

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

- Engage Communities is committed in all areas of its work to providing a safe, welcoming environment, where all people are treated with dignity and respect. This document is relevant to **all aspects** of Engage Communities work with children and young people (a “child” or “young person” is defined as being a person under the age of 18).
- It is the responsibility of every adult to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional or spiritual abuse of or the neglect of children and young people and to report any actual or suspected abuse that comes to light.
- All those who wish to work with children or young people will be subject to the agreed procedures for the appointing of workers in this area of work.
- Where Engage Communities works in partnership with schools and other youth agencies there will be, on each occasion, negotiation as to whose Child Protection procedures to follow but it is generally accepted that it will be the schools/agencies system that is used in most cases, provided they do not conflict with the procedures outlined in this document.
- Engage Communities is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people, and to providing adequate supervision. To this end, every paid employee and volunteers as far as possible will undertake training in Child Protection issues and seek to update their knowledge annually.
- Each staff member or volunteer will be given access to a copy of the Child Protection policy with agreed procedures and will be expected to observe them.
- Engage Communities will appoint a Child Protection Coordinator, initially being one of the trustees. The name of this person will be clearly displayed in any office space and given to all staff and volunteers, along with out of hours contact numbers where appropriate.

**COMMITMENT AND AGREEMENT OF Engage Communities TRUSTEES  
AND MANAGEMENT**

The above statement was formally adopted by Engage on

Date: .....01/07/2019.....at the trustees meeting



Signed: ..... Chair of Trustees



Signed: .....Project Manager

Date of review: A year after it was written/approved...  
03/01/2018.....

**Designated Child Protection Contact: Yaser Mir**

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# **SECTION 1**

## **Understanding about Abuse**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Engage Communities Board have adopted the policy contained in this document. The policy includes agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

- Responding to allegations of abuse
- Appointing youth workers
- Supervision of workers and activities, and practice issues
- Helping victims of abuse
- Working with offenders

1.2. Engage Communities recognises the need to build constructive links with relevant agencies.

1.3. The term ‘worker’ in this policy means any person working for or on behalf of Engage Communities, whether paid or unpaid, including a volunteer.

## 2. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

*The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria throughout England and Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and the Home Office in their joint document, Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999) are as follows:*

### 2.1. Abuse and Neglect

Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. A child may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

### 2.2. Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

(The Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry defines Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy as: "A form of young person abuse in which the parents, or carers, give false accounts of symptoms in their children and may fake signs of illness (to draw attention to themselves). They seek repeated medical investigations and needless treatment for children.")

### **2.3. Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to young people that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on young people. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **2.4. Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving young people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **2.5. Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **2.6. Spiritual Abuse**

The misuse of power amongst religious groups. Leaders should not be so controlling that people are denied choice and freedom - even to make mistakes.

## **2.7. Organised Abuse**

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse young people, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse. Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse young people, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit young people for abuse.

Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse).

## **3. WHERE ABUSE CAN OCCUR**

3.1. Child abuse can take place in a number of different settings, of which the following are examples:

- It is likely to occur most commonly where the child knows the individual/s and the person concerned is trusted. This can be a parent, carer, baby-sitter, sibling, relative, or friend of the young person or of the family.
- The abuser is sometimes someone in authority such as a teacher, youth worker, children's worker or other person in a position of power.
- The abuser is sometimes a paedophile or other person who sets out to join organisations to obtain access to children and young people.

3.2. Engage Communities has a responsibility to act if abuse comes to light and, as far as possible, to protect young people and young people from the possibility of being abused within the organisation.

## **4. RECOGNISING POSSIBLE YOUNG PERSON ABUSE**

The following behavioural signs *may* be indicators of young person abuse, but care should be taken in interpreting them in isolation.

#### 4.1. **Physical signs**

- any injuries, bruises, bites, bumps, fractures, etc. which are not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- injuries which appear to have been caused by a weapon e.g. cuts, welts, etc.
- injuries which have not received medical attention.
- instances where young people are kept away from the group inappropriately or without explanation.
- self-mutilation or self-harming e.g. cutting, slashing, drug abuse.

#### 4.2. **Emotional signs**

- changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a young person withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression.
- nervousness or inappropriate fear of particular adults e.g. sudden frozen watchfulness.
- changes in behaviour e.g. under-achievement or lack of concentration inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults e.g. excessive dependence attention-seeking behaviour.
- persistent tiredness, wetting or soiling of bed or clothes by an older child.

#### 4.3. **Signs of neglect**

- regular poor hygiene
- persistent tiredness
- inadequate clothing
- excessive appetite
- failure to thrive e.g. poor weight gain, consistently being left alone and unsupervised



#### 4.4. Indicators of possible sexual abuse

- any direct disclosure made by a young person concerning sexual abuse
- young person with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of the same
- adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- preoccupation with sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- young person who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- other emotional signs (see above) may be indicative of sexual or some other form of abuse.

# **SECTION 2**

## **Disclosure**

## 5. HOW TO REACT WHEN A YOUNG PERSON WANTS TO TALK ABOUT ABUSE

### ○ General points

- Take seriously what the young person says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the young person directly
- Be honest
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else - don't promise confidentiality
- Reassure them they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the young person may have been threatened
- Never push for information

### 5.1. Helpful things to say or show

- Show acceptance of what the young person says
- “I am glad you have told me”
- “It's not your fault”
- “I will help you”

### ○ Avoid saying

- “Why didn't you tell anyone before?”
- “I can't believe it”
- “Are you sure this is true?”
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as “I am shocked!” or “don't tell anyone else”

### ○ Concluding

- Again, reassure the young person that they were right to tell you and that you take them seriously
- Let the young person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what might happen
- Immediately refer the matter to someone appropriately qualified

## 6. WHAT TO DO ONCE A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON HAS TALKED ABOUT ABUSE

- 6.1. If the disclosure made by the young person to a worker suggests that there is a serious risk of abuse if he/she returns home from the activity attended, the worker should consider reporting the matter immediately to the Child Protection Coordinator. The Coordinator should then decide whether or not an immediate referral to Social Services or the Police is appropriate. In the event of the worker having difficulties contacting the Coordinator in time, the worker should consider whether or not to make a direct referral to Social Services or the Police him/herself before the young person leaves the activity.
- 6.2. Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of the interview), writing down exactly what the young person said and when he/she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. *Keep all handwritten notes, even if these are subsequently typed up.*
- 6.3. You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those named in the above points.
- 6.4. Workers are encouraged to report their concerns about possible abuse and to do so directly to Social Services or the Police if they believe inappropriate or insufficient action has been taken.
- 6.5. Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed. **Please do not divulge specific information regarding the young person/young person or the case.**

# **SECTION 3**

## **Responding to Abuse**

## **7. WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT THAT ABUSE MAY HAVE OCCURRED**

- 7.1. You must report concerns (but not the details) as soon as possible to the relevant line manager in the first instance. He/she will consult with the nominated Child Protection Co-ordinator (hereafter “the Co-ordinator”).
- 7.2. In the event that the line manager is implicated or is not available, the worker should go straight to the Coordinator.
- 7.3. If the Coordinator is implicated or not available, the worker should go straight to one of the other trustees of Engage Communities.
- 7.4. In the absence of all the above named people, advice should be sought from the CCPAS, telephone number **0845 1204551**. This is a 24 hour Helpline. Alternatively please phone your local Social Services Young people and Families Team or the Emergency Out of Hours Service whose numbers should be clearly displayed appropriately in offices and other places of work.
- 7.5. In the event that Social Services cannot be contacted, phone the Child Protection Team based at your local Police Station whose number should be clearly displayed appropriately in offices and other places of work.
- 7.6. It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the young person protection agencies or seek advice from. However, we hope that workers will use the procedure outlined above. If, however, you feel that the Coordinator has not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the relevant organisation listed above directly. We hope by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of Engage Communities to effective child protection.

## **8. ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

- 8.1. The procedures in the following paragraphs should be followed according to the type of abuse suspected. Where physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse is suspected the co-operation of parents/guardians will normally be sought, except where this would place the young person at greater risk or where emergency attention is required. However, where sexual abuse is suspected the Coordinator will *not* speak to parents/guardians as this may make the task of investigation by the Police or Social Services much harder.

8.2. If a young person has a physical injury or symptom of neglect or emotional abuse, the Coordinator will follow the following procedures:

- Speak with the parent/guardian and suggest medical help attention is sought for the young person. The doctor will then initiate further action, if necessary. If appropriate, the parent/guardian will be encouraged to seek help from the Child and Family Service Social Services Department. However under circumstances where deliberate injury is apparent or where allegations by a young person that a parent or family member has inflicted physical injury, then the **parents should not be informed** but contact immediately made with the Social Services.
- If the parent/guardian is unwilling to seek help, then it may be appropriate for another person to offer to go with them. If they still fail to act the coordinator should in cases of real concern follow the reporting procedures outlined above.
- Where emergency medical attention is necessary, this must be sought immediately.

## 9. ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

9.1. In the event of allegations of suspicions of sexual abuse, the Coordinator will:

- Contact the Social Services Child Protection Officer/Police Child Protection Team directly. The Coordinator will not speak to the parent (or anyone else), as there is always the possibility that they could be involved. If named people are innocent, talking with them before contacting the authorities may find it harder for them to be cleared.
- If, sexual intercourse is alleged to have occurred very recently, then contact the police immediately so that any physical evidence is preserved and a specialist medical practitioner can examine the person. Do not interfere with any evidence such as stained clothing. If the allegations concern events more than a week old then Social Services or the Police must be informed promptly.

- If, for any reason, the Coordinator is unsure whether or not to follow the above, then advice from the CCPAS will be sought and followed. The CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing in case this is needed for reference purposes in the future.
- Under no circumstances will the Coordinator attempt to carry out any investigation into allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse. The role of the Coordinator is to collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to the Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Childrens Act 1989.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the Coordinator, the absence of the Coordinator should not delay referral to the Social Services Department.
- Exceptionally, should there be any disagreement between the person in receipt of the allegation or suspicion and the Coordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral to the Social Services Department, that person retains a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the Social Services Department, and should do so without hesitation.
- The Board and any local management/support groups will support the Coordinator in their role and accept that any information they may from time-to-time have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

## **10. HELPING VICTIMS OF ABUSE**

- 10.1. Engage Communities will commit to support any child/young person through any legal processes that may become necessary as a result of any disclosure. Workers will make it a priority to be available to attend meetings, courts, etc with any young person who would appreciate such support, where it is appropriate.
- 10.2. Engage Communities will seek to support young people through the difficult times they may face with appropriate care and attention. We are committed to the on-going support of victims of abuse through arranging pastoral care, counselling and advice. We will seek to build positive self-esteem in young people through the attitudes and actions of all adults from Engage Communities they come into contact with.



## **SECTION 4**

# **Appointment of Workers**

## **11. PURPOSE AND NATURE OF PROCEDURES**

The following procedures are designed to promote the effectiveness of Engage Communities work and to protect both children, young people and workers. They will help ensure individuals' gifts are used in the best ways. The procedures involve all potential staff and volunteers being treated as potential job applicants.

## **12. APPOINTING WORKERS OR VOLUNTEERS**

There needs to be sensitivity and flexibility when it comes to filling in forms, especially when a potential volunteer is making tentative enquires about helping with the work, or for whom there may be a language or literacy difficulty. Sometimes it may be more appropriate for the forms to be completed during an informal interview, with the applicant checking and signing them. Nevertheless it remains very important to adhere to the following agreed procedures:

- 12.1. Prospective workers will be asked to complete a relevant application form requesting basic personal details, recent current and previous addresses, and any experience looking after or working with children/ young people, personal references from people not directly involved in any way with Engage Communities and details of any charges or convictions. (Disclosure of a criminal record may not in itself prevent appointment, as it is the nature of any offence that will be considered).
- 12.2. All applicants will be asked to complete a Disclosures form for a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) criminal records check. Information supplied by the CRB will be sent to the relevant manager and a copy is also sent by CRB to your home.

## **13. CRITERIA FOR NOT APPOINTING WORKERS**

- 13.1. Engage Communities responsibilities towards those it works with means that on occasion it will exclude people from work with children and young people. This will happen where it is known that the individual has a criminal record for offences relating to young people or sexual behaviour. Failure to disclose a criminal record will also lead to exclusion from work with children and young people. Even where real change has taken place in the life of the individual, it would be unwise to place an individual in a position of temptation, and refusal would be for the benefit of the individual concerned as well as for the young people. Applicants will also not be appointed where an unsatisfactory reference is received.
- 13.2. Where a criminal record is disclosed relating to other types of offence, this will be brought before the Board of trustees in confidence, together with other relevant background information, for a decision to be made to appoint or not.

- 13.3. Engage Communities has reservations about the overall suitability of someone to undertake work with children/young people in the specific context of the project then an appointment will not be made.

#### **14. WORKING WITH OFFENDERS**

- 14.1. Should a known offender apply to work with Engage Communities the case will be brought before the board of trustees in confidence, together with other relevant background information, for a decision to be made to appoint or not on a voluntary or paid basis.

## **SECTION 5**

# **Supervision of Activities and Practice Issues**

## 15. INTRODUCTION

Every worker on each project should have a clear understanding of what they are doing and what is expected of them, and activities should be planned in a way, which reduces opportunities for abuse to occur. The guidance which follows seeks to ensure the safety and well-being of young people and young people and their protection from abuse, whilst also protecting workers from false allegations.

## 16. YOUNG PERSON SUPERVISION

16.1. **Ratio of adults to Children.** The following figures are shown to inform good practice. Number of adults who should be present for a specific indoor/outdoor activity or holiday event. These are:

Age group	Adults : Children
0 to 2 years	1 : 3
2 to 3 years	1 : 4
3 to 8 years	1 : 8
9+	1 : 15

The following guidelines should be adopted wherever possible, recognising that Engage Communities work takes place in a variety of contexts and situations. You should inform the trustees of Engage Communities if you consider that these guidelines are not appropriate for a particular piece of work and give reasons why this is the case.

- 16.2. There should usually be at least one male and one female worker onsite, if it is a mixed gender activity.
- 16.3. In school settings, a member of the school staff should always be present or in the case of one to one work be easily reached.
- 16.4. Where possible, ensure that a worker is not alone with a young person/young person but when circumstances lend themselves to this happening, another worker will be informed and where appropriate doors will be left open.
- 16.5. Where confidentiality is important and a child/young person is being seen on their own, then ensure that others know the interview is taking place and that someone else is around in the building.
- 16.6. No person under 18 years of age should be left in charge of any children of any age, nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.
- 16.7. A register of young people attending a club or activity should be kept. This is also to include a register of workers/volunteers/visitors; times of arrival and departure if any individual is not attending the whole session.

16.8. A record of each activity/session should be kept. Workers should record unusual events with each leader recording what they witnessed.

16.9. A separate Accident Recording Book should be maintained.

## **17. EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

All workers and coaching staff will need to meet the minimum standards for deployment in order to provide safe and high quality provision. The following minimum standards will be required based on recommendations from sports coach UK:

### Essential

- Current NGB qualification in the sport(s) to be coached (normally level two or above for a lead coach, level one or above for an assistant coach, but as per NGB guidance)
- Minimum age requirement (18 or over for a lead coach, 16 or over for an assistant coach)
- Enhanced CRB / DBS check, subject to current DBS guidelines (if working with under 18s and / or vulnerable adults)
- Safeguarding Training (attended within the last three years, if working with under 18s)
- Membership of relevant NGB or of relevant NGB coach license scheme (where available)
- First Aid Training (attended within the last three years) if first aid provision is not available via the facility or via other means during the activity

### Strongly Desirable

- Equity Awareness training
- Disability Awareness training

## **18. BOUNDARIES**

All workers are responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries, and for ensuring that meeting their own emotional needs is not dependent on their relationships with young people. Workers involved in projects should be provided with staff and volunteer handbooks that specifically deal with issues related to safe practice and boundaries. Generally all workers are encouraged to attend in-house and/or accredited child protection training.

## 19. PERSONAL CARE

Workers should ensure that the level of personal care given is appropriate and related to the age and ability of the young person.

## 20. TOUCH

- Physical contact between adults and young people can be quite healthy and encouraged in public settings, and discouraged where an adult is alone with a young person. The following guidelines should be followed:
  - Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
  - Touch should be related to the young person's needs, not the worker's
  - Touch should be age-appropriate and generally be initiated by the young person rather than the worker
  - Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be construed as, sexually stimulating to the adult or young person, e.g. fondling, touching private parts of the body, etc.

20.1. Young people are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances, i.e. when young children need medical attention.

20.2. Team members should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to constructively challenge a colleague if necessary.

20.3. With some pieces of work it may be that the team involved decide to adopt a policy of non-touch, and this policy should be upheld by all staff and volunteers where implemented.

## 21. RESPECT

Workers should treat all young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions. There should be respect for the privacy of young people and questionable activity should be avoided. (e.g. rough/sexually provocative games or comments).

## 22. RESTRAINT

Any form of physical response to misbehaviour is unlawful unless it is by way of restraint. On those occasions when it proves necessary for workers to restrain a young person or young person physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or damage to property, only the minimum force necessary should be used.

## 23. VENUES AND TRANSPORT

- 23.1. Parental consent will be obtained for all organised activities, outings and residential trip outside usual group times.
- 23.2. Arrangements for transporting young people must also be with the knowledge of the person in charge of a particular project and with parental approval. In some circumstances it may be unwise to carry a particular young person/young person on their own.
- 23.3. All workers driving any vehicle transporting young people must hold a valid driver's licence for the type/class of vehicle that they are driving. All vehicles used in the transportation of young people must have a valid road fund licence, be appropriately insured, have a valid MOT certificate, have back seat seatbelts, and comply with all appropriate legislation and regulations. Seat sharing is not permitted.

## 24. A DUTY OF CARE

- 24.1. The physical safety and well-being of young people and young people worked with must be the highest priority. Workers have a legal 'duty of care' to act as a careful parent would. This means that if a worker causes loss or injury by failing to carry out his/her responsibilities in a careful way, the worker (and possibly Engage Communities) could be held liable in civil law for negligence. The duty of care involves exercising adequate supervision, which will depend on age, maturity and the particular circumstances pertaining to the young person. Supervision can mean giving adequate advice and instructions rather than constantly watching a young person.
- 24.2. Engage Communities has a legal duty under the Occupier's Liability Act 1957 to take such care as is reasonable in the circumstances to see that visitors to any sites are safe for the purpose for which they are on the premises. Workers are advised to check that:
  - A First Aid kit is available and well stocked during all activities
  - Fire extinguishers are available and fire drills are held periodically
  - Clear instructions are posted in case of emergency
  - Electrical sockets and appliances are safe
  - Equipment and furniture is kept well maintained and safe, and no sharp edges are protruding
  - All accidents are recorded in an *Accident Record Book*.
- 24.3. If any of the above are missing or unsafe, the Project Manager should be informed immediately.



## 25. INTERNET USE

### 25.1. Where the internet is used:

- Engage Communities will install and maintain a suitable filtering programme to be used by all young people when on the Internet.
- Workers will not allow use of the internet by young people without adult supervision.

## 26. GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

- Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, and prepares the young person for life.
- Work on each individual young person's positives, do not compare them with each other, but encourage and build them up, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with young people and be a good role model, setting a good example. You can't expect young people to observe ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved young people attention and don't allow some young people to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said - this avoids manipulation.
- Look honestly at your programme - if young people are bored, they misbehave. Is the programme at fault?
- **NEVER** smack or hit a young person and don't shout - change voice tone if necessary.
- **Never discipline out of anger.** Call on support from other workers if you feel you may deal with the situation unwisely in your anger.
- Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, a respect for property, and make sure the young people understand what action will be taken if not kept.
- Each young person is unique, special and individual, and each young person needs a different method of being dealt with. We need to ask why the young person is behaving that way.
- Separate young people who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive as a last resort.
- Have the young person sit right in front of you or get another worker to sit next to the young person.

- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active and not wait to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take the young person aside and talk to them, challenge them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths.
- Warn a young person that you will speak to their parents and do so if necessary. Warn them, send them outside the room/activity (take care regarding supervision of this). If a young person's behaviour is constantly disruptive, seek advice and guidance from a Line manager.

## **27. HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROTECT THEMSELVES**

- 27.1. Young people should have access to an independent adult outside of Engage Communities. For this reason, we promote the NSPCC and Child Line phone numbers and make use of their publicity. The NSPCC Child Protection Help line is **0808 800 5000**; Child Line is **0800 1111**.
- 27.2. Opportunities should be taken to teach safety generally, and to help young people to develop common sense rules. Workers should be willing to listen to and talk about a young person's suspicions and expressions of feeling uncomfortable.

# **SECTION 6**

## **Issues Relating to Residential Activities**

## **28. DETAILS OF THE RESIDENTIAL**

28.1. Where workers of Engage Communities make use of a variety of different outdoor pursuits and holiday centres, the workers should make preliminary visits before use of a venue is made and have very close links with the organisers and/or the owners of the venue before and during residential. In all cases, where young people are involved in a residential activities, consent will be obtained and the following details will be supplied to parents/guardians/carers:

- Name of the centre
- Address and location of the centre (including contact telephone numbers, e-mail address (if relevant))
- Dates of the residential
- Nature of activities to be offered
- Organisation responsible for the running of the centre.

## **29. POLICY OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY ON THE RESIDENTIAL**

29.1. It is expected that any centre or activity provider will have their own Child Protection Policy and staff will be properly recruited and CRB checked. Before any residential is carried out, negotiation should take place with the centre or provider as to who which organisation will be responsible for Child Protection during the residential. This may depend on the nature of the residential and the degree to which the centre/activity provider is involved with the young people.

29.2. It is the expectation that all those attending the residential activity accept the child protection policy and act according to it.

## **30. SUPERVISION OF GROUP/YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES IN A RESIDENTIAL SETTING**

30.1. Taking care of young people who are away from home involves taking responsibility for their well-being at all times, being prepared for every eventuality, and anticipating situations where there is harm and taking steps to minimise the risks.

30.2. It is the responsibility of all workers to know the whereabouts of all young people who are on the Residential.

30.3. Daily Logs of residential activities will be kept by Engage Communities workers. All significant incidents will be recorded therein.

30.4. All young people on residential will need to have completed a Health Information and Consent Form prior to attendance on the residential and no young people will be allowed to participate in any activity without the written consent of the parent/guardian for that activity.

- 30.5. Everyone on residential will be warned of the danger of fire. If the residential is in a building then everyone will be made aware of the fire exits. A fire drill will be practised on the first day of the residential.
- 30.6. Best practice dictates that there should be at least one worker qualified in first aid (through a course run by St. John Ambulance/Red Cross or similar) and that the most qualified person be the nominated First Aider for the duration of the Residential.
- 30.7. The First Aider will ensure that on the residential:
- First Aid boxes are available and their location known.
  - That the First Aid kit contains those items recommended by St. John Ambulance.
  - All accidents and injuries will be reported and accurately recorded.
  - That the location and telephone numbers of the nearest doctor and hospital are readily available.
- 30.8. The safety of the building, chalets or tents will be considered and a consistent set of rules will be applied as appropriate. The young people will be made aware of the rules at the start of the residential. The condition of fire and electrical appliances will be examined on preliminary visits undertaken.
- 30.9. The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 state that anyone who handles food or whose actions could affect its safety must follow the regulations. As technically food is being sold (if food is included and a charge is made for the residential, even if the charge is made to a funding body) then best practice dictates that those with responsibility for food should possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste, etc). Engage Communities workers attending residentials organised by an outside agency will check the status of workers involved in food handling. Staff organising in-house residentials are encouraged to complete Food Hygiene courses.
- 30.10. No adventurous activities will be engaged in without the written consent of the parent/guardian. The activity organisers will ensure that the staff engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to young people is met. If use is made of an activity centre or organisation whose own staff undertake all instructions then the residential organisers will ensure that the premises are licenced, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996.

## **31. TRANSPORTATION**

- 31.1. The residential organisers will ensure that all drivers have adequate car insurance and licence if they are transporting young people to, from and during a residential
- 31.2. All minibuses used to transport young people to the residential must have:
- a valid MOT certificate.
  - the necessary insurance.
  - a driver with a valid driving licence which entitles them to drive a minibus.
  - a fire extinguisher and First Aid kit on board.
  - a thorough check of oil, water, screen wash, etc before journeys.

## 32. INSURANCE

Engage Communities has a legal obligation to ascertain the type of insurance required for activities undertaken. Appropriate checks will be made when staying at a centre to see that Public Liability Insurance is in place.

## 33. RESIDENTIAL SUPERVISION - WORKERS

Opportunities for workers to meet together and receive supervision before, during and after residentials will always be provided.

## 34. SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements will be adopted:

- 34.1. There **must** be a worker of the same gender as the young people while on the residential
- 34.2. Young people will always be accommodated in single-sex rooms / dormitories / tents.
- 34.3. No workers will sleep in the same room/dormitory/tent as a young person except when the restrictions of space dictate and only then with the following exceptions and safeguards:
- 34.4. **Where there is a large room/dormitory ie 5 beds or more, with 2 or more young people and with 2 or more workers of the same sex.**
- 34.5. Careful consideration will be given to proximity of worker sleeping accommodation to ensure safety of young people.
- 34.6. Workers will only ever enter dormitories/rooms/tents, when given permission to do so by a young person and only then with two workers present except **exceptionally** when there is concern for the safety of young people.

## **35. GUIDELINES ON TOUCHING**

- 35.1. Residentials offer a great opportunity to teach young people personal safety skills and to encourage them to be assertive and learn how to say no to physical contact they may feel uncomfortable with. That said, the guidelines issued above about touching must still be adhered to.

# **SECTION 7**

## **Communication and Partnership**



## **36. RECORDS, CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION SHARING**

### **Records**

Information passed to the social services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. The following information should be recorded when 'reporting concerns about children':

- The young persons name, address and other relevant information
- The nature of the allegation.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened.
- Details of the alleged or suspected abuser.
- Witnesses to the incident(s).
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.

Reporting the matter to the designated person (or police or social services department) should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the designated person, social services or the police should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should be made of the name and designation of the social services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed. It is the responsibility of the person reporting the concerns to ensure written confirmation is completed. If details have been sent to either social services and/or the police a copy should also be sent to the designated person. If the concern is about the designated person this information should be sent to the Chair.

### **Confidentiality and Storage of Information**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be stored in a locked cabinet with limited access to designated people, in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act. The people designated to receive information are:

- The designated child protection officer
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social services/police
- Designated Officers within the Council according to the Councils policy and procedures
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child). \*

\*Seek social services advice on who should approach alleged abuser.

## Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. A key factor in many serious case reviews has been a failure to record information, to share it, to understand the significance of the information shared, and to take appropriate action in relation to known or suspected abuse or neglect. To help ensure that Engage Communities makes the correct and informed decision when considering whether to share information with other organisations relating to child protection issues we have adopted the non statutory guidance procedures as laid out in the Government document *Information sharing: Practitioners Guide*.

When considering whether to share information with other organizations Engage Communities will always follow the following six key points:

1. Explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.
2. Always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.
3. Where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. Engage Communities may still share information, if in the judgement on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need to override that lack of consent.
4. Seek advice when in doubt, especially when doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.
5. Ensure that the information shared is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.
6. Always record the reasons for the decision - whether it is to share information or not.

Decisions on whether to share information will where possible be taken collectively by the Designated Person and the Chair. As part of this decision making process the six above points will be considered along with the other guidance set out in the *Information sharing: Practitioners Guide documentation*.