

# SAFEGUARDING (CHILD PROTECTION) POLICY

## Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

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Designated Safeguarding Officer: David Kemp  
[safeguarding@dk-pro.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@dk-pro.co.uk) 07950980530

### Policy Statement

DK proDuKtions Ltd is committed to a practice which protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. This Policy details organisational behaviour and best practice which is applicable to all staff, including those who work on a volunteer or freelance basis.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

For the purposes of this policy, Vulnerable Beneficiaries are defined as children under the age of 18 or anyone over the age of 18 who requires activities which lead to them being considered vulnerable to significant harm or exploitation at that particular time.

A Vulnerable Beneficiary can be anyone:

- Who receives social care services or personal care
- Who requires assistance in relation to general household matters such as paying bills, shopping etc. due to a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem
- Who is detained by Her Majesty's Government or in contact with probation services

For ease of reading in this document whenever the terms *Child*, *Children* or *Young People* are used, it refers to all Vulnerable Beneficiaries including vulnerable adults.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which could cause Vulnerable Beneficiaries harm.

We will safeguard children, young people and other vulnerable adults by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately in a swift and appropriate manner.

- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, volunteers and any freelancers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
- This Policy will be made readily available to all staff and volunteers.
- Reviewing our policy annually and reflecting on any reports made, reviewing the effectiveness of the reporting process every quarter.

This policy is accompanied by two appendixes. Appendix A lists signs of abuse and Appendix B details definitions of abuse.

### **Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer**

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- Providing the 'first port of call' and offering advice and support to all staff regarding child protection issues
- Establishing and maintaining a liaison role with the relevant social work department, family and social services departments, where necessary
- Making referrals as necessary
- Keeping up to date with changes and developments in child protection
- Disseminating policy and good practice to all staff and volunteers, in particular:
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible safeguarding
- Ensuring that all staff have read/are aware of the Safeguarding Policy and procedures, and know where to access these
- Ensuring that new staff receive induction about safeguarding procedures and existing staff receive training as required
- Organising information relating to safeguarding so that this is accessible to all staff

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Officer, the Deputy Safeguarding Officer will assume the responsibilities of this role.

## Codes of Behaviour - Statement of Intent

It is the policy of DK proDuKtions Ltd to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm.

We are committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of DK proDuKtions Ltd programmes, training events, workshops or other activities. Personnel should, at all times, show respect and understanding individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of DK proDuKtions Ltd.

### Attitudes

Guidelines for all staff and volunteers:

- Staff and volunteers should be committed to treating children and young people with respect and dignity
- Always listen to what a child or young person is saying
- Value each child and young person
- Recognise the unique contribution each individual can make
- Encourage and praise each child or young person

### Staff Conduct

Staff and volunteers should:

- Endeavour to provide an example which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people
- Respect a young person's right to privacy
- Always dress professionally and appropriately at all times
- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never allow themselves to enter become embroiled in inappropriate situations, including tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child, young person or vulnerable adult

## Contact with Children, Young Adults and Vulnerable Adults

### Physical Contact

- Staff and volunteers should never engage in any type of physical contact with any young person or vulnerable beneficiary without first asking permission
- DK proDuKtions Ltd will always require a responsible adult to accompany any vulnerable beneficiaries or groups of vulnerable beneficiaries. The responsible adult will never be a member of DK proDuKtions Ltd staff
- If a child or vulnerable beneficiary is reliant upon an adult for any aspects personal care, e.g. toileting or assistance of movement, DK proDuKtions Ltd will engage the responsible adult, which will never be a member of DK proDuKtions Ltd staff
- Staff and volunteers should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind

### Online Contact

- DK proDuKtions will only contact a child via his/her parent/guardian directly via email or telephone in reference to workshops and performances
- DK proDuKtions Ltd will not contact a child directly in regards to non-professional or personal matters
- DK proDuKtions staff and volunteers will never issue or accept “friend requests” or equivalent from social networking sites from a child on their personal accounts however online “friendships” are acceptable on the DK proDuKtions Ltd business account/page
- If a child makes contact with a company member via social media, the member of the company should report it to the Artistic/Executive Director, who will ensure it is followed up and the appropriate action taken. On no account should the company member respond of their own volition
- DK proDuKtions Ltd staff and volunteers will not take or share photos or video footage of children without confirmation from the Artistic/Executive Director that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received

## Child Performance Licensing

All children who perform on stage or in television, films, commercials or who work as models, have their welfare and safety protected by the following children in entertainment legislation:

- Children & Young Persons Act 1933 & 1963
- Children (Performances) Regulations 1968
- The Children (Performance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 1998(1)
- The Children (Performance) Amendment Regulations 2000
- The Children (Performance) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2000

For the purposes of children in entertainment a child is a person aged from birth until the **end** of their compulsory schooling (16yrs).

The aforementioned legislation requires licences to be issued by each Local Authority (LA) for children who take part in one of the following categories:

- broadcast performances (films, TV, video) covers performances that will be broadcast;
- non-broadcast performances (theatre, modelling) covers performance that are not broadcast

It is the responsibility of DK proDuKtions Ltd to establish contact with the relevant local authority in which a child resides to obtain instructions as to whether a license is required.

The Children (Performances) Regulations 1968 only apply to actual performances and therefore the following information does not apply to rehearsals or regular workshops. Rehearsals are, however, affected by the Regulations, if they take place during the currency of a licence (between first and last performing day). Rehearsals are then subject to the same restrictions and conditions applicable to that licence i.e. time at place of performance, performing times and so forth. Rehearsals also count as a performance when calculating length of working week i.e. 5 days broadcast, 6 days theatre/other.

### Chaperones

All licensed children need to be chaperoned by law while taking part in a performance. Chaperones acts in loco parentis and should exercise the care which a good parent might be reasonably expected to give that child.

Regulations require a ratio of 1 chaperone to 12 children. A chaperone's first priority is always to the child and the chaperone must not take part in any activity that would prevent them from proper supervision and care of the children they are responsible for. A chaperone will have total charge of a child – unless the child is being chaperoned by his/her parent/carer – whilst the child is at the theatre/performance location, and is responsible for the child's care and control. If the child has completed his performance and is then handed into the care and control of his parent/guardian who is outside of the stage performance area, the chaperone will no longer have responsibility for the child.

Chaperones are required by law to keep a record for each child, per performance:

- It is a requirement under the Regulations that these records be kept and made available, together with each child's Licence, at every place of performance where a child is present, for inspection by an officer of the Local Authority in whose area the performance takes place
- Upon completion of the production, the daily record sheet/s should be stored at the Licence Applicant's main company address for a period of not less than 6 months after the final performance date for which the Licence has been granted

Licensed Chaperones are approved by Local Authorities and will be familiar with the law regarding children in entertainment.

### **Providing Effective Management for Staff & Volunteering Through Supervision, Support & Training**

It is imperative that each member of DK proDuKtions Ltd staff (including volunteers) is aware of their responsibilities under the Safeguarding (Child Protection) legislation and has a working knowledge of DK proDuKtions Ltd procedures. Each member of staff will receive this Policy when they start working with the company.

#### Induction

Each new member of staff or volunteer is made familiar with DK proDuKtions Ltd policies and procedures including the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Code of Behaviour.

#### Training and Communication

At DK proDuKtions Ltd the management take responsibility for the training needs of staff and volunteers. The individual, however, also plays a part in identifying areas they feel they require training in. Regular communication between staff, volunteers and the Management is fundamental as this assesses any Safeguarding training needs.

## **Guidelines on Recruitment**

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people and vulnerable adults.

The same recruitment procedure will be adopted whether the company members are paid or unpaid, full, part-time or freelance.

### Recruitment procedure

This process will be adhered to for any role at DK proDuKtions Ltd that directly relates to working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

- Advertisements for roles that involve work with children will state that applicants will be expected to have a current DBS (formerly CRB) check. In most circumstances, company members will have obtained their own check, which should have taken place within the last 3 years. In particular circumstances DK proDuKtions Ltd may arrange this. They may not work alone with children until a clean check is received
- All applicants must submit a CV or similar application detailing their experience relevant to the role
- Successful applicants, including volunteers, will be interviewed to assess suitability for the role
- Substantial gaps in employment will be queried
- For posts in which there will be direct contact with children, one reference should be provided regarding previous work with children, unless the applicant holds a valid Chaperone Licence

### On appointment

- An enhanced DBS (formerly CRB) check must be held by all DK proDuKtions Ltd staff and volunteers who will be closely working directly and alone with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults
- The DBS check must be cleared before work commences. If this is not possible, the individual must always be accompanied by a DBS checked adult in carrying out their duties in working with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Individuals who have a valid DBS check in place on appointment should have had their DBS check issued within the last 3 years and must present a copy of their DBS to the Designated Child Protection Officer or Artistic/Executive Director for verification
- Copies of DBS checks for company members and volunteers will be held in the DK proDuKtions Ltd office in a locked filing cabinet. Only the Child Protection Officer and Artistic/Executive Director have access to these files

## **Procedure for Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse**

In any case where someone at DK proDuKtions Ltd has concerns or an allegation is made, a record will be made using a standardised format. Details must include:

- Name of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary
- Date of Birth of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary (if available)
- Approximate Age of Child/ Vulnerable Beneficiary if Date of Birth is not available
- Name of staff member completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action Taken
- Were the parents informed?

The record must then be signed by the completing person and the designated Child Protection Officer.

## **Other**

Dressing room code of conduct for performances:

- Only licensed chaperones are permitted to be alone with children in the children's dressing room
- All hairsprays used by the children for a performance are to be located in a central point and application will be monitored by the chaperone
- Appropriate behaviour and language must be adopted by all
- A calm and respectful environment is enforced
- Separate dressing areas for boys and girls are provided
- Specifically provided undergarments are to be worn by all children at all times

## APPENDIX A

As part of the Safeguarding (Child Protection) procedures we are required to be watchful for any signs and /or symptoms of abuse.

The four categories of abuse are:

1. Physical abuse.
2. Sexual abuse.
3. Emotional abuse.
4. Neglect.

All staff and volunteers must be aware of the procedures regarding child abuse. If any child makes a disclosure to a member of staff they should:-

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Protection of Vulnerable Beneficiaries will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Ensure you never use closed questioning or leading questions
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises, and take what is said seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption, accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact or respond with emotive language.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event, use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Pass on the report to the DK proDuktions Ltd Designated Safeguarding Officer, or in their absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer.

### RECORD-KEEPING

- All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet.
- Only the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Artistic/Executive Director will have access to these files.

Please read the signs. Sometimes signs of one type of abuse can also be found under another heading.

**It is important to report and monitor any signs of suspected abuse.**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they reoccur.
- Refusal to discuss injuries.
- Improbable explanations for injuries.
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness that is not being dealt with.
- Admission of punishment that seems excessive.
- Shrinking from physical contact.
- Fear of returning home.
- Fear of undressing.
- Fear of medical help.
- Aggression/bullying.
- Over compliant behaviour.
- Running away.
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation.
- Significant deterioration in work.
- Unexplained pattern of absence.

### **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

- Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body.
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital area.
- Pregnancy – particularly if child is evasive about the identity of the father.
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to child's age – maybe in drawing, vocabulary, essays, games etc.
- Frequent public masturbation.
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity.
- Refusal to stay with certain people or go to certain places.
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, fearfulness.
- Withdrawal from friends.

### **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

- Continual self-depreciation.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate responses to painful situations.
- Self-harm or mutilation.
- Compulsive stealing/scrounging.
- Drug/solvent abuse.
- Neurotic behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb sucking etc.
- Air of detachment – don't care attitude.
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends.
- Desperate attention seeking behaviour.
- Eating problem, including overeating/lack of appetite.
- Depression, withdrawal.

## **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT**

- Constant hunger.
- Constant tiredness.
- Poor hygiene and poor state of clothes.
- Emaciation.
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance.
- Untreated medical problems.
- Destructive tendencies.
- Low self esteem.
- Neurotic behaviour – rocking, thumb sucking, hair twisting .etc
- No social relationships.
- Chronic running away.
- Compulsive stealing/scavenging.
- Failure to thrive.