

## Photography and Filming Policy

### The purpose and scope of this policy statement

The Signing Company works with children and families as part of its activities. These include: Signing classes, workshop, birthday parties and working in Early Years settings. The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- protect children and families who take part in The Signing Company'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 families 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 families. This policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers and other adults associated with The Signing Company.

### We recognise that:

- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and families, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation.
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and families and to take, share and use images taken and received of children safely.
- 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.
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.
- Due to the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of images, parents and carers need to be made fully aware of how images will be used and stored.

### We will seek to keep children and families safe by:

- always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image.
- 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 or initials 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 dressed in appropriate clothing.
- using images that positively reflect children's involvement in the activity.

We will ensure everyone involved in our organisation knows the procedures to follow to keep children safe, including how to report abuse or misuse of images of children as part of our child protection procedures.

### Photography and/or filming for personal use

When individuals are taking photos or filming for personal use during a class or event, we will provide guidance regarding image sharing and distribution in our joining instructions and remind families at the beginning of a course.

This includes:

- reminding parents, where possible, to only to take images of their own children.
- when images are captured by parents which include other people's children, the parent is responsible for ensuring that the images of the other children are cropped, blurred, or covered before image sharing.

### Photography and/or filming for The Signing Company's use

The Signing Company's general policy is not to film or photograph during any signing classes where children are present unless an extraordinary class is provided for publicity purposes.

Adult workshops may be photographed or filmed for publicity purposes with the written consent of the participants and / or setting.

For the purpose of capturing promotional images and videos, extraordinary signing sessions will be offered, and a formal *Parental consent for videos and photo images form* will be required to be completed by the participants.

If we hire a photo/videographer for one of our promotional sessions or events, we will seek to keep children and families safe by:

- informing that a photo/videographer will be at the session.
- ensuring the photo/videographer has a valid enhanced DBS certificate.
- providing the photo/videographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour.
- ensuring the photo/videographer wears identification at all times.
- not allowing the photo/videographer to have unsupervised access to children.
- not allowing the photo/videographer 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 The Signing Company) 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.

The Signing Company 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 The Signing Company 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 stored for a period of 5 years unless consent has been given for them to be used indefinitely.

We will never store images of children on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones.

The Signing Company does not permit staff and volunteers to use any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children. Only cameras or devices belonging to The Signing Company or a professional photo/videographer should be used.

## Contact Details

Nominated child protection lead

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## Related policies and procedures

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

- Parental Consent for videos and photos images form
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- Staff code of conduct Policy.
- GDPR/Privacy Policy

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Next Review: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025