a child's name in order to report them via the NSPCC helpline.
 - If a child makes a disclosure to a volunteer, the volunteer must remain calm, listen attentively, not ask leading questions, and at an appropriate moment, explain to the child that it will be necessary to share the information with the appropriate person.

8. Additional requirements by schools

- In previous years, schools have requested us to take additional Safeguarding measures to those described above. Some examples of these requests, and guidance for the CHaOS Committee, are listed below.
 - Identity badges: CHaOS volunteers will, wherever possible, wear official bright blue CHaOS t-shirts during school visits/events other than "Crash, Bang, Squelch!". Whilst we do not have our own official identity badges, we are happy to wear school visitor passes or similar if required.
 - Staff supervision of volunteers: in the past, we have visited schools which have insisted that all volunteers must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times when on the premises. This is often impractical, as there can be more than 15 demonstrators who need to move frequently between classrooms, vehicles and facilities throughout the day, but can be accommodated if deemed necessary.

- If schools or other hosts require any such measures to be taken in order to fulfil their own Child Protection/Safeguarding Policies, then CHaOS must be informed of these by the following dates:
 - 1st June if the visit is part of the Summer Roadshow.
 - Two weeks before the date of the visit if it is part of the December Mini-Roadshow or at any other time of the year.
- CHaOS will then consider whether these requirements can be accommodated.
- CHaOS can only legally carry out enhanced DBS checks, with a check of the Children's Barred Lists, for volunteers if they demonstrate to children at more than 3 events in a 30-day period. For events outside of our Summer Roadshow, including schools visited on our December Mini-Roadshow, it is therefore unlikely that every volunteer will have been DBS checked.