

Child Image Policy for The Company of Four

Introduction

The Company of Four is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people who participate in our activities. This Child Image Policy outlines the guidelines for the use of images and videos of children and young people involved in our productions, in line with UK legislation and best practices for safeguarding.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect the welfare of children and young people.
- Ensure that all images and videos are used in a manner that is respectful and appropriate.
- Provide guidance on how images and videos of children and young people should be handled by members, volunteers, and third parties associated with the Company.

Scope

This policy applies to all children and young people (under the age of 18) participating in The Company of Four productions, workshops and events.

All members, volunteers, and other adults who may be involved in the production or media activities must adhere to this policy.

General Principles

Informed Consent: Before any images or videos are taken, written consent must be obtained from the parent or legal guardian of the child or young person. The consent form must specify how and where the images will be used, and consent can be withdrawn at any time. This will include permission to include the child's name. A consent form will be issued for every production.

Respect and Privacy: Images and videos should portray children and young people in a respectful manner and should not exploit or misrepresent them. Children's dignity and privacy must always be maintained.

Appropriate Content: No images or videos should be taken that may be seen as inappropriate, humiliating, or distressing for the child or young person. This includes but is not limited to intimate or sexualised imagery, or anything that could potentially be used in an exploitative manner.

Supervision: The taking of photographs and videos must always be done under the supervision of an appropriate adult. Unsupervised or secretive filming is strictly prohibited.

Usage of Images and Videos

Purpose of Use: Images and videos will only be used for the purposes specified at the time of consent (e.g., promotional materials, social media, press releases, etc.). Any additional use must be re-approved by the child's parent or guardian.

Storage and Security: All images and videos will be stored securely, and access will be restricted to authorised personnel only. Digital images should be protected by passwords, and physical copies should be stored safely.

Sharing: Images and videos may be shared publicly (e.g., on social media, on the Company's website, in printed promotional materials, etc.) only if this has been specifically agreed to by the child's parent or guardian. Parents should be informed of any public sharing and given the option to opt out.

Photography and Filming at Performances and Events

Public Performances:

In many cases, third party photographers or videographers may be used by the Company to capture images and videos of public performances or events. Prior to any event, the Company will ensure that:

- Consent is obtained for all children involved.
- Audience members are reminded not to take photos or videos of children without permission.

Dressing Rooms and Rehearsals:

Photography and filming will not be permitted in the children's dressing rooms or during rehearsals unless it is authorised for specific purposes (e.g. behind-the-scenes footage for promotional material, recording routines for practising). Parents will be notified of any planned photography or filming in these spaces.

Children's use of phones during rehearsals and backstage must be carefully managed. Phones can provide entertainment during downtime, but their use must not interfere with rehearsals or create distractions or infringe on privacy. The production team may determine specific rules for their rehearsals.

Additionally, rules should be in place to prevent the capture of photos or videos of children without explicit parental consent, as this may breach safeguarding protocols and privacy laws. Photography or filming on a device should be supervised and in designated areas with the consent of all featured. Chaperones can determine whether it is appropriate to take group photos once all children are dressed and there is consent from all participants.

By fostering a responsible and transparent approach, we can ensure a safe, professional, and creative environment for all young participants.

Rights of Children and Parents

Opting Out: Parents or guardians may opt out of any planned photography or filming at any time. Children and young people also have the right to withdraw consent at any stage if they are uncomfortable with the use of their image or video.

Access to Images: Parents and guardians have the right to request access to any images or videos in which their child is featured, and to request their removal from any public-facing media (website, social media, etc.).

Training and Awareness

- All members and volunteers involved with children and young people must be trained on this policy and understand their responsibility in ensuring that it is adhered to. This includes safeguarding training and guidance on handling sensitive media materials.

Reporting Concerns

If any concerns arise about the inappropriate use of images or videos, or if any images or videos are found to be violating this policy, the matter should be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding Lead: Vicky Fosker - safeguarding@cof4.co.uk

All concerns will be treated seriously and investigated in accordance with the Company's safeguarding procedures.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed no less than once per annum to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Updates or amendments may be made as necessary, with the most current policy published on the website.

Signed:

Date:

Vicky Fosker

Safeguarding Lead