

Title:	Potentially Vulnerable Groups
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UKfilmNet | Potentially Vulnerable Groups Policy

1. Policy

It is the general policy of UKfilmNet to ensure that all employees and others who may be potentially vulnerable (e.g. due to their age, declared disability or condition, or sexual orientation) are given an appropriate level of support so that they are not harmed by being in our working environment.

Associated Documents	Lone Working Policy Risk Assessment Policy
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2. Children on organisation Premises

The presence of children or young persons within the organisation premises could, in some cases, mean that normal controls over hazards are inadequate for them for a variety of reasons e.g. due to their size, inquisitiveness or immaturity.

[In this Section, the term ‘Child’ includes young persons i.e. 16 -18 year olds as well as those under the age of 16 – see section ‘Young Persons’ for arrangements specifically for 16-18 year olds.]

Members of the organisation must be discouraged from bringing their children into the organisation except for social purposes such as organised functions or brief visits (e.g. with new born babies etc.). These must be restricted to low hazard areas, or to any areas specifically designed for children e.g. the organisation’s crèche facilities.

In general, parents may not bring a child to the organisation and care for the child whilst at the same time undertaking their work as an employee or student of the organisation.

All staff are cautioned that if, against policy, they bring a child on site they are exposing the child to an environment not designed for children and must accept responsibility for the child's own safety (and possibly for any damage done by the child to others).

UKfilmNet recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, employees and students may find it necessary to have a child/children with them. Anyone wishing to bring children onto organisation premises must seek permission beforehand from their line manager/course leader so that an appropriate risk assessment can be undertaken and controls can be discussed and agreed. The request and subsequent approval should be in writing whenever possible to ensure that both parties are aware of the conditions of the agreement.

The following is a list of some of the factors to be taken into account:

- The safety of the work area in terms of hazards, access/egress etc.
- The effect of having children present on people working in that area (e.g. introducing distractions).
- The potential for damage to property.
- The numbers and ages of any children: and
- The frequency and duration of their visits to the organisation.

Where permission has been granted, parents or guardians are required to ensure that there is adequate supervision of children at all times whilst they are on organisation premises. This is the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian and cannot be delegated to another person.

Children must not be allowed into any high-risk areas (e.g. studio areas or workshops). The exception to this is where a young person is undergoing pre-arranged supervised work experience and a written risk assessment has been completed.

Low risk areas are considered to be the public and social areas and most offices where the parent or guardian has control over carrying out risk-reduction measures. In communal areas the parent/guardian should discuss their suitability with their line manager.

There are no restrictions on parents being accompanied by their children in the public areas of the organisation although obviously there is still the need for close supervision, especially in areas such as stairs/landings and car parks etc. Children under the age of 14 are also prohibited from any alcohol licensed areas except where such sales are suspended due to UKfilmNet events.

3. Young Persons ('employed' or undertaking 'work experience')

Regulation 19 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 state that:

'Every employer shall ensure that young persons employed are protected at work from any risks to their health or safety which are a consequence of their lack of experience or absence of awareness of existing or potential risks or the fact that young persons have not yet fully matured'.

'Young Persons' are defined as persons who have not reached the age of 18. (A 'child' is defined as a person who is not over compulsory school age). Persons between the ages of 16 and 18 can still be employed for work where it is necessary for training, and if supervised by a competent person, and where the risks are reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable.

Employers must therefore review their risk assessments before employing any young person (or providing work experience) with the aim of determining the particular risks facing young persons in the light of their relative immaturity, lack of experience, and unfamiliarity with the workplace. Care must also be taken to avoid contravening other legislation e.g. work in licensed premises, night work etc.

Work should also not be allocated that is beyond their physical or psychological capacity; which involves exposure to harmful agents (including cancer-causing substances and radiation) and where there is a risk from extreme cold, heat, noise or vibration.

UKfilmNet is required by law to advise Parents, Guardians or Carers if there any significant identified workplace risks to a child (under the age of 18) and how they are controlled. This is best achieved by providing a copy of the risk assessment covering the activities in which they will be involved (or exposed to).

It is the responsibility of the Parent, Guardian or Carer to advise UKfilmNet (who has duties as an employer in law) where the child has any medical or behavioral conditions, e.g. asthma know.

4. Discrimination in the Workplace

The Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty) protects individuals from discrimination and covers nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or Beliefs - – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Declared Disabilities;

The Equality Act requires employers to treat people with a declared disability equally with non-disabled persons in all employment matters. A disability under the Act is described as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' (more than minor or trivial) and 'long-term' (more than 12 months) negative effect of the individual's ability to undertake normal daily activities.

Employers must make reasonable adjustments/changes to the premises etc. to accommodate the needs of employees with disabilities so long as these changes do not contravene other health and safety laws.

Other provisions in the Act relate to "advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it", by "fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it".

The provision of goods and services;

As a 'Service Provider' the organisation must consider the needs of individuals with disabilities when designing and offering the services it provides. More information on this aspect is available from the organisation's Additional Learning Support Team.

5. New or Expectant Mothers

UKfilmNet encourages female employees to notify their Line Manager if they become new or an expectant mother, as the organisation has additional legal responsibilities towards them and will carry out a review of their work and any risk assessments applicable to their work.

This 'person-specific' review should be carried out by the individuals Line Manager (or designated person) who will consider any potential risks to their health and safety on account of their working conditions, the type of work in which they are involved and any environmental conditions to which they are exposed e.g. noise, cold, heat, chemicals, biological agents, etc.

Where this review reveals that there are significant hazard(s) which could present a risk to the employee then an assessment must be carried out and this must be recorded (see also 'Risk Assessment').

Help and advice can be obtained where necessary from the relevant Health & Safety Coordinator and the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team.

6. Lone Working

The health, safety & wellbeing of vulnerable groups can also be exacerbated through lone working. It is therefore important that these individuals are considered in relation to the separate UKfilmNet policy 'Lone Working Policy Guidance'.