

POLICIES

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION

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SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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(1) Overview

1. Our policies are set out in line with up to date government guidelines and legislation which are followed in strict protocol by our teams, officers, contractors and service users at all times.
2. Our safeguarding policy is in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all minors using our services or platforms in any way
3. Our aim is always to prevent, protect and support young people at risk of harm
4. We maintain a strict reporting & referral system, and will support local authorities in order to keep young people safe
5. Our policy applies to all children, visitors and staff
6. A minor/child is someone under the age of 18 years old

(2) Procedure

1. When new staff join, they will be made aware, and shown a copy of this policy

2. All new members of staff will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place and told who the **Designated Officer (DSO)** is
3. All new staff will have an induction period to include robust safeguarding training and information
4. All staff are made aware of their responsibilities to safeguarding and what actions should be taken in the event of a referral
5. All staff are made aware of the remit of the role of DSO
6. All staff will be asked to read this policy yearly or upon any updates

(3) Who this policy protects

1. This policy is designed to keep all minors at our organization safe
2. We deem minors using our services to include the following:

a) Performers under the age of 18 years - Any minor taking part in a performance either produced, co-produced or general managed by us.

b) Customers/patrons under the age of 18 years - Any minor involved directly, or indirectly with the purchase of a service or goods at theatrical performances produced and/or operated by us or in our name.

c) Minors participating in any of our Learning and Participatory services. This includes (but is not limited to) - work in schools, at festivals, workshops, and/or community activities

(4) Safer recruitment

1. Any staff who come into direct and/or in-direct contact with minors within the remit of their role, have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
2. We ensure that our company adheres to safer recruitment processes at all times. This includes:

a) Carefully consider and tailor our job specifications

b) Prepare an information pack;

c) Ask for a written application form (save as with reasonable adjustments)

d) Ask for a written declaration with regards to criminal convictions, spent or otherwise;

e) Ask for identification;

f) Ensure referencing checks are carried out and completed prior to start date commencing;

g) Ensure appropriate vetting & training is carried out as applicable

h) Conduct safer interviews to ensure that any candidate is suitable to perform a role in a safeguarding capacity; and

i) Ensure that staff are inducted in line with safeguarding procedures.

(5) Disclosure recording

1. All staff are made aware of their duty to disclose allegations of abuse made in relation to child safety and any up-to-date laws and legislation
2. We will always seek advice from the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** within a time period of 24 hours of an allegation and/or concern being made
3. We will follow up to this within a further 24 hours
4. The LADO details used will depend on the area in which the minor resides
5. Staff will not investigate these matters, and we will act in accordance with the advice sought from the LADO or other **Local Authority agency** as necessary, and in relation to the concern raised
6. Staff must immediately record any concerns for minors welfare in the report form and submit this to the DSO without undue delay
7. Any records of concerns may be passed on to the appropriate agency by staff
8. Any record will be filed in the agreed manner
9. Records of concerns are the responsibility of the DSO
10. Any and all information shared within the organization is strictly on a need to know basis
11. We may pass information obtained in relation to a safeguarding concern, to the **Police** and/or **Children's Services**
12. In the event that staff believe a child is in immediate danger, they should report the matter to the Police and the DSO must be informed of this
13. All reports made to the DSO must be in writing, signed and dated

(6) Disclosure handling

1. A child may decide to disclose information which indicates they are suffering from abuse or neglect. A child chooses to speak to an adult because they feel that they will listen and that they can trust them. The adult needs to listen to what the child has to say, and be very careful not to influence what the child is saying.
2. In the event that a disclosure is made, it is important that the member of staff does the following:
 - a) Listen and be supportive;
 - b) Not ask any leading questions, interrogate the child, or put ideas in the child's head, or jump to conclusions;
 - c) Not stop or interrupt a child who is recalling significant events;
 - d) Never promise to keep secrets – it must be explained that information will need to be passed on to help keep them safe. Broken promises of confidentiality may prevent the child making any further comment at a later stage, where this may be helpful in keeping them safe.
 - e) Avoid criticizing the alleged perpetrator;
 - f) Tell the child what must be done next (the safeguarding process must be followed);

- g) Record what was said immediately and accurately. Also record what was happening immediately before the child made said disclosure. Be sure to sign and date the document; and
 - h) Contact the DSO without undue delay
3. It is important that actions taken are not delayed
 4. Advice may be sought from the LADO, or **MASH** teams within the council

(7) What is abuse

Vitality Entertainment Group considers the following actions as abuse:

	DEFINITION
Neglect	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children
Physical	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child
Emotional	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or

developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone

Sexual

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- a) Provide adequate food;
- b) Clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- c) Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- d) Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); and/or
- e) Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

(8) Law & Legislation

1. This policy falls under the remit of the following legislation and acts of law:
 - a) Children's Act 1989
 - b) Children's Act 2004
 - c) Working Together 2018
2. This policy must undergo regular yearly reviews and should be updated in line with relevant laws and legislation
3. Vitality Entertainment Group is responsible for following safeguarding legislation and takes seriously its dedications in the interest of safeguarding
4. This policy and its content is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and Designated Safeguarding Officer

(9) Definition of safeguarding

1. Safeguarding and Child Protection are the processes set out in order to ensure that minors are kept safe from harm, abuse or neglect
2. Safeguarding is the term used collectively to define our organisations procedures to prevent abuse from occurring to minors

(10) Glossary

DEFINITION

Minor

A child or young person under the age of 18 years.

Safeguarding

The process of ensuring the safety and well-being of children and young people involved directly, or indirectly with our company, subsidiaries, and partners.

Referral

The official process and actions taken by our staff in view of trying to keep children and young people safe who we have reason to believe could be at risk of harm.

LADO

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is the person responsible for managing safeguarding referrals.

The Mash team

The Multi Agency Safeguarding hub (MASH), brings together key professionals from multiple authorities in safeguarding, in order to identify safeguarding risks at the earliest possible point.

This policy:

This policy is to be reviewed once every 12 months, and updated on this date unless:

- A relevant change to the law applies which requires us to update it earlier;
- A relevant error or concern has been raised in relation to the policy; or
- We change, add or remove a service/operation which may affect this policy

Any questions related to our policies may be put to us by email at info@vitality-entertainment.com

This policy must be adopted by the entirety of the company, it's staff, subsidiaries, projects, customers and service providers/partners, whilst involved in our activities:

