

**Vamos Theatre Safeguarding Policy**  **- Online delivery**

**Guidelines for Vamos Theatre employees and freelancers for safe online delivery and creation of digital content with children, young people and vulnerable persons**

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**These temporary guidelines should be read alongside the main Vamos Theatre Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Persons.**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide additional information to supplement the policy during the Covid 19 pandemic and specifically focuses on creating a safe environment in which to continue our work with children, young people and vulnerable persons. It is a temporary extension of the guidance provided in (Online Safety) of the Vamos Theatre Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons policy, page 4.

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**1. Context**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we will work digitally as well as in person to connect, create work with and support children and young people in partner schools and independently. The following guidelines provide protocols for that work, ensuring that the safeguarding of children and adults at risk is to the fore.

1. **Live communication via digital platforms**

Vamos Theatre staff may run live virtual sessions with children and young people during this period and will therefore adopt and maintain the following additional safeguarding measures.

* Written permission (including via email) from parents/carers will be sought for all live chat communication with children and vulnerable persons via digital platforms. Where permission is not given by the parent/carer, the child/Vulnerable person will not participate in the digital sessions.
* All parents/carers will be informed of the platform/s to be used in the session along with the dates and times of sessions and the names of the authorised adults who will be participating in these sessions.
* Vamos Theatre staff and artists and authorised personnel will be the only adults present during Vamos Theatre digital live chat communication with young people and vulnerable people
* When communicating with children and vulnerable people via digital platforms Vamos Theatre staff will use Vamos Theatre accounts and ensure that the personal numbers of young people and freelancers are kept confidential and not shared with any other group member.
* All live chat sessions (for example using Zoom) will be password protected.
* The staff member hosting the session will use the [waiting room](https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/02/14/secure-your-meetings-zoom-waiting-rooms/?zcid=1231) feature before a session starts. ensuring no access is given to anyone besides authorised staff and children/vulnerable people who have been previously invited.
* Vamos Theatre staff will ensure the following safety measures are in place when running any online chat session:
* Do not engage with any children, young people and vulnerable persons via email for any other purpose than organising the session or dealing with technical issues related to the session.
* Do not reply to messages from children, young people or vulnerable persons save in relation to organising sessions and resolving technical issues.
* Before the session commences, the Vamos Theatre staff member responsible for the session will send the following advice to the children, young people and vulnerable persons participating in the session:
* Make sure that people you live with know you are on a live video chat. Please do not include them in the chat, unless a support worker or parent is requested to be present.
* Please wear appropriate clothing, even on parts of you that you think won’t be seen.
* Please ensure you are appropriately dressed at all times.
* Please consider the background of the room you will be speaking from to ensure it is appropriate (for example, a bedroom may not be suitable).
* During all live chat sessions, Vamos Theatre staff will ensure that:
* Where possible and when deemed necessary, two DBS checked adults will be present for the duration of every session; one of these will be designated as the session host and the other will provide active support as needed.
* A Waiting room function will be switched on so that the host can monitor who is joining.
* The host will disable the chat function that enables members to chat between each other, **unless the chat function is needed to be part of the workshop or meeting.**
* The host will be the only user able to share their screen
* The host will remind young people that this is not a private space and whatever they share online will be seen by the group.

At the start of each live chat with children, young people and vulnerable persons, Vamos Theatre staff will establish a code of conduct / group contract for the session including:

* Reminding participants about respecting others and not to do anything online that they would not do if the group were in the room
* Introducing the platform technology to the group, explaining that everyone will have their microphones on mute when they are not speaking. Any ‘raise your hand’ / response features will also be introduced.
* Reminding participants that they must not record or take photos of anything during the session
* Reminding participants that any chat function is disabled and there will be no private chat between group members.
* Young people and parents/responsible adults will be advised about the process for reporting online abuse via CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) part of the national Crime Agency

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

1. **Video content including children, young people and vulnerable persons**

There are two ways in which the images of children and young people may appear in online Vamos Theatre content:

* Where it is submitted by a parent, child or vulnerable person via our open social media channels
* Where it is submitted via email or on other platforms as part of a Vamos Theatre curated creative project

We will take a different approach in each context:

*1. Content submitted via our open social media channels*

Where it is deemed that a child or young person has submitted content on Vamos Theatre’s social media channels and where the content includes the child or other children, Vamos Theatre will not retweet or respond to the content. Where content containing children has been submitted on Vamos Theatre channels by an adult who refers to themselves as the parent of the child, Vamos Theatre may choose to retweet and/or respond to the parent.

Where a child has submitted content that does not feature any children or adults, Vamos Theatre may subsequently share that content, redacting anything that could identify the child, including their twitter handle.

*2. Content submitted via email as part of a Vamos Theatre curated creative project*

Where Vamos Theatre has asked young people to submit content as part of a creative project the following protocols will be used:

* The content will be submitted to learning@[vamostheatre.co.uk](mailto:learning@vamostheatre.co.uk), with the project title in the subject matter.
* The person/s accessing the email address will be DBS checked adult/s

Young people and vulnerable adults will be advised:

* Not to submit material that uses or discloses their full name
* Not to film or submit things that might reveal their exact address, school or somewhere they go regularly (e.g. a sports club or activity)
* Not to film anyone else under the age of 18
* To wear appropriate clothing
* To keep themselves safe – i.e. not to share content that feels too personal, complicated or sad.
* Not to share work recorded by them on their own social media channels, only to share work posted on Vamos Theatre social media channels.

1. **Sharing work made by young people online**

Where the Vamos Theatre has invited young people and vulnerable persons to create work online, for example in response to a digital challenge, Vamos Theatre staff will:

* Use the Vamos Theatre parental consent form to gain consent from the parent/guardian for their child to participate in the project, making clear that it involves the submission of photos or video content made by the child or young person
* Share the final edits with the children, young people via their parents/guardians before sharing more widely.
* Not use any child’s surname in photography or video content.

1. **Useful website and further information**

The following links provide up to date information about the terms, conditions and safety features of the most popular video conferencing sites including minimum age requirements (e.g. Zoom, Teams, Adobe Connect, Google Hangout).

[saferinternet.org.uk/blog/video-conferencing-children-safeguarding-and-privacy-overview](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/video-conferencing-children-safeguarding-and-privacy-overview)

[saferinternet.org.uk/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19)

In addition, the UK Safer Internet Centre, Co-funded by the European Commission, runs The Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH). It was set up in 2011 to help all members of the community working with or for children in the UK, with any online safety issues they, or children and young people in their care, may face. The phone line will be operation Monday – Friday 10 – 4pm during this period: 0344 381 4772. This helpline can assist with any online safety issues or concerns any professional working with children and young people may have. For help and support, please email: [**helpline@saferinternet.org.uk**](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk)

The latest advice for parents and children from Gov.UK is here: [COVID-19 – staying safe](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-staying-safe-online?utm_source=e4c788c1-f189-421b-a3ba-daa405f979eb&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily) [online](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-staying-safe-online?utm_source=e4c788c1-f189-421b-a3ba-daa405f979eb&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily).

The following websites can provide practical support for young people or adults who are experiencing mental health issues:

[headstogether.org.uk/](https://www.headstogether.org.uk/)

[themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk/)

[Young Minds](https://youngminds.org.uk/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI7fj6kKnF6QIViZntCh3FUgcCEAAYASAAEgJEsvD_BwE)

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