



Off Stream

Child Safeguarding Policy

Purpose and Commitment

Off Stream recognises that safeguarding children is a fundamental responsibility of any organisation that designs and delivers activities involving children and young people. As part of its artistic, educational and community-based work, Off Stream is committed to providing an environment in which every child is protected from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

This Child Safeguarding Policy aims to prevent harm, promote the early identification of safeguarding concerns and ensure that any incidents are managed appropriately and effectively. It ensures that children's participation in Off Stream's activities takes place within an environment characterised by safety, respect and care. This policy forms an integral part of Off Stream's broader commitment to human rights, inclusion and social responsibility.

Legal and Policy Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with recognised international, European and national standards relating to the protection and safeguarding of children.

In particular, it aligns with:

- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which recognises every child's right to protection from all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation
- the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which establishes children's protection as a fundamental right
- the European Union Strategy on the Rights of the Child
- European guidelines and good practice relating to child safeguarding within cultural, educational and community organisations
- the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), particularly with regard to the protection of children's personal data
- applicable Greek legislation concerning the protection of children, including:
 - Law 3500/2006 on domestic violence
 - Law 4538/2018 on child protection and foster care
 - the Greek Penal Code relating to offences against children
 - Law 4624/2019 on the protection of personal data.

Scope

This policy applies to all activities organised or delivered by Off Stream in which children may participate, either directly or indirectly. It applies to all individuals involved in the organisation's work, including employees, freelancers, artists, educators, facilitators, volunteers, consultants and project partners. The policy extends to activities taking place in physical venues, digital environments and any other setting in which interaction with children occurs under the responsibility of Off Stream.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, a “child” is any person under the age of eighteen. “Child abuse” refers to any act or omission that causes, or is likely to cause, physical, psychological or emotional harm to a child. This includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation. The policy also covers situations in which a child may be exposed to inappropriate content, unsuitable behaviour or unsafe environments.

Child Safeguarding Principles

Off Stream is guided by the principle that the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in every activity involving children. Safeguarding is recognised as a shared responsibility and applies to everyone involved in the organisation's activities. Off Stream further recognises every child's right to participate, express their views and be treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination of any kind. The organisation is committed to creating environments that promote safety, trust, participation and freedom of expression.

Prevention and Safe Practice

Off Stream takes all reasonable steps to ensure that activities involving children are planned and delivered in ways that minimise the risk of harm. Safeguarding considerations are integrated into the design of activities from the outset. This includes assessing the suitability of venues, ensuring appropriate visibility and supervision and providing the presence of more than one responsible adult whenever necessary. Particular attention is given to interactions between adults and children to ensure that relationships remain transparent, professional and conducted within clearly defined boundaries.

The organisation avoids practices that could create situations of isolation or lack of accountability, such as one-to-one meetings between an adult and a child without a legitimate reason or unsupervised communication, particularly through digital platforms. Where such interactions are operationally necessary, additional safeguarding measures are implemented to protect both the child and the adult concerned.
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Code of Conduct

Off Stream expects everyone involved in, or associated with, its activities to uphold the highest standards of conduct in relation to children, demonstrating respect, responsibility and a shared commitment to safeguarding. All interactions with children must be appropriate, professional and guided by a clear understanding of the boundaries inherent in

each individual's professional or educational role. Adults participating in Off Stream's activities are expected to act in ways that promote children's safety, wellbeing and confidence, while avoiding behaviours that could create dependency, confusion or any perception of coercion or undue influence.

Particular care must be taken to ensure that communication, whether in person or through digital platforms, remains appropriate at all times. Language, gestures or behaviour that may reasonably be perceived as offensive, intimidating, sexually suggestive or otherwise inappropriate are strictly prohibited.

Off Stream recognises that even well-intentioned behaviour can unintentionally create situations that compromise a child's sense of safety. For this reason, all individuals are expected to exercise sound professional judgement, maintain appropriate boundaries and act with transparency and accountability in every interaction.

Any behaviour that may constitute abuse, exploitation, grooming or any other form of inappropriate conduct towards a child is expressly prohibited and will be treated as a serious breach of this policy.

Reporting and Incident Management

Off Stream is committed to ensuring that any concern, suspicion or allegation relating to the safety or wellbeing of a child can be reported promptly, safely and without fear of retaliation. To support this process, the organisation appoints a **Child Safeguarding Officer**, who serves as the primary point of contact for receiving and managing safeguarding concerns.

Any individual involved in Off Stream's activities who becomes aware of, witnesses or reasonably suspects that a child may be at risk of harm is expected to report their concern as soon as practicable. Reports may relate to an observed incident, a disclosure made by a child or any reasonable safeguarding concern, even where complete evidence is not yet available. The management of safeguarding concerns is guided by the following principles:

- the child's safety and best interests take precedence at all times
- information is handled confidentially and shared only on a need-to-know basis
- reports are assessed impartially, fairly and without prejudice
- all actions are taken in accordance with applicable legal and safeguarding obligations

The Child Safeguarding Officer assesses each report according to its nature and level of risk and determines the most appropriate course of action. This may include immediate safeguarding measures, consultation with qualified safeguarding professionals or, where required, referral to the relevant statutory authorities. Throughout the process, Off Stream seeks to protect both the child and all individuals involved, minimising unnecessary exposure and reducing the risk of secondary harm.

Risk Management and Safe Programme Design

Child safeguarding is integrated into the planning, delivery and evaluation of all activities involving children. Rather than being treated as a standalone procedure, safeguarding forms an essential component of programme design and organisational risk management.

Before any activity takes place, Off Stream considers the context in which it will be delivered, the roles and responsibilities of those involved and any circumstances that could present a risk to children's safety or wellbeing. Particular attention is given to ensuring appropriate supervision, clearly defined responsibilities and the avoidance of situations in which a child is left alone with an adult without a legitimate operational reason.

The organisation also ensures that all activities are appropriate to participants' age, maturity and level of understanding. Risk assessments are reviewed and updated whenever circumstances change or new safeguarding risks are identified.

Protection of Children's Personal Data and Images

Off Stream considers the protection of children's personal data to be an integral element of child safeguarding. Personal information relating to children is collected, processed and stored only for specific, legitimate and clearly defined purposes, in accordance with applicable data protection legislation.

Particular care is taken in relation to photography, video recording and other audiovisual material involving children. Images or recordings are captured and published only with the informed consent of a parent or legal guardian and in a manner that protects the child's dignity, privacy and safety. The organisation avoids practices that may result in unnecessary identification, overexposure or increased safeguarding risks, particularly in publicly accessible or online environments.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Off Stream regularly reviews the implementation and effectiveness of this policy through ongoing reflection, operational experience and feedback from participants, partners and other stakeholders. The organisation regards this policy as a living document that evolves in response to emerging safeguarding challenges, changes in legislation and developments in good practice. Regular review and continuous improvement help ensure that the policy remains effective, relevant and aligned with recognised national and international safeguarding standards.

Final Statement

Off Stream recognises child safeguarding as a fundamental organisational responsibility that underpins every aspect of its work. Creating a safe environment for children extends beyond the prevention of harm. It involves fostering relationships built on trust, respect and care, enabling every child to participate in the organisation's activities safely, confidently and with dignity. Through this policy, Off Stream reaffirms its commitment to maintaining a culture in which the rights, wellbeing and best interests of every child are protected and promoted in all areas of its work.