

Vamos Theatre Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons



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Location of safeguarding information and main policy documents	Policy Documents: C:\Users\Asrock\Box Sync\NEW VAMOS SHARED\COMPANY DEVELOPMENT, STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT\GOVERNANCE\Vamos Theatre CIO\Policies and Procedures

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POLICY STATEMENT

Vamos Theatre is committed to a practice which protects vulnerable people from harm. This Policy details organisational behaviour and best practice which is applicable to all Vamos Theatre 'Employees' - those who work with Vamos Theatre on a freelance basis and /or voluntary basis, to include Vamos Theatre's Board of Trustees.

Safeguarding is a matter of attitudes as much as policies, and Vamos Theatre is committed to an attitude that allows for client friendly practice as much as client safe practice. We will do all we can to limit risk, whilst maximising the engagement of our Employees with our client group.

Our safeguarding responsibilities apply to vulnerable persons, specifically children, young people and vulnerable adults.

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

According to the Department of Health, a **Vulnerable Person** can be anyone:

- Who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

We also include, in our definition, anyone:

- Who is detained by Her Majesty's Government or in contact with probation services.

We will safeguard vulnerable people by:

- Adopting child and vulnerable person protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for Employees.
- Sharing information about child and vulnerable person protection with Employees and related persons, e.g. carers, parents, guardians, etc.
- Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies who need to know, and involving related persons and vulnerable persons appropriately and doing so in a swift and appropriate manner.
- Following carefully the procedures for safer recruitment and selection of all company Employees.
- Providing effective management for Employees through supervision, support and training.
- This Policy will be made readily available to all Employees, and accessible on the Vamos Theatre website.
- Reviewing this Policy annually and reflecting on any reports made.
- The Policy has been agreed with the Board and is fully supported by the Artistic Director and all members of Vamos Theatre Employees.

This Policy is accompanied by two appendices. Appendix A is an Incident Report Form, and Appendix B details definitions of abuse.

It is imperative that each Vamos Theatre Employee is aware of their responsibilities under current safeguarding legislation and has a working knowledge of Vamos Theatre procedures. Each Employee will receive this Policy as part of the Company Handbook when they start work at Vamos Theatre. Existing Employees will receive this Policy as an adjunct.

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSON PROTECTION

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Providing the 'first port of call' and offering advice and support to all Employees regarding safeguarding issues.
- Making referrals as necessary.
- Keeping up to date with changes and developments in safeguarding, via the Board Lead.
- Disseminating policy and good practice to all Employees, in particular:
 1. Ensuring that Employees understand their responsibilities for being alert to the signs of abuse and for referring any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
 2. Ensuring that all Employees have read, and are aware of the specific Vamos Policies and Procedures
- Ensuring that new Employees receive induction about safeguarding procedures and existing Employees receive training as required
- Organising information relating to safeguarding so that this is accessible to all Employees.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead will assume the responsibilities of this role. In the absence of all of these people, or in respect to a complaint about either of these persons, the Board Safeguarding Lead will assume responsibility for this role.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead should attend Level 2 Safeguarding Training.

CODES OF BEHAVIOUR - STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is the policy of Vamos Theatre to safeguard the welfare of all vulnerable 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 vulnerable persons can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of Vamos Theatre's programmes, training events, workshops or other activities. Employees 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 Vamos Theatre.

ATTITUDES

Guidelines for all Vamos Theatre Employees:

- Employees should be committed to treating vulnerable persons with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a participant is saying
- Valuing each participant
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
- Encouraging and praising each participant

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employees should:

- Endeavour to provide an example which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with vulnerable persons and challenge any inappropriate language used by vulnerable person or any individual working with vulnerable persons.
- Respect a vulnerable 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 or become embroiled in inappropriate situations, including tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a vulnerable person.

CONTACT WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS

Employees should:

- actively avoid spending any time alone with vulnerable person, away from others
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or vulnerable person this meeting must be as open as possible, and other Vamos Theatre Employees and /or responsible persons will be informed of the location and approximate length of the meeting. If no responsible person is available to join the meeting, the vulnerable person will be encouraged to bring a friend.

Physical Contact

- Employees should never engage in any type of physical contact with any vulnerable persons without first asking permission.
- Employees should never allow inappropriate touching of any kind.
- Vamos Theatre will always require a responsible person to accompany any vulnerable person or groups of vulnerable persons.
- If a vulnerable person is reliant upon a responsible person for any aspect of personal care, e.g. toileting or assistance of movement, Vamos Theatre will engage a responsible person other than an Employee.

Online Contact

- Vamos will only contact a vulnerable person directly via email, telephone or designated, private Facebook pages (where relevant) in reference to workshops, performances or related Vamos Theatre work.
- Where possible, all contact with vulnerable persons will be conducted via schools, care centres or relevant and responsible persons.
- Vamos Theatre will not contact a vulnerable person directly in regards to non-professional or personal matters.
- Vamos Theatre Employees will never issue or accept "friend requests" or equivalent from social networking sites from a vulnerable person.
- If a vulnerable person makes contact with an Employee via social media, the Employee should report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure it

is followed up and the appropriate action taken. On no account should the Employee respond of their own volition.

- Vamos Theatre Employees will not take or share photos or video footage of vulnerable person without confirmation from the Designated Safeguarding Lead that the appropriate permissions have been sought and received.
- The Employees related to any given project is responsible for distributing and collating photo permission forms to schools or other organisations as appropriate and for discussing how best to document projects, and will circulate this information
- Confidential data that is collected on vulnerable persons, including addresses, dietary needs, medical conditions etc. should be treated in confidence and with respect and should be shared between responsible persons only on a need-to-know basis.
- All vulnerable persons have a right to know and have sight of any information Vamos Theatre holds on them.
- Please refer to Vamos Theatre's Privacy Policy for information on the storage and access to data held by the Company
(see <https://www.vamostheatre.co.uk/general/privacy-policy>)
- See also **Online Guidelines** Page 9.

CHILD PERFORMANCE LICENSING

Requirement to licence

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
- Statutory Instruments: 1968 No. 1728, 1998 No. 1678, 2000 No. 10, & No. 2384

For the purposes of children in entertainment, a child is a person aged from birth until the end of their compulsory schooling (18 yrs from 2015).

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 Vamos Theatre 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 in law while taking part in a performance. Chaperones act 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/her performance and is then handed into the care and control of his/her 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 EMPLOYEES & VOLUNTEERING THROUGH SUPERVISION, SUPPORT & TRAINING

GUIDELINES ON RECRUITMENT

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

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 Vamos Theatre that directly relates to working with vulnerable persons.

- Advertisements for roles that involve work with vulnerable persons will state that applicants will be expected to have a current DBS check. In most circumstances, company members will have obtained their own check, which should have been undertaken within the last 3 years. In particular circumstances Vamos Theatre may arrange this. They may not work with vulnerable persons until a clean check is received.
- All applicants must submit a CV or application form 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.
- Two references should be taken up before appointing paid company members.
- For posts in which there will be direct contact with vulnerable persons, one reference should be regarding previous work with vulnerable persons.

On appointment

- An enhanced DBS check must be held by Vamos Theatre Employees who will be working directly with vulnerable persons.
- The DBS check must be cleared before work commences. If this is not possible, the individual must always be accompanied by a DBS checked responsible person in carrying out their duties in working with vulnerable persons.
- 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 Safeguarding Lead for verification.
- Please refer to Vamos Theatre's Privacy Policy for information on the storage and access to data held by the Company
(see <https://www.vamostheatre.co.uk/general/privacy-policy>)

ONLINE DELIVERY

These guidelines specifically focuses on creating a safe environment in which to continue our work with children, young people and vulnerable persons online.

Contents

- 1. Context**
- 2. Live communication via digital platforms**
- 3. Video content including children and young people**
- 4. Sharing work made by young people online**
- 5. Useful websites and further information**

1. Context

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.

2. 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 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.
 - 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/>

3. 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@[vamos theatre.co.uk](mailto:learning@vamos theatre.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.

4. 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.

5. 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

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

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

headstogether.org.uk/

themix.org.uk

[Young Minds](https://www.youngminds.org.uk)

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

In any case where an Employee at Vamos Theatre has concerns or an allegation is made, a record will be made using a standardised format [Appendix 1]. Details must include:

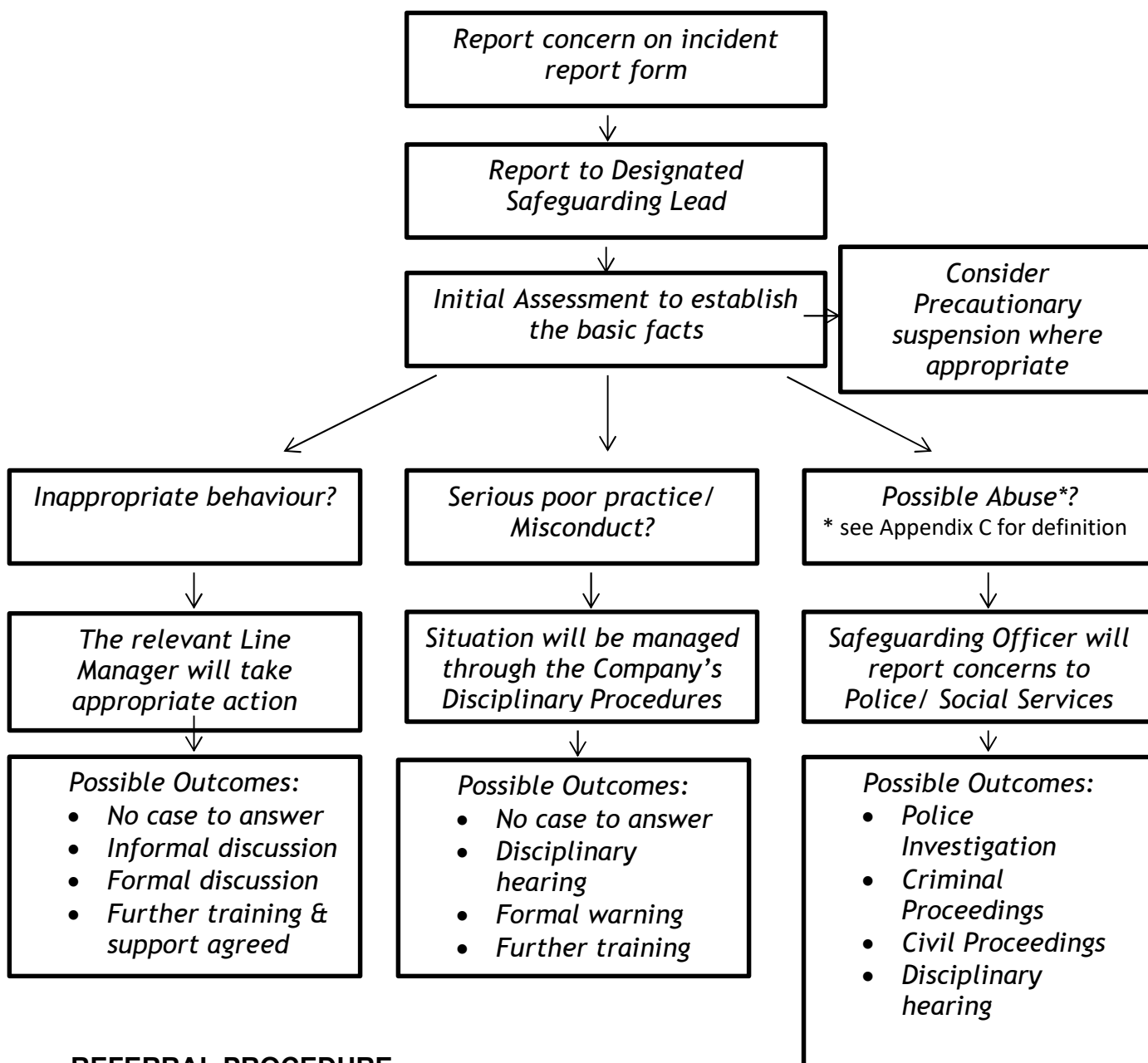
- Name of vulnerable beneficiary
- Date of Birth of vulnerable persons (if available)
- Approximate Age vulnerable persons if Date of Birth is not available
- Name of Employee completing the form
- Date the incident took place
- Time the incident took place
- Location the incident took place
- Names of others involved, or others who witnessed the incident
- Details of the incident as a statement of fact
- Action taken
- Were the responsible person(s) informed?

The record must then be signed by the completing person and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS MADE BY A CHILD AND VUNERABLE PERSON OF SUSPECTED ABUSE



RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF AN EMPLOYEE OF VAMOS THEATRE COMPANY



REFERRAL PROCEDURE

The Vamos Theatre referral procedure for identified suspicion or concern will be followed at all times. This is outlined below:

Vamos Theatre Employees identify a safeguarding concern:

- All safeguarding concerns should first be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Leads. No Employee should act alone.
- Do Not Delay, the concern should be discussed between the referring Employee and the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, other Vamos Theatre Employees consulted as appropriate, and a decision made.
- If the concern is deemed of a serious nature, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the Social Services and Police if appropriate.

- Wherever possible an identified concern will be discussed with the social worker or person responsible for the vulnerable person (if possible) before any further action is taken. Advice from the social work department will be taken and any concerns discussed. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will lead on this but the person who identified the concern will assist.
- The person who identified the concern will be asked to complete a referral form.
- Information sharing needs to be proportional to the level of concern. Relevant Vamos Theatre Employees and other agencies involved with the vulnerable person will only be given information on a need to know basis.
- If a child who is already subject to a Child Protection Plan is involved with Vamos Theatre, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be notified and provided with any relevant information on a need to know basis. This information will be shared with other Vamos Theatre Employees on a need-to-know basis.

DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as the protection of vulnerable persons 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 vulnerable persons 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 vulnerable person's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the vulnerable persons was trying to say.
- Contact the Vamos Theatre Designated Safeguarding Leads for advice / guidance.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.
- Record any discussions or actions taken as soon as is practicable.

APPENDIX A - INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name of Vulnerable Beneficiary: Date of Birth/ Approximate Age:	Name of Employee completing form:
Date the incident took place: Time:	
Where did the incident take place:	
Who else was involved/witnessed the incident:	
Details: please provide a statement of fact:	
Action taken:	Responsible person(s) informed? Yes/No

Signature of Employee reporting incident: _____

Signature of Designated Safeguarding Lead: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B - WHAT IS ABUSE?

The following definitions are informed by The Department for Children Schools and Families (2013) Working Together to Safeguard Children document. Vamos Theatre Company considers the same definitions relevant to all vulnerable persons.

ABUSE: Somebody may abuse or neglect a vulnerable person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Vulnerable persons 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 ABUSE: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a vulnerable person. Physical harm may also be caused when a responsible person fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a vulnerable person.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a vulnerable person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the vulnerable person'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 vulnerable persons. These may include interactions that are beyond a vulnerable person's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the vulnerable person-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 vulnerable persons frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of vulnerable persons

SEXUAL ABUSE: Involves forcing or enticing a vulnerable person or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the vulnerable person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving vulnerable persons in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging vulnerable persons in to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a vulnerable person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other vulnerable persons.

NEGLECT: The persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious Impairment of the vulnerable person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may involve a responsible person failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a vulnerable person from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a vulnerable person's basic emotional needs