

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Policy Statement and aims To be read by all adults working with or alongside children in our care whilst at one of our events. This policy relates to all children in our care regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, religion or disability. Vegan Kids provide events and activities for Children aged 0-18, Including residential, day trips, outings, parties, festivals, both online and in person.

Children may be accompanied or unaccompanied by their parents/guardians at our events. At our residential events the youngest age a child can be unaccompanied is 8 years old. The ages for other events will depend on the nature of the event and location and specific risk assessment carried out for that event.

This policy takes into account the requirements for all ages of children who may attend one of our events.

This policy has been written with the resources and guidance from the NSPCC Learning group, and covers the following mandatory sections.

- Recruiting the right people to work and volunteer with children
- Responding to concerns about a child's wellbeing
- Responding to allegations of abuse made against a child
- Preventing and responding to bullying
- Responding to concerns about online abuse
- Ensuring photographs and images of children are taken, stored and shared appropriately
- Whistleblowing.

All children and young people have the right to protection from any kind of abuse and the right to exist in a safe and friendly environment whilst in the care of Vegan Kids. We are committed to providing as far as is reasonably practicable, an environment that is safe from any kind of harm, for all those under the age of 18 at our events.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Including best practice advice and policies from accreditation, and governmental and charity bodies (such as the British Council and NSPCC), into existing policies such as our Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.
- Having effective systems in place ensuring that our facilities, procedures and activities take account of the students' health, safety and welfare requirements
- Following safer recruitment procedures carefully, for all staff and volunteers, ensuring the suitability of all staff to work with children under the age of 18
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and ongoing training
- By ensuring children have a clear channel of communication in time of need

- By ensuring that all staff and volunteers understand general child safeguarding principles and out policies.

This policy will be reviewed and updated each year

A copy of the statement will be required to be read by all Staff and volunteers attending our events.

- 1.2 Definition of a child In the UK, the legal definition of a 'child' is a person under the age of 18. As an organisation, we are committed to meeting and, wherever practicable, exceeding our duty of care towards all students and safeguarding children from harm.
- 1.3 What is the difference between child safeguarding and child protection? This is one definition of child safeguarding: "The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully" Types of harm can include:
 - Sexual abuse
 - Grooming
 - Physical and emotional abuse and neglect
 - Domestic violence
 - Inappropriate supervision by staff or volunteers
 - Bullying, cyber bullying,
 - Acts of violence and aggression at our events
 - Victimisation
 - Self- harm
 - Unsafe environments and activities
 - Crime
 - Exploitation Child safeguarding is different from 'Child Protection' which is the protection of children from direct specified harmful behaviour, how we act upon reports of abuse and neglect using referral processes to other agencies. Safeguarding and child protection sit alongside each other, however Vegan Kids is not an investigating agency. Any allegation or suspicion of abuse or significant harm will normally be carried out by the social services or police.
- 1.4 Each Event will have as a minimum a Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) and if it is considered necessary a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). It must be made clear to all staff and volunteers who the DSP and DSL are and how they may be contacted.
- 1.5 Staff / volunteer Training All staff and volunteers will be required to read our safeguarding policy. As part of our recruitment of Staff and volunteers we will ensure Staff and volunteers have received appropriate training for the role they are undertaking. Where gaps are identified, extra training may need to be provided, which will be in house training.

2. Safer Recruitment

- 2.1 Volunteers will be recruited on their suitability to working with Children, We will always clearly state the volunteer requirements. Previous experience of working with Children is desirable. Our recruitment for volunteers will details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job.

Volunteers who will be working in the direct care of Children that are not their own will be required to provide a DBS check, Which can be obtained via our account with care check, or an existing certificate valid within the last 2 years can be used.

- 2.2 When using external companies, we will ensure the company, if working unsupervised with Children also has adequate insurances and DBS checks.
- 2.3 DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate (formerly known as CRB Disclosure) It is our policy to re-check staff and volunteers DBS Certificates on every application and at every event. In short, all staff and volunteers commencing work will have undergone a new DBS check before commencing work and which will be funded by the volunteers.

On rare occasions when it is not possible to wait for a DBS check to be returned, a risk assessment will be carried out and a check on the Children's Barred List (List 99) will be implemented until DBS Check is received. During this period, their supervisory responsibility and access to children is limited.

- 2.4 Dealing with convictions All staff and volunteers must sign a declaration of suitability to work with children. Stafford House operates a formal procedure if a DBS Certificate is returned with details of convictions. Consideration will be given to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and also:

- The nature, seriousness and relevance of the offence
- How long ago the offence occurred
- One-off or history of offences
- Changes in circumstances

- 2.5 Proof of identity, For Staff and volunteers a Right to Work in the UK and Verification of Qualifications and/or professional status all staff and volunteers will be required to bring their identification documentation such as passport, birth certificate, driving licence, etc. with them as proof of identity/eligibility to work in UK in accordance with those set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 and DBS Code of Practice Regulations. In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have legally obtained any academic or vocational qualification required for the position and claimed in their application form.

- 2.6 Overseas Checks All new employees where persons have lived outside the UK are subject to additional checks; a 'Certificate of Good Conduct' or 'Police Certificate' will be required from the applicant's country of residence.

- 2.7 Training will be provided for all new staff and volunteers prior to the event starting. Which will clearly identify the company's policies and procedures, including the Child Safeguarding Policy and make clear the expectation and codes of conduct which will govern how staff and volunteers carries out their roles and responsibilities.

- 2.8 Record Retention / Data Protection Vegan Kids will retain all interview notes on all applicants for a period of 6 months, after which time the notes will be destroyed (i.e. shredded). The 6 month retention period is in accordance with the GDPR and will also allow Vegan kids to deal with any data access requests, recruitment complaints or to respond to any complaints made to an Employment Tribunal. All information retained on employees is kept in a locked and secure cabinet.

3. Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

- 3.1 Guidance Safeguarding is the responsibility of ALL members of staff and volunteers at the centre. All staff and volunteers are in a position of trust, and therefore all staff and volunteers are required to take a shared responsibility to safeguard children and young people. All staff and volunteers will also be made fully aware of their duties and in safeguarding children and responding to allegations of abuse or neglect. Child abuse does not necessarily have to be physical or sexual. It can also be emotional or psychological, or due to the neglect of a child's physical or emotional needs. Any member of staff or volunteer with an issue or concern relating to child protection, including but not limited to allegations of child abuse, should discuss it immediately with the DSP. Anyone who hears an allegation of abuse against another member of staff or volunteer, or has concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff or volunteer, must report the matter immediately to the DSP. If the DSP is unavailable, or involved in an allegation, the matter must be referred immediately to the DSL. The DSP or DSL will decide on an appropriate course of action. At no point should an attempt be made to investigate the situation. This will be undertaken by NSPCC/Social Services and/or the Police as necessary.

Vegan Kids is an 'agent of referral' and not of investigation.

- 3.2 Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse All concerns or disclosures of abuse should be acted upon-staff should know the 5 Rs':
- Recognise signs of vulnerability
 - Respond to student concerns
 - Record student concerns
 - Report student concerns
 - Refer student concerns

Sometimes issues are raised which, whilst seemingly complex, are generally safeguarding matters and not necessarily a child protection issue. These matters should be responded by offering a supportive response and where necessary or relevant, refer them to their Group Leader.

When a child self-discloses a matter that constitutes a potential or alleged situation of abuse, the staff member or volunteer must take the child to a private place within view but out of ear-shot of other people. Promises of confidentiality must not be given. Tell the child that you have a duty to pass on the information, only to those who need to know.

- Listen carefully to what is said
- Do not interview them, but ask what happened, keep questions to a minimum and obtain sufficient facts to understand what is being alleged
- Allow the child to continue at their own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only and always avoid asking leading questions (questions that suggest a particular answer).

Do not make assumptions or offer explanations Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so do not attempt to personally investigate any allegations of abuse

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared If in doubt ask your on site DSL or DSP.

3.3 Recording

A full record must be made as soon as possible detailing the nature of the allegation. Record in writing everything that was said, using the child's own words. Note place, date, time, and names of persons to whom the information was given.

The Vegan Kids referral form - 'Safeguarding Incident/Concern Form' can be obtained from the DSP.

- Do not ask the child to make a written statement
- Avoid jargon
- Include:
 - The nature of the alleged abuse
 - A description (if applicable) of any injuries observed
 - An account of the allegation
- Ensure that the record is signed and dated by the appropriate persons.

Report the incident immediately to the on site DSP/DSL and send a report to Vegan Kids.

Do not confront any person against whom an allegation has been made.

The Designated Safeguarding Team will guide you in dealing with any allegation or suspicion of abuse, and if applicable, report allegations and incidents of abuse at the local County Council Children's Social Services.

Vegan Kids recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It also recognises that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career.

Therefore those dealing with such allegations within a centre, shall do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way and in accordance with our procedures. If you are ever in doubt as to what to do, please consult a the DSP.

4. Staff Code of Conduct with Children and Young People

4.1 Advice for Staff and volunteers

- Staff and volunteers must avoid actions/situations that might be misconstrued, bearing in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misinterpreted.
- Staff and volunteers should avoid working on a one to one basis with a student. For example, if a student stays after class to ask a question, you should try to get one of their friends to stay with them, and always keep the door open.
- Staff and volunteers should never enter a student's bedroom if a child is in the room alone; if it is absolutely necessary to do so, for example if the student is sick, you should call their Group Leader or another member of staff (preferably same sex) to go in with you. Staff and volunteers should also never invite any child into their own bedroom, living quarters, or any other room. Bathrooms must be signposted for the use of either Adults or children, and staff should not use any child's bathroom.
- Staff and volunteers should ensure they adhere to our dress code for the event and be aware of the effect of their appearance to students. They should also be extra sensitive when at evening activities and on accommodation at night. Written in conjunction with

Staff and volunteers must:

- Treat all children and young people with dignity and respect. Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- Treat all young people equally
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable whilst in their care. Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people (see 'Cultural Sensitivity' section).
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse or bad behaviour (e.g. bullying, alcohol/solvent/drug abuse, smoking)

Staff and volunteers must not:

- Have inappropriate physical, verbal or sexual contact with children or younger people
- Allow themselves to be drawn into any inappropriate behaviour, or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- Show favouritism to any individual or group
- Swear or make racist, sexist or blasphemous remarks within earshot of other staff or children
- Smoke or consume alcohol, in front of or in the company of students or their group leaders, or allow any effects of these practices to affect them in any way
- Take a chance, when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach
- Endanger the well-being of children/young people through action or inaction, whether intentional or not

5. Policy on Personal Communications with Children

5.1 Advice for Staff and volunteers

Please be aware of the potential dangers of personal contact (i.e. contact beyond what is reasonably expected in performing your duties) with students, and the following advice from child protection/ teaching agencies: If students do try to make contact with you on your personal email or phone, discourage this and inform your DSP. Exercise extreme caution in connection with internet sites/messaging systems, and avoid inappropriate communication with all individuals under 18, or others with whom you may be in a position of trust. This also extends to taking part or attempting to take part in on-line gaming with children or associates of students, who may well be underage or unaware that you are an adult. Take care to avoid becoming personally involved in a student's personal affairs. Remember that your personal profiles can be viewed by anyone, and people working with children should be especially careful about their personal web presence, checking any relevant privacy settings carefully. The legal responsibilities of people working with minors extend past the end of any contract they have with Vegan Kids.

5.2 Risks to Children

Children may be able to find information about your personal life that may be inappropriate for minors, and may damage your working relationship with your children. By allowing children access to friendship groups you may be inadvertently introducing them to a wider circle of adults, over which you have no control, and may facilitate inappropriate contacts. Sexual predators and bullies are known to use information available on web pages and social networking sites to gain information about children, such as their interests, tastes and location.

Staff and volunteers who post information about children (e.g. photos of their summer holiday, names etc.) on a personal web page may make them vulnerable to inappropriate attention.

5.3 Our Policy

- The onus is on the member of staff or volunteers – not the children – to distance themselves from any potentially inappropriate situation.
- Staff and volunteers should not attempt to instigate private contact with children of any age during or after the course.
- Staff must not give their personal email/postal addresses or telephone number to children, or ask for theirs, during or after the course. If Children wish to make friends, and parents are not available, contact details may be shared to the DSP, who will then share that information with the adult, upon collection. Contact details can only be shared from the parents to parents and must never be obtained from the children.
- Staff and volunteers must not add any children to any social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.), nor allow themselves to be added to any child's social networking site.
- Staff and volunteers must use common sense and professional judgement to avoid circumstances which could be perceived to be of an inappropriate nature.
- Staff and volunteers must not - by any means or in any circumstances - make, view or access illegal or inappropriate images of children.
- Unless authorised, staff and volunteers must not distribute (by any means) images or information about children of any age. This includes the use of student images or details on blogs, social networking sites, messaging systems or any internet sites.

6. Policy on Taking Photographs of Children

- 6.1 We understand that the nature of our events may mean staff and volunteers may wish to take photos of their own Children. However we also have a duty of care to Children and data protection regulations.

Our policy refers to the use of film and digital cameras, including mobile phones:

- Only staff and volunteers authorised by the DSP or site manager are allowed to take pictures of children. Children must never be photographed alone, but always in pairs or groups
- No clues as to the identity of the student must be visible in the image
- Photography is only allowed when parents have consented to this.
- Members of staff and/or Group Leaders of both gender must be present
- Children and parents are to be asked their permission before taking the picture
- Only pictures of students in appropriate dress are acceptable, for example, taking pictures of students at poolside is not allowed
- Images must be securely stored and only used by those authorized to do so
- Images must not be transmitted electronically, or printed copies distributed, unless authorized • Anyone suspected of capturing unauthorised or inappropriate images should be reported to the Principal DSP

This policy covers all photographs taken by vegan kids staff and volunteers

- Group Leaders are expected to follow the policy – they may take photos of their own students for business use, providing the students and parents give their permission.

- Students should never be photographed alone
- Group photographs are acceptable, providing the students and parents have given their consent
- Wide angle group shots are also acceptable
- Students should not be identifiable to a third party

6.2 Taking the Photo

- Prior to the event permissions slips will be obtained from the parents, Any children who do not have permission will be identified at the site training.
- Ask the students' permission before you take the photograph. If this is not feasible (i.e. action shots taken during activities), ask the students' permission afterwards to keep the image
- When taking a photo of students, please make sure that there is a Group Leader present, or members of staff of both genders
- Photographs should only be taken in appropriate settings. Poolside, for example, is inappropriate.

6.3 Storage of Image

- Photos are only able to be stored on the memory/HD card or at head office. They must not be downloaded onto Staff personal computers or devices.

6.4 Display of Image

- Images of the children may only be displayed with the permission of the children and parents involved
- If a child or parent asks for a photograph of them to be taken down, it should be done so immediately
- The image must not be used in any way that may upset or humiliate the child

6.5 Distribution of Image

- The image must not be displayed on any internet/intranet storage medium • Images must never be sent via email to anyone
- The subjects of the photograph are entitled to keep a printed copy of the photograph provided that there are no objections from any other subjects in the photograph

6.6 Disposal of Image.

Photographs of students should not be kept for any longer than is necessary.

FAQs Should we stop students taking photos of each other? No, the children are free to take photographs of one another, unless the subject of the photograph objects, or if the taking of the photograph could be construed as a form of bullying.

A Group Leader is taking photos of students. Should we stop them? We cannot stop a Group Leader from taking photographs of their own students, as many have permission and already have a "sign off". However, please make sure that the photographs are being taken in line with our policies, and that there is no odd behaviour, i.e. taking lots of photographs of the same student/taking close-up photographs of students.

Children are asking us to give them copies of photos from the display. Should we? We can send the photo to the child's parents, provided that there is no objection from any subjects, and that they have all given permission.

A student has asked to have their photograph taken with a member of staff. Is this allowed? This is more a question of staff protection than child protection. Only have your photograph taken with a student if you feel comfortable in doing so, and please be aware of the context in which the photograph is being taken, i.e. where the photograph is being taken. Is it in a public place? Are there other people around? What is the level of physical contact? Please also remember that you cannot ask for a copy of this photograph!

7. Policy on Physical Contact with Students

You must abide by the terms of the Equality Act and the Children Act of 1989. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and if necessary, referral to outside authorities. It is Vegan Kids policy to advise against any physical contact with students, especially any type of 'positive touch' (see below). However, we recognise that there may be circumstances where this is unavoidable, and some exceptions exist (see below), but it is crucial that staff and volunteers only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

- 7.1 'Positive Touch' Positive touch is used to mean everyday acts of communication by physical means to indicate approval, reassurance or sympathy. Positive touch is used in schools when necessary to comfort/reassure children or to demonstrate skills e.g. in P.E. or Art, is to be avoided wherever possible.
- 7.2 First Aid Emergency treatment may be required at any time and staff should never feel constrained from acting immediately to prevent harm even where this involves body contact
- Any procedure used must have a First Aid or hygiene purpose and should not involve more contact than is necessary
 - Any such procedure should be undertaken by a person of the same sex as the student if available
 - Ensure that there is open access to the area where you are, taking into account the student's requirement for dignity and privacy
 - Wherever possible, contact should be avoided e.g. asking a student to clean their own cut/graze, unless they are very young
- 7.3 Negative Intervention Negative intervention means that where necessary, reasonable force can be used by authorised staff and volunteers to control or restrain pupils to prevent them from:
- Committing a criminal offence
 - Injuring themselves or others
 - Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the event, whether during an activity or elsewhere

Negative intervention is not justified for trivial misdemeanours but for any situation which can be resolved without physical force. It is not a substitute for good behavioural management. Staff must also take into account the student's age and level of understanding. Never give the impression of loss of temper – remain calm.

If a child is about to injure themselves or someone else, staff are obliged to intervene, to protect the child(ren) from harm. However, physical intervention must only be used as a last resort. Other ways of resolving the situation include:

- Talking calmly to the student and telling them to stop
- Removing other students from the area
- Summoning help from colleagues and the Group Leader

- Telling the student that help has been sent for
- Telling the student that their parents will be informed
- Reminding the student of the rules and the possible sanctions for breaking them (e.g. being sent home)

Self-defence: Everyone has the right to defend themselves against an attack, provided they do not use a disproportionate amount of force to do so.

- 7.4 Precautions before engaging in any physical contact • Ensure that you and the student are in a public area, e.g. not alone behind closed doors. If you are in a room, leave the door open or ask another member of staff to be present
- The contact should be the minimum necessary for the purpose
 - You must always remain conscious of the physical context of your actions. Remember that even innocent actions can be misconstrued
 - Physical contact with a person of the same gender is less likely to be misconstrued, so be extra vigilant with a person of the opposite sex

A full incident report must be completed after any incident and emailed to vegan kids immediately

8. Anti-Bullying Policy

- 8.1 Statement of Intent We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can have fun in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our events. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell us and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING organisation. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

What is Bullying? Bullying is the use of aggression with the intent of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, and tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings, threatening gestures)
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, etc.
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of/focusing on the issue of sexuality

Why is it important to respond to bullying? Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

- 8.2 Objectives of this Policy All staff must make themselves fully aware of what constitutes bullying, and what actions are necessary. We take bullying very seriously. Students, parents and volunteers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported and that bullying will not be tolerated.
- 8.3 Signs and Symptoms A child may indicate by their behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to lessons or activities
- Begins truanting
- Starts stammering
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Cry themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Stops eating
- Comes back with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions or money go 'missing'
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

8.4 Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to your DSP
- Incidents of bullying or threats of bullying will be recorded in writing by Vegan kids staff
- In serious cases, parents should be informed and asked to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- Attempts will be made to help the bully/bullies change their behaviour

8.5 Outcomes

- The bully/bullies may be asked to genuinely apologise
- Other consequences may take place. In serious cases, exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the students will be reconciled After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored and a written report kept to ensure further bullying does not take place.

9. Cultural Sensitivity

9.1. Policy Our organisation values the individuality of all our children and young people. We are committed to giving all our students every opportunity to be the 'best they can be'. Within our environment of learning and healthy interaction, we do not tolerate any lack of sensitivity, disrespect, bullying or harassment of any kind. All our policies are there to help ensure that we promote the individuality of all our students, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We aim to reflect the multi-ethnic nature of our society here in the UK and ensure that the events we offer include positive attitudes to all people. This is expected of not only students to students, but staff members to each other and especially all staff to students at all times.

We do this by:

- Creating an atmosphere in which students and staff feel valued and secure
- Having consistent expectations of students and their learning

- Ensuring that our teaching takes into account the learning needs and backgrounds of all students as much as possible
- Actively encouraging racial equality through our manuals, course books and supplementary materials and displays of students' work
- Making clear to our students and staff what constitutes aggressive and racist behaviour and that it will not be tolerated
- Identifying and dealing quickly with any signs or incidents of racist behaviour Staff must take great care to respect the cultural, political and religious sensitivities of children and young people.

Comments or questions regarding their background, society or beliefs, may cause offence and/or distress.

Vegan Kids is responsible for ensuring that the policy is communicated and implemented by all staff and volunteers at all times. All staff members and volunteers and contractors are responsible for dealing with racist incidents, and being able to recognise and tackle racial bias and stereotyping.

Any issues or concerns relating to the above should be communicated to the DSP or DSL.

10. Other people involved with Vegan kids who are not staff

- 10.1 Other people engaged in regulated activity. In addition to employees, it is recognised that various contractors and suppliers come into contact on a more or less regular basis with our students.
- 10.2 Contractors and Suppliers vegan kids requires that all external suppliers that are used regularly conduct background checks on their staff. All contractors who come on site are required to sign in, read the Visitor Guidance notes.

