

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

You must be committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people including yourself.

In the context of Child Protection, the words “children and young persons” refer to anyone less than 18 years of age.

USEFUL CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION:

NSPCC Inform

The UK’s only free, online, specialised child protection resource.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

The CRB’s aim is to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society.

Office of Communication (OFCOM)

Ofcom is the independent regulator for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, telecommunications and wireless communication services.

Directgov Child Employment

Directgov summarises the rules that apply to children of compulsory school age at work including contact details for your local education department.

Here are some basic points of child protection that you may wish to consider (among others) when you devise the Child Protection Guidelines for your project:

- * The welfare of the child or young person is the paramount consideration.
- * All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse.
- * It is yours and everyone in your team’s responsibility to promote the protection of children and young people. In following these guidelines you should maintain a sense of proportion, apply common sense to situations and protect the child’s welfare as priority.
- * You should also ensure that you, or any member of your team, are never placed in situations where abuse might be alleged. It is not intended that this guidance should restrict you from normal ways of working, but you must always consider how an action or activity may be perceived as opposed to how it is intended.
- * Ensure you treat children and young people with care, respect and dignity.
- * Ensure communication with children and young people is open and clear.
- * Assess the risks to children of any activities you and your team undertake.
- * Avoid physical contact with children and young people except for reasons of health and safety, or under supervision (see below).
- * An individual who discloses that they have been convicted of any offence relating to children or young people, and/ or subject to any disciplinary action or sanction relating to children, must not be permitted to work on any production/project that involves contact with children.
- * Other than a parent, any adults assigned to the project (ie. As a regular carer, for so-called mentoring, training, supervising, or for being in sole charge of children and young people, should present a disclosure from the Criminal

Records Bureau (CRB) before the role may be undertaken. We advise that a duly cleared adult be appointed for each project to assume responsibility for the Child Protection Policy within that project (maybe a parent or teacher). This person would then: decide which positions require CRB disclosure; be the focal point for all child protection questions and; have responsibility to provide advice and guidance to staff who, during the course of their work, believe that a child may be at risk of harm and/or are told by a child or young person of a child welfare issue.

* Please ensure that you read the Mediabox Editorial Guidelines and the Mediabox Production Guidelines which set out editorial values and production advice including the safeguarding of the welfare of children involved in project making.

* Within the Health & Safety section of the Production Guidelines is advice on how to ensure the safety of your entire team. In addition to these, where a child or young person is involved, the risk assessment must take account of their particular vulnerabilities, which will include child protection. The Risk Assessment should set out what arrangements are in place for their care and supervision, eg. by a school, parent, guardian or chaperone and how these will be communicated to the appropriate parties.

* When children are being transported for the purpose of the project, a parent, guardian, chaperone or teacher should accompany them.

* Please be aware that school age children (aged up to and including 16 years old) who plan to work during school hours will need a work permit from their local authority (to include permission from their school and a doctor's certificate) and will need to be accompanied by a parent or registered chaperone at all times. The Directgov website provides more detail, explains the role of the chaperone, tells you how to get the ball rolling to apply for a licence, find a chaperone and provides further information and links on human rights issues.

* If you plan on working on your project during your free time, you do not need a licence, but must anyway follow the licensing guidelines, but wherever young people aged 16 or under are involved please ensure that a responsible adult is involved and always ensure that you have a parent or guardian's consent with a "Child Artist Consent Form", "Child Contributor Consent Form" and/or "Child Crew Consent Form".

* A child should be accompanied by a registered LEA chaperone or a parent if required to stay overnight for the project. Should a parent prefer to accompany and stay they may. Written parental/ guardian consent will be sought before a Young Person is asked to stay unaccompanied overnight in accommodation.

* A young person who is officially over school leaving age but is under 18 does not require a licence or chaperone. However, all other considerations apply.