

Vache Baroque: 2024 Safeguarding Policy & Code of Conduct for working with children and vulnerable adults

Last reviewed and updated 14 June 2024 E. Makharinsky

Vache Baroque recognises that the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults is paramount and that all children, young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, culture, ability, gender, language, ethnicity, religious or spiritual beliefs and/or sexual identity, have equal rights of Safeguarding.

We have a duty of care when they are in our charge and we will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities. By law Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

This Safeguarding Policy applies to **ALL** personnel including freelance staff, temporary staff, artists, workshop leaders, volunteers and anyone who works with children. The procedures are most relevant for those with significant or sole responsibility for children, young people and vulnerable adults, although Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play.

All allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to in a swift and appropriate manner.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and in line with the following:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020](#)

Vache Baroque pledges to:

- Treat children and vulnerable adults equally, listening to and respecting them
- Write and regularly review its safeguarding and safeguarding policy and procedures
- Appoint a Safeguarding Officer and member of the trustee board who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding at the highest level in the organisation
- Make sure all staff and volunteers within the organisation read, understand, and follow the Safeguarding Handbook and are kept updated with any safeguarding policy and/or procedural updates or changes
- Ensure that children, vulnerable adults and their families know about the organisation's safeguarding policies and what to do if they have a concern
- Build a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers, children, and vulnerable adults know how they are expected to behave and feel comfortable about sharing concerns

Vache Baroque will ensure that:

- Anyone in the organisation who is engaged to work with children and/or vulnerable adults will require Enhanced DBS clearance following an assessment of risk
- All trustees and directors will complete an NSPCC online safeguarding training course
- The welfare of each child or vulnerable adult will always be of highest priority
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- There is a clear line of accountability with regards to safeguarding concerns
- All staff and volunteers within the organisation are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguarding and their duty to the children and young people in their care, and that they fully understand the correct process for reporting concerns

RECOGNISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS: WHO MAY NEED HELP?

- **Abuse:** A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children 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 child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional Abuse:** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child'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 children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child 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 children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
 - Protect a child 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 child's basic emotional needs.

- **Child Sexual Exploitation:** This is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity:
 - in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
 - for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
- **Child Criminal Exploitation:** As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity:
 - in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
 - for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
 - through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
- **Extremism/radicalisation:** Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable - including the young - by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as "the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist."

- **County Lines:** As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

WHAT TO DO

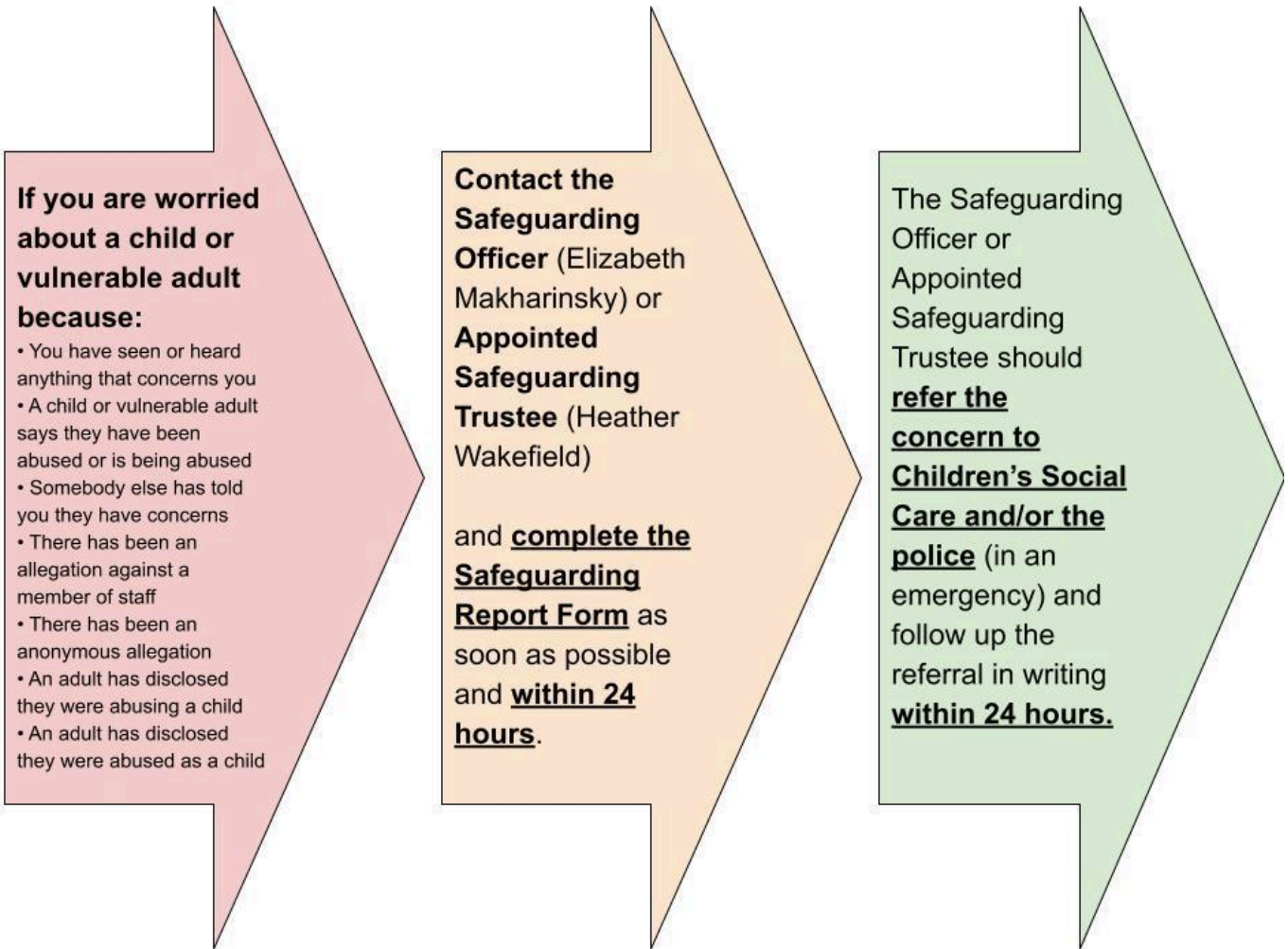
If there is immediate risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, contact the Safeguarding Officer or Appointed Safeguarding Trustee without hesitation who will call the police or social services. **If they are not available, or it is an emergency, DO NOT DELAY, ring 999**, then inform the safeguarding leads of the referral immediately.

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses to you that abuse or inappropriate behaviour has/may be taking place, you should:

1. **Listen to them.** Allow them to tell you what has happened in their own way, and at their own pace.
2. **Do not interrupt** anyone who is freely recalling significant events.
3. **Remain calm.** Be reassuring and supportive but try not to respond emotionally.
4. Do not ask leading questions. Only ask questions if you are seeking clarification about something they have said. Use TED; **Tell, Explain, Describe.**
5. When you are able to, **make an accurate record** of what you have been told, taking care to note any times, dates or locations mentioned. **Use the person's own words** where possible.
6. **Do not substitute anatomically correct names for body part names** used by the child or vulnerable adult.
7. Reassure the child or vulnerable adult that they did the right thing in telling someone and you are glad they told you.
8. Reassure them that they have not done anything wrong.
9. **Do not promise to keep their disclosure a secret**, but reassure them that you will only share the information with the right people who will be able to help them. Explain what you will do next.
10. At your earliest opportunity, and within 24 hours, speak to your Safeguarding Officer regarding the disclosure. If your Safeguarding Officer or Appointed Safeguarding Trustee are not available, ring First Response for advice. **Their details are secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk or 01296 383962** (outside of office hours call: **0800 999 7677**)

The Safeguarding Officer for Vache Baroque is **Elizabeth (Betty) Makharinsky** (Executive Director), who can be contacted on **07870171587**.

If the Safeguarding Officer is not available, staff and volunteers should report to the Appointed Safeguarding Trustee who is **Heather Wakefield**, who can be contacted on **07801555614**.



ALL RECORD KEEPING

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing on plain paper or on the Safeguarding Report Form, along with dates and times of the discussions and decisions, and the details of those present. These records should be passed to the Safeguarding Leads and kept confidentially.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE BEHAVIOUR OF OTHER ADULTS / SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

Concerns about the behaviour of other adults or operational issues of the organisation in relation to safeguarding should be reported to the Safeguarding Leads at the earliest opportunity. If the concerns involve a Safeguarding Lead, they should be reported to the Chairman of the Trustees (**Jeremy Lewison** - 07901555785).

CODE OF CONDUCT

DATA

Use of data/email addresses

Vache Baroque will communicate with the children and vulnerable adults with whom it works through teachers, parents or guardians. All contact information is held securely and used in line with GDPR guidelines.

E-safety

All personnel have a responsibility to ensure the e-safety of children and vulnerable adults in relation to Vache Baroque activity. Personnel should be alert to online abuse, grooming and cyber-bullying by text, email or on social media. Concerns should be dealt with in the same way as any other safeguarding issue.

Children will not be permitted to bring mobile phones or cameras into rehearsal or workshop settings. For children and vulnerable adults in performance, the use of mobile phones to take photographs will be managed by their appointed chaperones.

Vache Baroque personnel may not befriend on social media any children, young people or vulnerable adults who they have met through their work on Vache Baroque projects or productions.

It is important for Vache Baroque to document its work through film and photography for archive purposes, in order to have images and footage to use for promoting future projects, as well as to celebrate its high-quality work with funders and supporters. Vache Baroque personnel and/or professional photographers will document this work at regular intervals during each year, but only when prior written permission has been obtained from parents/guardians. A child's or vulnerable adult's name or personal details will not be used without permission from parents/guardians.

Vache Baroque may post pictures on its social media channels of children or vulnerable adults who are involved in its work. No pictures or names will be posted without parent/guardian permission.

Children will not be permitted to bring mobile phones/devices or cameras into rehearsals or workshop settings unless at the request of Vache Baroque for official reasons.

Children will be permitted to use mobile phones/device and cameras in rehearsal breaks, but must abide by a code of conduct which includes the following:

- Only suitable material should be accessed online; using the internet to transmit or gain access to materials which are unlawful, obscene or abusive is not permitted.
- No photographs should be taken or posts shared online without consent.
- Any inappropriate comments about Vache Baroque or company members will not be tolerated.
- Social media must only be used in a polite and courteous way and any online bullying will not be tolerated.
- No child or young person should befriend a member of VB personnel online. Any requests to do so must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer or Appointed Safeguarding Trustee.
- Any suspected inappropriate behaviour must be logged and reported immediately to the Safeguarding Officer or Appointed Safeguarding Trustee.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

All Vache Baroque personnel, contracted, employed, or otherwise have special responsibilities to the children and vulnerable adults that they work with. The organisation is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and clear guidance is provided on the types of practices that will meet these responsibilities and ensure that children and vulnerable adults are listened to, valued and respected as individuals.

All VB staff and personnel, should:

Recognise the position of responsibility they hold with the children and vulnerable adults they are working with; understand that they will be trusted by these children and vulnerable adults and will hold a certain amount of power over them. Treat this trust and this power with the highest responsibility.

Demonstrate the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour at all times, maintain a professional relationship with all children and vulnerable adults they work with, and never be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any illegal substance during project activities.

Work in an open and accountable manner at all times. Ensure there is more than one adult present in any session or break. When this is not possible, ensure you are working in full view of others and hold an enhanced DBS.

Not take children or vulnerable adults alone on car journeys unless absolutely unavoidable and only then if the full knowledge and consent of the parents/guardians/chaperones and senior manager in the organisation has been sought and given. Insurance liability should also be checked in this instance.

Not meet with children or vulnerable adults outside of organised activities, unless it is work-related and with the knowledge and consent of the parents/guardians and senior manager in the organisation.

Use appropriate forms of communication and language. Do not swear and never make sexual or suggestive comments to a child. Always challenge a child's, vulnerable adult's, or colleague's use of bad language or sexual or suggestive comments.

Never discriminate against a child or vulnerable adult because of age, disability, gender, cultural or racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or sexual identity.

Recognise the additional needs of children or vulnerable adults from minority ethnic groups or those with disabilities and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

Not use unnecessary physical contact with children or vulnerable adults. There may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable or necessary, for example to provide reassurance to a distressed child or vulnerable adult, to provide physical support when working with a disabled individual, or for first aid or demonstration purposes. Physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child or vulnerable adult and the purpose of the contact should be clear.

Be vigilant and mindful that some children or vulnerable adults may misinterpret the actions of adults or other individuals, sometimes finding good intentions to be intrusive or intimidating. Sometimes children become attracted to the adults working with them. Adults should be aware of the impact of their actions, and should sensitively address any misunderstanding.

Not befriend on social media any children or vulnerable adults who are project participants.