



## **Child safeguarding policy**

The purpose and scope of this policy statement:

Vessel Studios occasionally works with children and families as part of its film production activities. These include music video production, short film production, feature film production and documentary production.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who take part in Vessel Studios's productions. This includes the children of adults who take part in our productions.
- to provide parents, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Vessel Studios, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

### **Legal framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England and Wales. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from [nspcc.org.uk/childprotection](http://nspcc.org.uk/childprotection).

### **Chaperones**

All children on set must be accompanied by a licenced chaperone or parent or guardian acting as chaperone.

Chaperones will have care and control of the child, and will safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of the child.

The maximum number a chaperone can take care of at any one time is twelve.

### **Working hours**

Vessel Studios adheres to child working hours as set out by law.

Children should not take part in performances or rehearsals:

- on more than 6 consecutive days
- for more than 8 consecutive weeks without an interval of 2 weeks

- more than once a day if attending school that day
- without an interval of 1 hour 30 minutes between 2 performances on the same day
- without an interval of 12 hours between the end of an evening performance and the start of the following day.

### Times and hours for children aged 9+

The child must not be at the premises:

- for more than 9 hours 30 minutes in 1 day (including tuition)
- before 7am at the earliest
- after 11pm at the latest.

While the child is at the performance premises they:

- can perform for a maximum of 2 hours 30 minutes at a time and 5 hours in total
- must have at least 2 breaks (45 minutes for a meal and 15 minutes for a break) if they are at the premises for 4 hours or more
- must have at least 3 breaks (45 minutes for a meal and 2 15 minute breaks) if they are at the premises for 8 hours or more.

### Times and hours for children aged 5 - 8

The child must not be at the premises:

- for more than 8 hours in 1 day (including tuition)
- before 7am at the earliest
- after 11pm at the latest.

While the child is at the performance premises they:

- can perform for a maximum of 2 hours 30 minutes at a time and 3 hours in total
- must have at least 2 breaks (45 minutes for a meal and 15 minutes for a break) if they are at the premises for more than 4 hours.
- must have at least 3 breaks (45 minutes for a meal and 2 15 minute breaks) if they are at the premises for 8 hours or more.

### Times and hours for children 0 - 4

The child must not be at the premises:

- for more than 5 hours in 1 day (including tuition)
- before 7am at the earliest
- after 10pm at the latest.

While the child is at the performance premises they:

- can perform for a maximum of 30 minutes at a time and 2 hours in total
- must have at least 2 breaks (1 hour for a meal and 15 minutes for a break) if they are at the premises for more than 4 hours.

## Our beliefs

We at Vessel Studios are committed to a practice, which protects children from harm.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which cause children and young people harm.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people 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 agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

## Code of Behaviour

### Statement of Intent

It is the policy of Vessel Studios to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm.

This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of Vessel Studios's productions. Personnel should at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of Vessel Studios.

## Guidelines for all Vessel Studios staff and volunteers

### Attitudes

Staff and volunteers are committed to:

- Treating children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a child or young person is saying.
- Valuing each child and young person.
- Recognizing the unique contribution each individual can make.
- Encouraging and praising each child or young person.

By example

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.

### One to one contact

Staff and volunteers should:

- Not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or young person make every effort to keep this meeting as open as possible.
- If privacy is needed, ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts

### Physical contact

Staff and volunteers should never

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or a young person that they can do for themselves. If such an incident arises, for example, where a child or young person has limited mobility, Vessel Studios's staff should seek a parent or chaperone to deal with the incident.
- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind

Vessel Studios acknowledges that touching such as hugging or holding hands with other performers may be necessary for the child's performance. In such cases, approval from a parent and/or chaperone will be needed.

### General

Staff and volunteers should:

- 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 ourselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention- seeking situations such as tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child or young person, even in fun

## Relationships

Staff and volunteers who are involved in relationships with other members of staff or volunteers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role within Vessel Studios or the work of Vessel Studios.

## Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, staff and volunteers

Good communication is essential in any organisation. In Vessel Studios, every effort will be made to assure that, should individuals have concerns, they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the management to ensure that information is available to, and exchanged between all those involved in this organisation and its activities. Some information is confidential and should only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

## Children and young people

Children and young people have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. Vessel Studios will act to ensure they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties.

When sharing information, Vessel Studios personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

## Staff & Volunteers

As an organisation, which offers support and guidance to children and young people, it is imperative that each member of the Vessel Studios's staff is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of Vessel Studios's procedures. Each member of staff, contractor or volunteer will receive a copy of our Child Safeguarding Policy ahead of any shoot involving children.