Incorporating RATS Youth Theatre

CODE OF CONDUCT

For children and young people, their named parent / carer should read this alongside our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies

1. Purpose and Scope

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all members of Ribchester Amateur Theatrical Society ("the Society"), including committee members, production teams, cast, crew, and general members. It applies to conduct at rehearsals, performances, meetings, social events, and in all forms of communication carried out in connection with the Society, including electronic and social media communication such as WhatsApp.

The Society aims to keep participants safe, in a calm, safe and supportive environment and where young people can thrive.

By joining or remaining a member of the Society, individuals agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may be addressed in accordance with the Society's policies and procedures.

2. General Standards of Conduct

All members are expected to:

- Treat fellow members, volunteers, and members of the public with courtesy, respect, and consideration at all times.
- Act in a manner that upholds the reputation and values of the Society.
- Refrain from any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination, or abusive behaviour, whether in person, in writing, or online.
- Support a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all members, regardless of age, background, or experience.

The Society asks everyone involved in a production to:

- Respect themselves – be on time, join in, use feedback to improve performance, be polite to everyone.
- Respect others – follow the Director's instructions, listen, do not interrupt, co-operate, do not disrupt others who are rehearsing, respect other peoples' opinions.
- Attend all rehearsals and performances wherever possible.
- Respect the building, sets, props and costumes – young members, listen to the Chaperones.
- Follow health and safety guidelines and report any damages to a member of the production team.
- Report any bullying and harassment to the Director of Producer.

Code of Conduct first endorsed 7th July 2026. Amended and re-endorsed 6th October 2026. Next review October 2027. Lead Committee member: Anna Flynn, Vice Chair and Welfare Officer

Mobile phones during rehearsals and performances:

- Children and young people – the use of mobile phones is prohibited during rehearsals and performances. In an emergency, or in special circumstances, mobile phones are permitted to be used with consent from the lead Chaperone or Production lead.
- The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any mobile phone is strictly prohibited.
- The Director may give participants permission to video sections of choreography or make audio recordings for personal reference only to support learning. These must not be shared on social media.
- Participants can enjoy taking photographs and videos in a DESIGNATED photo and videoing session but must respect the rules about not sharing these on social media.
- Only 'official' photographs can be shared on social media.

3. Use of WhatsApp and Similar Messaging Platforms

3.1 Where committee members, production teams, members, or volunteers, establish a WhatsApp group in connection with RATS activities, such groups are to be used solely for the sharing of information. Appropriate use includes, but is not limited to:

- Committee updates and administrative notices.
- Communication relating to productions, including rehearsal schedules, cues, and logistical arrangements.
- General information of relevance to members of the Society.

3.2 WhatsApp groups, and WhatsApp messaging generally, **must not** be used to raise a complaint, a concern, unacceptable behaviour. Any such matter must instead be raised using RATS official email address, [ribchesterrats@gmail.com], so that it can be received, recorded, and handled appropriately and confidentially. Any concerns regarding a welfare or safeguarding issues must be addressed in accordance with RATS Safeguarding Policy.

3.3 Any Committee member who receives a WhatsApp message raising any of the above must, rather than responding to or addressing the matter on WhatsApp, refer the sender to the RATS official email address and encourage them to submit the matter in writing by that route.

3.4 No member must set up a RATS associated WhatsApp group adding other members of the society, or add another member to an existing RATS WhatsApp group, without that member's express prior agreement.

3.5 Standards of Communication **-** all use of WhatsApp (or other) involving members of RATS must always be conducted in a respectful and courteous manner. Disrespectful, offensive, or inappropriate messages are not permitted under any circumstances, and may be treated as a breach of this Code of Conduct.

3.6 Permitted Hours of Communication **-** Messages sent to or from any official RATS WhatsApp groups must not be sent between the hours of 7:00 pm and 9:00 am. This restriction is intended to protect members' time and wellbeing outside of reasonable hours. Members should schedule or hold non-urgent messages for sending within the permitted hours.

4. Raising Concerns

- Most issues can be resolved 'informally' by talking things through with the appropriate person/party.
- Anyone wishing to report a breach of this Code during a rehearsal or performance, should bring it to the attention of the Director or Producer in the first instance.
- If neither of the above options are acceptable or appropriate to the person raising the concern, or have failed to resolve the issue, the matter should be put in writing via the Society's official email address [ribchesterrats@gmail.com]. Matters raised in this way will be handled in accordance with the Society's relevant policies and procedures.

5. Breach of this Code of Conduct

Any breach of this Code of Conduct may be addressed by the Committee. This may include an informal discussion, a formal warning, or, in serious or repeated cases, suspension or termination of membership. Further information is available in RATS Complaints Policy and Procedure.

6. Review

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed periodically by the Committee to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects good practice.

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