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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2013')

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the other company policies and procedures.

Introduction

The Outdoors Group Ltd is committed to the safeguarding of all the children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in its activities and in promoting their welfare.

It is the responsibility of each and every one at The Outdoors Group Ltd to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We are also responsible for preventing and dealing with bullying and harassment.

All children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, language or religious belief.

This document is intended as a guideline for all staff and volunteers and must be read and understood by anyone who has contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults both inside The Outdoors Group Ltd premises or on The Outdoors Group Ltd behalf. Shevek Pring, Director is available to clarify procedures or provide further in depth reading on any issues raised here.

How to recognise abuse in Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Child abuse can take a number of forms but can be identified under four general categories:

1. Physical abuse
2. Neglect
3. Emotional abuse (including exposure to domestic violence)

4. Sexual abuse

It is not always easy to recognise child abuse. Significant harm includes ill-treatment and/or anything that seriously impairs a child's health, social or physical development or well-being.

There are a number of ways that abuse can be identified including:

- Disclosure by the young child or young person.
- Information from a third party (e.g. friend, family member, another worker).
- Observation of unexplained injury or changes in behavior.

How to deal with suspected abuse:

- Disclosure, both to the designated officer (Shevek Pring) and to the MASH team (details below) if the designated officer deems this necessary.
- There are two deputies if the designated officer is not available; these are Nick Murphy and Emma Sheffield.
- If a child, young person or vulnerable adult wants to talk about abuse listen, do not question.

Helpful things to say include:

- I believe you
- I am glad you told me
- It is OK to tell
- I will try to help
- Tell the child/young person/vulnerable adult that you will need to speak to someone else, be reassuring
- Make a record of what was said- if possible use the phrases/ words that the child/ young person/ vulnerable adult uses.
- Never make promises you cannot keep

Information

If another person wants to give you information about alleged abuse then listen rather than question, accept what the person says and keep calm, ask them to make a note of what they were told or observed, let them know you will need to tell someone. Make sure there is a written record that is as close to word for word as you can make it, this should go to the designated officer or deputy if the designated officer is not available.

Observation

Some children, young people and vulnerable adults may display one or more of the following signs. They can have an innocent explanation but these signs can also be key signs to potential abuse:

- Bruising, cuts or burns particularly if the injuries are on parts of the body not normally injured in accidents such as the back of the legs.
- Changes in behaviour
- Aggressive behaviour
- Weight loss or excessive weight gain
- Inadequate or inappropriate clothing
- Sexually explicit behaviour
- The child/young person or vulnerable adult only seems happy with you
- Isolation from the group
- Lack of attachment or trust towards parents or other family members
- Having strange secrets
- Telling untruths

What to do

- Do not delay
- Consult with the designated officer (or deputy) or with the MASH team (details below) or report directly to your site manager if there is no-one else available. It is your responsibility to ensure that the designated officer has received the information.
- Fill out a report form (see appendix 1 of this document)

The designated officer will take whatever steps are necessary to secure the safety of any child, young person or vulnerable adult who may be at risk. The strict guidelines followed are;

Children's disclosures and safety;

- Reporting to MASH where necessary
- Recording of incidents or observations that may be used as a body of evidence constituting harm
- Speaking directly to parents about issues
- Informing social services, police and other authorities where deemed necessary to the safety of the child
- Refusing to allow children out of our care if parents/carers/guardians are unfit to be in charge of children (for example if they come to pick up children when under the influence of drugs or alcohol)

Allegations against staff;

- Suspending staff from work whilst investigations are proceeding
- Reporting and engaging with LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) where appropriate
- Termination of employment if deemed necessary after investigation

People working with us, for us, or on our behalf should understand these will not be compromised and if necessary, contact will be made with social services and the police.

A confidential record will be maintained in the office in which staff can log any details of any incidents and circumstances which have caused them concern. **It is important that all concerns are logged whether social services are informed or not, there is a reporting form in the appendix of this document.** There are forms available on request or in the main office.

If the situation is critical such that the child/young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger then the police or social services should be contacted immediately.

All staff and volunteers are required to read the detailed staff guidance on Safeguarding and to participate in safeguarding induction.

Changing

Although it is not a regular part of The Outdoors Group Ltd provision to require students to change, the fact that groups are outdoors in all weather mean that there are situations where it is both inevitable and important to allow students to change. If students are in danger of suffering ill health or are extremely wet and cold it is important to be able to offer this facility.

The Outdoors Group Ltd does not have a designated changing facility, but if this is a necessity then students will be provided with a private area behind suitable screening and left undisturbed to change. If it is necessary for a member of staff to assist someone with changing then a person of the same sex will be used, and wherever possible this will be a member of staff from the visiting organisation that is known to the students.

If it becomes necessary for someone to communicate with students during changing this will be done from outside the screened area, under no circumstances would the screening be removed or entered for the purpose of communication alone.

Intimate Care

The Outdoors Group Ltd have a separate Intimate Care Policy with specific guidance on this area of care.

Vulnerability to Abuse

Children should be encouraged to recognise and challenge inappropriate assistance and behaviour that erodes their dignity and self-worth. Staff should be encouraged to listen.

The following are factors that can increase a child's vulnerability:

- Children who need help with intimate care are statistically more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse
- Children with disabilities may have less control over their lives than others
- Children may experience multiple carers
- Children may not be able to distinguish between intimate care and abuse
- Children may not be able to communicate

If a child is hurt accidentally he or she should be immediately reassured and the adult should check that he or she is safe and the incident reported immediately to the designated line manager.

If a child appears sexually aroused, misunderstands or misinterprets an action/instruction, the incident should be reported immediately to the designated line manager.

Safeguarding and Allegations of Abuse

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If a child appears sexually aroused, misunderstands or misinterprets an action/instruction, the incident should be reported immediately to the designated line manager.

Personnel working in intimate situations with children can feel particularly vulnerable. The Outdoors Group Ltd Intimate Care Policy can help to reassure both staff involved and the parents of vulnerable children.

Action should be taken immediately should there be a discrepancy of reports between a child and the personal assistant, particularly with reference to time spent alone together.

It is advised that the support role be changed as quickly as possible, should such a discrepancy occur, and then reviewed on a regular basis.

Where there is an allegation of abuse, the guidelines in the Devon Child Protection procedures should be followed.

Training in Safeguarding

Training in child/young person or vulnerable adult protection will be offered to all staff and volunteers at The Outdoors Group Ltd Site managers and Nursery managers are trained up

to the statutory and Ofsted required levels and all staff are regularly updated on protocols and procedures.

All staff receive Level 2 Safeguarding training as a minimum requirement and the designated officer and deputies are trained to Level 3.

DBS

All jobs both paid and voluntary will be subject to a disclosure check with the Disclosure and Baring Service; all jobs both paid and voluntary will be offered subject to confirmation that the applicants are not on record as being unsuitable to work with children.

The Outdoors Group Ltd must also meet our responsibility under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; which includes a duty to make a referral to the DBS services where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been had they not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

Extra Safeguards

- All posts will have a minimum probationary period of 3 months.
- Any concerns about this policy or its administration can be logged through The Outdoors Group Ltd complaints procedure and appeal, copies are available on request.
- If the complaint is made about the named person in this document please contact Thomas Lowday, Director (details on website).
- This policy will be reviewed annually.
- This document has been drawn up from the guidelines in:
 - 'Safe from harm' A code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children in voluntary organisations in England and Wales. Published by the home office.
 - **Police MASH Sergeants: Sally Wootton 01392 448921**
 - NSPCC keeping children safe

Useful Contacts

Devon MASH Contact Details

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
PO Box 723
Exeter
EX1 9QS

Telephone: 0345 155 1071
Email: mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk
Fax: 01392 448951

Appendix 1: Suspected abuse or incident reporting form

FORM NUMBER: CC01:01:00

STANDARD REPORT FORM

(For reporting CP&W Concerns to HSE)



A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate: _____

1. Date of Report

2. Details of Child

Name:		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:		DOB		Age	
		School			
Alias		Correspondence address (if different)			

3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)

Name:		Telephone No.	
Address:		Occupation:	
		Relationship to client:	
Reporter wishes to remain anonymous	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reporter discussed with parents/guardians	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to the HSE?	Yes	No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Details of Report

(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.)

National Child Care Information System Project – Phase 3

Date created: 1st September 2017

Signature of Director or Company Secretary:



Name: Shevek Pring

Review date set: 1st September 2018

Reviewed by:

Amended / updated? yes / no

Brief explanation of changes:

Signature of Director or Company Secretary:

Name:

New Review date set:

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