"Inspiring children to be happy and confident through music"

FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

Voices for Life works with children and families as part of its activities. These include providing specialised singing, confidence and wellbeing projects for primary school children in the UK involving the delivery of workshops and performances.

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- protect children and young people who take part in Voices for Life's services, events and activities, specifically those where photographs and videos may be taken
- set out the overarching principles that guide our approach to photographs/videos being taken of children and young people during our events and activities
- to ensure that we operate in line with our values and within the law when creating, using and sharing images of children and young people.

This policy applies to trustees and Voices for Life workers. This includes trustees, agency workers, freelancers, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England/Northern Ireland/Scotland/Wales. Summaries of key legislation and guidance is available on NSPCC Learning:

- online abuse legislation and guidance
- child protection legislation and guidance

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 and to take, share and use images of children safely.

We recognise that:

- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation
- the welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount
- children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- always asking for written consent from parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- for school-based projects, Voices for Life may rely on schools to obtain and manage appropriate parental consent for photography and filming in line with school procedures
- always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- changing the names of children whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)

- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the name of their school or a school uniform with a logo)
- making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by:
- only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary)
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

We will also develop a procedure for reporting the abuse or misuse of images of children as part of our child protection procedures. We will ensure everyone involved in our organisation knows the procedures to follow to keep children safe.

Photography and/or filming for personal use

To help safeguard children and young people and respect the wishes of all participating families, audience photography and filming are not permitted at Voices for Life performances and events unless explicitly authorised in advance by Voices for Life.

We will communicate this clearly in advance of events and through signage and/or announcements at the venue.

Where authorised photography or filming takes place, this will be managed in line with this policy and appropriate consent procedures.

Photography and/or filming for Voices for Life's use

Voices for Life may occasionally use photography or filming to document and celebrate workshops, rehearsals, performances and other activities, or to support communications, fundraising and promotional activity.

Any photography or filming carried out on behalf of Voices for Life will only take place with appropriate consent and in line with this policy.

Children, young people, parents and carers will be informed when photography or filming is taking place. For school-based projects, Voices for Life may rely on schools to obtain and manage appropriate parental consent in line with school procedures.

If we hire a photographer for one of our events, we will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- providing the photographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour
- ensuring the photographer wears identification at all times
- informing children, their parents and carers that a photographer will be at the event and ensuring they give written consent to images which feature their child being taken and shared
- not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access to children
- not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event or at a child's home
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography following our child protection procedures.

Photography and/or filming for wider use

If people such as local journalists, professional photographers (not hired by Voices for Life) or students wish to record one of our events and share the images professionally or in the wider world, they should seek permission in advance.

They should provide:

- the name and address of the person using the camera
- the names of children they wish to take images of (if possible)
- the reason for taking the images and/or what the images will be used for
- a signed declaration that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

Voices for Life will verify these details and decide whether to grant permission for photographs/films to be taken. We will seek consent from the children who are the intended subjects of the images and their parents and inform the photographer of anyone who does not give consent. At the event we will inform children, parents and carers that an external photographer is present and ensure the photographer is easily identifiable, for example by issuing them with a coloured identification badge.

If Voices for Life is concerned that someone unknown to us is using their sessions for photography or filming purposes, we will ask them to leave and (depending on the nature of the concerns) follow our child protection procedures.

If consent to take photographs is not given

If children, parents and/or carers do not consent to photographs being taken, we will respect their wishes. We will agree in advance how they would like to be identified so the photographer knows not to take pictures of them and ensure this is done in a way that does not single out the child or make them feel isolated. We will never exclude a child from an activity because we do not have consent to take their photograph.

Storing images

We will store photographs and videos of children securely, in accordance with our safeguarding policy and data protection law. We will keep hard copies of images in a locked drawer and electronic images in a protected folder with restricted access. Images will be retained only for as long as necessary and will normally be deleted after a period of up to 7 years, unless there is a legitimate safeguarding, legal or archival reason to retain them for longer. Where images are stored on portable devices, appropriate security measures such as passwords or encryption should be used.

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures.
- Code of conduct for VFL workers and volunteers.
- Online safety policy and procedures for responding to concerns about online abuse.

Contact details - Photography and filming contact

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Senior lead for safeguarding and child protection

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NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Date adopted: 17th June 2026

Next review due: June 2027

Approved by: Board of Trustees