



# Safeguarding Procedures

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**Procedures Reviewed and Updated:** March 2023

**Next Procedures Review and Update Due:** March 2024

## 1. Introduction

The Youth Adventure Trust is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in its work with children and young people. It is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at all times, and expects all employees and volunteers to share this commitment. These procedures apply to anyone working on behalf of the Youth Adventure Trust, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff and volunteers.

In our work with young people we recognise that every child has the right to live free from harm and abuse. We also recognise that every child is potentially at risk from harm and abuse. A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years old. The terms young people and children are used interchangeably in this policy to mean anyone under the age of 18.

In order to facilitate our commitment to safeguarding, the Youth Adventure Trust has developed Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures that detail:

- a. Policy and guidelines to ensure a safe and supportive environment for young people, staff and volunteers is provided.
- b. Policy and guidelines to ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped to make clear and consistent responses to disclosures, allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- c. The responsibilities of staff and volunteers within their duty of care.
- a. A code of conduct for staff and volunteers that identifies required behaviour in working professionally and safely with young people at the Youth Adventure Trust.

### 1.1 Aim

The aim of these Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures is to ensure the Youth Adventure Trust is:

- a. providing young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care and supervision of our staff and volunteers;
- b. enabling all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to safeguarding issues;
- c. contributing to the protection and safety of the children on our programmes in the wider context of their lives.

## 2. Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers must demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to create a positive and protective culture within the Youth Adventure Trust.

### 2.1 Staff and Volunteers must:

- a. Always put the welfare of each young person first.
- b. Treat all young people fairly and with respect, dignity and patience. Listen to, value and take their issues seriously. Promote openness and honesty.
- c. Respect differences and challenge discrimination or prejudice.
- d. Always work in an open environment, avoid private or unobserved situations. Make sure other adults can see and preferably hear you if you have to have any one to one interaction with a young person.

NB Mentoring Volunteers should use public venues and locations for their sessions. If this is not possible it should be discussed and agreed with the Mentoring Manager in advance, and details included in the session recording.

- e. Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with young people. Sometimes it may be necessary to do things of a personal nature for young people e.g. in an emergency situation. If you must use physical contact, clearly tell the young person what you are doing and why, seek their permission and give choices. Unless absolutely unavoidable such as in an emergency, have another member of staff / volunteer / adult present. Ensure that you record your actions and inform the Programme Manager / Mentoring Manager / Volunteer Manager as a matter of urgency.
- f. Where applicable ensure you know and follow the arrangements put in place by YAT staff for things such as showers, toilets, changing and accommodation access.
- g. Be appropriately dressed at all times, including during activity sessions, such as not wearing just swimwear or going bare chested.
- h. Take opportunities to sensitively have conversations with young people about keeping safe at the Youth Adventure Trust and at home.
- i. Involve young people in the decisions that affect them. Listen to, value and take their contributions seriously.
- j. Report all concerns, suspicions or allegations to the Programme Manager / Mentoring Manager / Volunteer Manager / Director of Programmes & Development or another member of Youth Adventure Trust staff as soon as possible. Always act.

### **3.2 Volunteers and staff must not:**

- a. Make sarcastic, insensitive, patronising, belittling, inappropriate, derogatory, discriminatory, offensive or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of young people, or allow these to go unchallenged or unreported.
- b. Allow any concerns, reports, suspicions or allegations to go unreported. Always pass things on to a YAT staff member staff as a matter of urgency, even if it seems a relatively minor thing.
- c. Engage in or allow behaviour that is in any way harmful or abusive.
- d. Develop inappropriate relationships with young people.
- e. Engage in rough or physical games or play.
- f. Have inappropriate and unnecessary physical contact with young people.
- g. Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- h. Do things of a personal nature that young people can do for themselves - e.g. applying sunscreen, eczema cream.
- i. Give young people, or accept from them, any personal contact details or having any contact with them outside of that agreed with the Youth Adventure Trust and using their official channels - this includes any form of social media, exchanging phone numbers, email or postal addresses. See 3.4 Communications Statement.
- j. Consume alcohol or use illegal substances whilst at work or volunteering with young people. Smoking or vaping in front of young people is not permitted.
- k. Take any photos unless asked to do so by a YAT staff member on a YAT device.
- l. Travel alone or be in a position where they are alone with a young person - two adults is the minimum. Where this is unavoidable, such as in an emergency situation, it must be with the prior permission of the Programme Manager / Mentoring Manager or a Youth Adventure Trust staff member.

NB: Mentoring Volunteers are required to work on a 1:1 basis with a young person and should adhere to the Lone Working policy in respect of this matter for their role.

Any breach of this code of conduct will result in the individual concerned being removed from contact with young people pending further investigations.

If any of the following occurs you must report it immediately to the Programme Manager, Mentoring Manager, Volunteer Manager or in their absence the Director of Programmes & Development (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Chief Executive, and also record the incident.

- a. if you accidentally hurt a young person.
- b. if a young person seems distressed in any manner by your actions.
- c. if a young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done or said.
- d. if an allegation is made about you or anyone else.

### **3.3 Use of photographic and filming equipment during the Youth Adventure Trust activities**

All young people, their parents/carers and volunteers will be made aware that photographic and/or filming equipment may be used to record activities for the Youth Adventure Trust, and their consent will be required.

Unless specific consent is given by the Director of Programmes & Development or Chief Executive, volunteers, staff and external parties are not permitted to take photographs or film any Youth Adventure Trust activities unless requested to do so by a Youth Adventure Trust staff member using a Youth Adventure Trust owned mobile phone or camera.

Always seek the consent of the young person before taking photographs and/or films.

Volunteer mentors will be provided with a YAT mobile phone for the sole purpose of the mentoring relationship. Where appropriate mentors are permitted to take photographs of their mentee and activities that they undertake together using this device only. Any images taken must be submitted with the session recording and then deleted from the device.

### **3.4 Social Media / Communication Statement**

Staff and volunteers are not permitted to have any private communication with young people who have been involved with the Youth Adventure Trust through any form of social media or direct communication (i.e. phone, text, apps, email, letter, face to face). Any communication must be agreed by the Youth Adventure Trust and where appropriate made through the Trust's formal channels.

Volunteer mentors will be provided with a YAT mobile phone for any communication with their mentee and their family. All contact such as calls or texts should be noted in session recordings.

For details of the policy and protocol around remote video call contact with young people, please see [Appendix IX](#).

Staff and volunteers should be aware of their digital footprint - the information about a person that exists on the internet as a result of their online activity – and take steps to avoid being found by young people involved with the Youth Adventure Trust on social media by selecting strict privacy settings, using a different display name and choosing an appropriate display picture.

## 4. Recognising, Raising Concerns and Reporting Safeguarding Issues

### 4.1 Types of Abuse

To ensure that young people are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and harm. Further information in relation to this can be found in [Appendix I and II](#). This information is provided from HM Government's document 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' 2015, and the NSPCC's website <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>.

### 4.2 Radicalisation and Extremism

The Youth Adventure Trust recognises that challenging and tackling radicalisation and extremism is a shared effort. Radicalisation and extremism can put a child or young person at risk of being drawn into violence and criminal activity and has the potential to cause significant harm. As an organisation working with children and young people we have a responsibility to protect them from harm, which includes becoming radicalised and/or being exposed to extreme views.

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

YAT programme staff have received appropriate training and have the knowledge and confidence to identify young people at risk of being drawn into terrorism and extremism.

Further information relating to recognising, and responding to radicalisation and extremism can be found in [Appendix II](#) and at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/radicalisation>.

Any concerns should be acted on immediately following the processes outlined in these procedures. Further helpline contact details can also be found in [Appendix X](#).

### 4.3 Importance of raising concerns

Everyone working and volunteering within the Youth Adventure Trust can play an important part in promoting the safety and protection of the young people with whom they are working.

There are many reasons why staff/volunteers may consider not reporting the matter e.g.

- a. they are not sure that their concern is correct
- b. they have been asked by the young person not to tell anyone
- c. they believe the consequences of raising the issue may not be in what they believe to be the best interests of the young person
- d. the consequences for the alleged abuser may be very serious even if the case is not proven against them
- e. they are not sure if the young person's story is credible
- f. the desire to protect a colleague or friend who is implicated.

However, it is not the responsibility of anyone working within the Youth Adventure Trust, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. It is therefore vital that staff and volunteers raise **all** concerns of suspected or alleged abuse; failure to do so may put a young person

at risk. Suspicions and allegations of abuse will be reported to Children's Social Care and/or the police (in line with the 'Actions in response to safeguarding concerns flowchart' [Appendix III](#)), whose duty it will be to take further steps to protect the young person and investigate the allegations or suspicions.

#### **4.4 Raising and reporting safeguarding issues**

If anyone is concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a young person because:

- a. they see or suspect abuse
- b. an allegation of abuse is made
- c. a young person reports abuse

they must discuss their concerns with the relevant Programme Manager or Mentoring Manager as a matter of urgency who will then discuss with the Director of Programmes & Development.

Alternatively they can raise the matter directly with the appointed safeguard lead who is the Director of Programmes & Development. If this is the person who is suspected of abuse, they must discuss their concerns with the Chief Executive. They should ensure that detailed written records are made of all events, what the young person has said (where this applies) and their subsequent actions, including details of passing on the information (see guidance below on recording). The Director of Programmes & Development will decide on the next course of action as a matter of urgency, including informing the relevant external agencies.

#### **4.5 Confidentiality and information sharing**

In the event of a young person making a disclosure of abuse, it is important at the earliest opportunity to remind the young person of the issue of confidentiality and explain what this means. Do not promise to keep information to yourself. It is essential to explain that all concerns or allegations of abuse and harm have to be passed on to the relevant people as it is your duty to keep young people safe.

Volunteers and staff are not permitted to discuss identifiable and confidential information concerning young people involved with the Youth Adventure Trust with anybody outside of the organisation, unless it is deemed necessary by the Youth Adventure Trust as part of collaborative working to support that young person's safety and wellbeing.

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Decisions to share information must be discussed with the Director of Programmes & Development (the designated safeguarding lead), and any information sharing should happen in line with the protocols outlined in 'Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers' 2018. A flowchart summarising the key points of this document is included in [Appendix VIII](#).

Consent to share information will be sought wherever possible. In the instance this is not possible or consent is not given, a decision to go ahead and share information will be agreed with the designated safeguarding lead and a written recording will be kept outlining;

- what steps were taken to get consent
- the person's reasons for not giving consent (if known)
- why it was felt necessary to share information without consent.

Information held internally by the Youth Adventure Trust will be stored in a secure place with limited access by designated people in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, timely and secure), and the YAT Data Protection Policy.

#### **4.6 What to do if a young person tells you they have been or are being abused.**

The NSPCC (Baker et al, 2019) identified three key interpersonal skills that help a child feel they are being listened to and taken seriously:

- **Show you care, help them open up:** Give your full attention to the child or young person and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown such courage today' help.
- **Take your time, slow down:** Respect pauses and don't interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language.
- **Show you understand, reflect back:** Make it clear you're interested in what the child is telling you. Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.

The following are guidelines on immediate action to be taken following disclosure of abuse by a young person.

- a. React calmly. Reassure him/her that you are glad they have told you, and what has happened is not their fault.
- b. Don't promise to keep it to yourself; at the earliest opportunity remind the young person about confidentiality and explain what it means i.e. that you need to make sure they will be safe, and have to pass on the information to somebody trusted to deal with it appropriately.
- c. Listen carefully to what the young person says and take them seriously.
- d. Allow the young person to speak freely and tell you what happened in their own words.
- e. It is important to clarify what you have heard, and to establish the basic facts. However, do not ask any leading or investigative questions, and do not ask the young person specific questions about details. This is the job of the external professional agencies.
- f. If possible make brief notes during the initial disclosure, explaining to the young person why you are doing this. If not possible to do so at the time, make notes as soon as possible afterwards.

Your information should include:

- a. The nature of the suspicion or allegation.
- b. A description of any visible injury.
- c. The young person's account of what has happened. Where possible try to write down the actual words used by the young person.
- d. Dates, times, details of the alleged abuser, any other factual information, such as witnesses, locations etc.
- e. Remember it is essential to make the distinction between fact, opinion or hearsay in anything you write.

#### **4.7 Action to be taken where an incident of abuse has or potentially has taken place whilst a young person is under the Youth Adventure Trust's supervision.**

The overriding priority in any situation is the immediate safety of the young person. Consideration must be given to removing the victim from any potential harm to a place where any



physical/emotional needs can be cared for. The procedures as outlined in section 4.3 - 4.6 of this policy must be followed.

As well as establishing initial facts, there will be a need to ensure that any victim and alleged abuser are kept apart. In a residential setting consideration must be given to returning individuals concerned home, unless the police or social care request that those involved remain where they are and await their arrival.

The process outlined in [Appendix III](#) Action in Response to Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart must be followed. Allegations of abuse will be reported to Children's Social Care and/or the police whose duty it will be to take further steps to protect the young person and investigate the allegations or suspicions.

The Youth Adventure Trust will take advice from the relevant authorities on responding to the matter. They will work in partnership with young people, parents/carers, social care, the police and any other involved authorities to ensure the best outcome. They will record all incidents, responses and decisions on a Significant Event Form ([Appendix IV](#)). A full internal review will take place involving the senior management team and representation from the Board of Trustees where any learning and actions will be noted and implemented.

#### **4.8 Action to be taken in respect of allegations or suspicions where the victim and perpetrator are both participants in the Youth Adventure Trust programme.**

Where allegations are made against a young person participating in the Youth Adventure Trust by another young person involved in the Youth Adventure Trust programme, the procedures as outlined in section 4.3 - 4.6 of this policy and the process outlined in [Appendix III](#) Action in Response to Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart must be followed. The Youth Adventure Trust will consider the needs of everyone involved, remembering that both victim and alleged perpetrator are children.

The Youth Adventure Trust will take advice from the relevant authorities on responding to the matter. They will work in partnership with young people, parents/carers, social care, the police and any other involved authorities to ensure the best outcome. They will record all incidents, responses and decisions on a Significant Event Form ([Appendix IV](#)). A full internal review will take place involving the senior management team and representation from the Board of Trustees where any learning and actions will be noted and implemented.

#### **4.9 Action where a report or suspicion of abuse is made concerning a paid member of staff or volunteer**

If a concern or allegation of abuse or inappropriate conduct is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the matter must immediately be reported to the Director of Programmes & Development, or in their absence the Chief Executive, as a matter of urgency.

Each situation will be considered individually, but the overriding priority will be the immediate safety and wellbeing of any young people concerned. The procedures as outlined in section 4.3 - 4.6 of this policy and the process outlined in [Appendix III](#) Action in Response to Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart must be followed.

The Youth Adventure Trust will bring the allegations or suspicions to the attention of the authorities (the LADO/DOFA within the relevant social care area and/or police where required) as a matter of urgency. They will take advice from the relevant authorities on responding to the matter. They will work in partnership with young people, parents/carers, social care, the police and any other involved authorities to ensure the best outcome. They will record all incidents, responses and decisions on a

Significant Event Form ([Appendix IV](#)). A full internal review will take place involving the senior management team and representation from the Board of Trustees where any learning and actions will be noted and implemented.

Please refer to Section 7 of this policy, [Raising Concerns](#), and the Youth Adventure Trust Allegations Management Policy for comprehensive details on this matter including referring the matter to the DBS.

#### **4.10 Welfare concerns / decision not to refer**

Where it is agreed with the Director of Programmes & Development that concerns do not meet the threshold for a safeguarding referral to external agencies, a “(Staff) Young Person Welfare Concern Form” ([Appendix V](#)) should be completed outlining the concern and the reasons for not referring the situation on as a safeguarding matter. Consideration should be given, and any decisions recorded, to the appropriateness of passing the information on, or not, to relevant involved agencies and the family.

Volunteers with welfare concerns should raise this with a YAT staff member as soon as possible and then complete a “(Volunteer) Young Person Welfare Concern Form” ([Appendix VI](#)) at the earliest opportunity.

#### **4.11 Record Keeping**

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. A member of staff must make an accurate record on a YAT Significant Event Form ([Appendix IV](#)) or YAT Welfare Concern Form ([Appendix V](#)) as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. All records must be passed to and discussed with the Director of Programmes & Development as a matter of urgency.

The record should include:

- a. date and time of incident/disclosure,
- b. parties who were involved, including any witnesses to an event,
- c. what was said or done and by whom,
- d. any action taken by the organisation to look into the matter,
- e. any further action taken,
- f. where relevant, the reasons why a decision was taken not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (see 4.10),
- g. name of person reporting on the concern, name and designation of the person to whom the concern was reported, date and time and their contact details,
- h. any interpretation/inference drawn from what was observed, said or alleged should be clearly recorded as such rather than stated as facts,
- i. the record should be signed and dated.

All records relating to safeguarding and welfare concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential, in line with the Youth Adventure Trust Data Protection Policy. Record sharing will only happen in line with the protocols outlined in ‘Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers’ 2018. A flowchart summarising the key points of this document is included in [Appendix VIII](#).

## **5. Selection and Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

### **5.1 Selection and Recruitment**

The Youth Adventure Trust recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse a child in some way, and therefore all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable individuals are prevented from working or volunteering within the Youth Adventure Trust. The Youth Adventure Trust Safer Recruitment policy must be followed in recruitment of all staff and volunteers.

This includes:-

- a. All staff and volunteers must complete an application form in full. The application form should elicit information about the applicant's past, and self-disclosures about any criminal record.
- b. Any gaps identified in employment history will be explored with the individual concerned.
- c. All prospective staff members and volunteers must be vetted through a Disclosure and Barring Service check (see point 6.2 below). No member of staff or volunteer will be permitted unsupervised access to young people on the Youth Adventure Trust programmes until full references and satisfactory DBS clearance have been received.
- d. Should the vetting process raise any concern about an individual's suitability to work or volunteer with the Youth Adventure Trust, the Director of Programmes & Development must be informed immediately and further assessment take place.
- e. Two confidential references must be taken up in writing in all cases.
- f. Evidence of two forms of identity and proof of address as outlined in the DBS check guidelines must be seen (originals).

See the Youth Adventure Trust Safer Recruitment Policy for full details.

## **5.2 Disclosure and Barring Service Checks**

All staff and volunteers working for the Youth Adventure Trust must be vetted through a Disclosure and Barring Service check. The level of this check will be dependent on the nature of their role and involvement in regulated activity. The full legal definition of regulated activity is set out in Schedule 4 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. Whether a position amounts to regulated activity will be considered by the charity in order to decide which checks are appropriate. See the Youth Adventure Trust Safer Recruitment Policy for full details.

It is the Youth Adventure Trust's policy to re-check employee and volunteer DBS certificates every year as a minimum. Staff and volunteers should sign up to the DBS Update Service. Using this system, checks (with permission) will be carried out in advance of any volunteering on residential camps and therefore may be more frequent than annually.

## **6. Safeguarding Training**

The Youth Adventure Trust will ensure that all its staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training, recognising that a proper awareness and understanding of child protection and safeguarding is crucial for all its staff and volunteers.

Operational staff will participate in relevant and regular external and internal safeguarding training at a suitable level for their role. They will participate in regular safeguarding and child protection

updates, reviews, discussions and briefings including scenario based training sessions. They will update their safeguarding training at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard young people effectively.

All staff and volunteers must complete the NSPCC's 'Introduction to safeguarding and child protection' online training course and YAT's online safeguarding training module annually. Volunteers will participate in safeguarding training at the annual volunteer training courses and on an ongoing basis through other training opportunities. All volunteers and staff will be required to read the YAT Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and these procedures in advance of any work with young people on the Youth Adventure Trust programmes.

## **7. Raising Concerns**

### **7.1 Raising concerns / Whistleblowing**

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. Staff members should raise any concerns at the earliest opportunity with the Director of Programmes and Development, or directly to the Chief Executive. All staff must be familiar with the Youth Adventure Trust Whistleblowing Policy which contains further information and details on who to contact if they do not feel able to raise concerns internally, or have concerns about the way their report is being handled.

If volunteers are concerned about poor practice or conduct, they should report the matter to the Programme Manager, Mentoring Manager or Volunteer Manager as soon as possible. They will take any further action required, including reporting to the Director of Programmes & Development and ensuring any individuals concerned are removed from contact with young people pending further investigation. In the absence of one of these staff members, or if the concern is in relation to them or if they would prefer, they should report the matter directly to the Director of Programmes & Development or Chief Executive. In their absence or if the matter is concerning them, they should contact a member of the Board of Trustees, or the appropriate external agency, who will take the necessary further action. Key contact details can be found in [Appendix X](#).

Staff or volunteers can also contact the NSPCC on 0800 028 0285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

### **7.2 Allegations and concerns about the behaviour or conduct of an adult in relation to young people**

The Youth Adventure Trust is committed to safeguarding young people and promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working or volunteering on behalf of the organisation are shared responsibility, with the right person, recorded and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

#### **a) Allegations that may meet the harm threshold**

Where there are concerns or an allegation that an adult associated with the Youth Adventure Trust has;

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

it is essential that the procedures outlined in the Youth Adventure Trust Allegation Management Policy are immediately referred to and followed.

Where it has been identified that a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child, or if the situation is an emergency, the Youth Adventure Trust staff will contact the Local Authority Children's Social Care team and/or the police immediately.

In the case of an allegation there are two aspect that the Youth Adventure Trust will consider:

- Looking after the welfare of the child and ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the relevant authorities as per the processes outlined in these procedures.
- Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation. The YAT Case Manager will discuss with the relevant LADO/DOFA the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree a course of action. See YAT Allegation Management Policy for full details.

Please refer to the Youth Adventure Trust Allegations Management Policy for comprehensive details including referring the matter to the DBS.

**b) Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold – referred to for the purposes of this policy as 'low-level concerns'.**

A low-level concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working or volunteering on behalf of the Youth Adventure Trust may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff/volunteer code of conduct (outlined in Section 2 of these procedures and in the YAT Employee Code of Conduct), and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO/DOFA.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. It is crucial that any low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. This ensures the safety and wellbeing of young people, creates a culture of openness, trust and transparency, helps ensure that adults consistently model and reinforce our values and expected behaviour, and protects adults from false allegations or misunderstandings.

YAT staff and volunteers should share any concerns as a matter of priority with the Director of Programmes & Development who is the designated safeguarding lead. This can be shared verbally initially, or by completing a Low-Level Concern Form ([Appendix VII](#)). In their absence or if the concern is about them, it should be passed straight to the Chief Executive. The Case Manager (Director of Programmes & Development or Chief Executive) will gather as much information as possible by speaking directly to the person who raised the concern (unless it has been raised anonymously), and to the individual involved and any witnesses. They will record this information, decide on the response and any action, and feedback to those involved. Staff and volunteers should also proactively self-refer if they find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or might appear compromising to others.

Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing on a Low-Level Concern Form ([Appendix VII](#)) including:

- details of the concern,
- the context in which the concern arose,
- action taken,
- the name of the individual sharing their concerns, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous that will be respected as far as reasonably possible,
- any outcomes, follow up, response or learning.

Where there is any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, the Case Manager will consult with the LADO/DOFA.

Low-level concerns which are shared about external staff will be recorded and notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Records will be kept confidential and held securely in line with the YAT Data Protection Policy. They will be reviewed by the Director of Programmes and Development in consultation with the Chief Executive, so that potential patterns of concerning behaviour can be identified, and consideration will be given to any learning, wider cultural issues, any required revisions to policies or extra training to minimise the risk of it happening again.

## **8.     Reviewing these procedures**

These procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year and any changes that are required as a result of changing or emerging legislation, policy, guidelines and best practice will be made as a matter of urgency and the procedures re-circulated to all staff, trustees and volunteers. As a minimum the procedures will be reviewed and updated annually.

### **Person Undertaking Review / Update:**

Tessa Woodrow, Director of Programmes and Development, and Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Procedures Reviewed / Updated:** 17/03/2023

### **Procedures reviewed and approved by:**

Mark Davey, Chief Executive

**Date:** 17/03/23

## Appendices

### Appendix I Understanding and Identifying Abuse and Neglect

*Information taken from HM Government document "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, Advice for practitioners" March, 2015*

1. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
2. Child welfare concerns may arise in many different contexts, and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or by a stranger, including, via the internet. In the case of female genital mutilation, children may be taken out of the country to be abused. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time, but can also be a one-off event. Child abuse and neglect can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and well-being.
3. The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, including because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening. Children also develop and mature at different rates so what appears to be worrying for a younger child might be normal behaviour for an older child. Parental behaviours may also indicate child abuse or neglect, so you should also be alert to parent-child interactions which are concerning and other parental behaviours. This could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health. By understanding the warning signs, you can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family. It is important to recognise that a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused.
4. There are a number of indicators which might suggest a child may be being abused or neglected.

**Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:**

- a. Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed;
- b. Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty;
- c. Children with consistently poor hygiene;
- d. Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason;
- e. Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities;
- f. Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry;
- g. Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers;
- h. Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason;
- i. Children who are reluctant to go home;
- j. Children who are consistently late being picked up;
- k. Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns;
- l. Parents who collect their children when drunk, or under the influence of drugs;
- m. Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age;
- n. Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why;
- o. Children who talk about running away;
- p. Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

## Appendix II NSPCC Definitions and Signs of Child Abuse

Information taken from the NSPCC Knowledge and Information Service, July 2020  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf>

### What is child abuse?

Child abuse happens when a person harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve neglect.

Children may be abused by:

- a. family members
- b. friends
- c. people working or volunteering in organisational or community settings
- d. people they know
- e. strangers.

### General signs of abuse

Children experiencing abuse often experience more than one type of abuse over a period of time. Children who experience abuse may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend.

Many of the signs that a child is being abused are the same regardless of the type of abuse. Anyone working with children or young people needs to be able to recognise the signs. These include a child:

- a. being afraid of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people
- b. knowing about or being involved in 'adult issues' which are inappropriate for their age or stage of development, for example alcohol, drugs and/or sexual behaviour
- c. having angry outbursts or behaving aggressively towards others
- d. becoming withdrawn or appearing anxious, clingy or depressed
- e. self-harming or having thoughts about suicide
- f. showing changes in eating habits or developing eating disorders
- g. regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep problems
- h. regularly wetting the bed or soiling their clothes
- i. running away or regularly going missing from home or care
- j. not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.

These signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may well be other reasons for changes in a child's behaviour such as a bereavement or relationship problems between parents or carers. If you have any concerns about a child's wellbeing, you should report them following your organisation's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

### Physical abuse

#### What is physical abuse?

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating. It's also physical abuse if a parent or carer makes up or causes the symptoms of illness in children. For example, they may give them medicine they don't need, making them unwell. This is known as fabricated or induced illness (FII).



## **Spotting the signs of physical abuse**

All children have trips, falls and accidents which may cause cuts, bumps and bruises. These injuries tend to affect bony areas of their body such as elbows, knees and shins and are not usually a cause for concern.

Injuries that are more likely to indicate physical abuse include:

### **Bruising**

- a. bruises on babies who are not yet crawling or walking
- b. bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet
- c. bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs
- d. multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- e. bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand or an object, like a belt or shoe
- f. large oval-shaped bite marks.

### **Burns or scalds**

- a. any burns which have a clear shape of an object, for example cigarette burns
- b. burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals or buttocks.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (such as bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times.

If a child is frequently injured, and if the bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation doesn't match the injury, this should be investigated. It's also concerning if there is a delay in seeking medical help for a child who has been injured.

## **Neglect**

### **What is neglect?**

Neglect is not meeting a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can result in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer not:

- a. providing adequate food, clothing or shelter
- b. supervising a child or keeping them safe from harm or danger (including leaving them with unsuitable carers)
- c. making sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
- d. making sure the child receives a suitable education
- e. meeting the child's basic emotional needs – this is known as emotional neglect.

Neglect is the most common type of child abuse. It often happens at the same time as other types of abuse.

### **Spotting the signs of neglect**

Neglect can be difficult to identify. Isolated signs may not mean that a child is suffering neglect, but multiple and persistent signs over time could indicate a serious problem.

Some of these signs include:

- a. children who appear hungry - they may not have lunch money or even try to steal food
- b. children who appear dirty or smelly
- c. children whose clothes are inadequate for the weather conditions
- d. children who are left alone or unsupervised for long periods or at a young age

- e. children who have untreated injuries, health or dental problems
- f. children with poor language, communication or social skills for their stage of development
- g. children who live in an unsuitable home environment.

## **Sexual abuse**

### **What is sexual abuse?**

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

- a. sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- b. rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- c. forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- d. making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- a. encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- b. making a child masturbate while others watch
- c. not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- d. showing pornography to a child
- e. making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- f. allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.
- g. meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Online sexual abuse includes:

- a. persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- b. persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- c. having sexual conversations with a child by text or online.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

### **Spotting the signs of sexual abuse**

There may be physical signs that a child has suffered sexual abuse.

These include:

- a. anal or vaginal soreness or itching
- b. bruising or bleeding near the genital area
- c. discomfort when walking or sitting down
- d. an unusual discharge
- e. sexually transmitted infections (STI)
- f. pregnancy.

Changes in the child's mood or behaviour may also cause concern. They may want to avoid spending time with specific people. In particular, the child may show sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age.

For example:

- a. they could use sexual language or know things about sex that you wouldn't expect them to
- b. they might become sexually active or pregnant at a young age.

## **Child sexual exploitation**

### **What is child sexual exploitation?**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Young people may be coerced or groomed into exploitative situations and relationships. They may be given things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities.

Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs (Berelowitz et al, 2013).

Child sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators.

### **Spotting the signs of child sexual exploitation**

Sexual exploitation can be very difficult to identify. Young people who are being sexually exploited may:

- a. go missing from home, care or education
- b. be involved in abusive relationships
- c. hang out with groups of older people
- d. be involved in gangs or anti-social groups
- e. have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- f. spend time at places of concern, such as hotels or known brothels
- g. be involved in petty crime such as shoplifting
- h. have access to drugs and alcohol
- i. have new things such as clothes and mobile phones, which they aren't able to easily explain
- j. have unexplained physical injuries

## **Harmful sexual behaviour**

### **What is harmful sexual behaviour?**

Harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people and which may be harmful or abusive. It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour.

HSB encompasses a range of behaviour, which can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children or adults. It is harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as the people it is directed towards.

HSB can include:

- a. using sexually explicit words and phrases
- b. inappropriate touching
- c. using sexual violence or threats
- d. sexual activity with other children or adults.

Sexual behaviour between children is considered harmful if one of the children is much older – particularly if there is more than two years' difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other isn't (Davies, 2012). However, a younger child can abuse an older child, particularly if they have power over them – for example, if the older child is disabled (Rich, 2011).

### **Spotting the signs of harmful sexual behaviour**

It's normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Children also develop at different rates and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the child's age and the situation.

### **Emotional abuse**

#### **What is emotional abuse?**

Emotional abuse involves:

- a. humiliating, putting down or regularly criticising a child
- b. shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
- c. mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
- d. constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
- e. trying to control a child's life and not recognising their individuality
- f. not allowing a child to have friends or develop socially
- g. pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
- h. manipulating a child
- i. exposing a child to distressing events or interactions
- j. persistently ignoring a child
- k. being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
- l. not being positive or encouraging to a child or praising their achievements and successes.

### **Spotting the signs of emotional abuse**

There aren't usually any obvious physical signs of emotional abuse but you may spot changes in a child's actions or emotions.

Some children are naturally quiet and self-contained whilst others are more open and affectionate. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child or are particularly unusual for their stage of development.

Babies and pre-school children who are being emotionally abused may:

- a. be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long
- b. not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, for example when being taken to or collected from nursery
- c. lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- d. be unable to play
- e. be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Older children may:

- a. use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn't expect for their age

- b. struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- c. seem isolated from their parents
- d. lack social skills or have few, if any, friends
- e. fear making mistakes
- f. fear their parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- g. self-harm.

## **Domestic abuse**

### **What is domestic abuse?**

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

Exposure to domestic abuse is child abuse. Children can be directly involved in incidents of domestic abuse or they may be harmed by seeing or hearing abuse happening. Children in homes where there is domestic abuse are also at risk of other types of abuse or neglect.

### **Spotting the signs of domestic abuse**

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening, because abusers can act very differently when other people are around.

Children who witness domestic abuse may:

- a. become aggressive
- b. display anti-social behaviour
- c. suffer from depression or anxiety
- d. not do as well at school - due to difficulties at home or disruption of moving to and from refuges.

## **Bullying and cyberbullying**

### **What are bullying and cyberbullying?**

Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable.

Bullying includes:

- a. verbal abuse, such as name calling
- b. non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or glaring
- c. emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- d. exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
- e. undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours
- f. controlling or manipulating someone
- g. racial, sexual or homophobic bullying
- h. physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
- i. making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying happens online it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying can also be known as cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying includes:

- a. sending threatening or abusive text messages
- b. creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos

- c. 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chatrooms or online games
- d. excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- e. setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- f. encouraging young people to self-harm
- g. voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- h. creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

### **Spotting the signs of bullying and cyberbullying**

It can be hard to know whether or not a child is being bullied. They might not tell anyone because they're scared the bullying will get worse. They might also think that the bullying is their fault.

No one sign indicates for certain that a child's being bullied, but you should look out for:

- a. belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- b. physical injuries such as unexplained bruises
- c. being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- d. not doing as well at school
- e. asking for, or stealing, money (to give to a bully)
- f. being nervous, losing confidence or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- g. problems with eating or sleeping
- h. bullying others.

### **Child trafficking**

#### **What is child trafficking?**

Child trafficking is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked into the UK from overseas, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Children may be trafficked for:

- a. child sexual exploitation
- b. benefit fraud
- c. forced marriage
- d. domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- e. forced labour in factories or agriculture
- f. criminal exploitation such as cannabis cultivation, pickpocketing, begging, transporting, drugs, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

Children who are trafficked experience many forms of abuse and neglect. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse is often used to control them and they're also likely to suffer physical and emotional neglect.

Child trafficking can require a network of organised criminals who recruit, transport and exploit children and young people. Some people in the network might not be directly involved in trafficking a child but play a part in other ways, such as falsifying documents, bribery, owning or renting premises or money laundering (Europol, 2011). Child trafficking can also be organised by individuals and the children's own families.

Traffickers trick, force or persuade children to leave their homes. They use grooming techniques to gain the trust of a child, family or community. Although these are methods used by traffickers, coercion, violence or threats don't need to be proven in cases of child trafficking - a child cannot

legally consent to their exploitation so child trafficking only requires evidence of movement and exploitation.

Modern slavery is another term which may be used in relation to child trafficking. Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking (HM Government, 2014). The Modern Slavery Act passed in 2015 in England and Wales categorises offences of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking.

### **Spotting the signs of child trafficking**

Signs that a child has been trafficked may not be obvious but you might notice unusual behaviour or events.

Children who have been trafficked may:

- a. have to do excessive housework chores
- b. rarely leave the house and have limited freedom of movement
- c. not have any documents (or have falsified documents)
- d. give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children
- e. be unable or reluctant to give details of accommodation or personal details
- f. not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- g. have a history with missing links and unexplained moves
- h. be cared for by adults who are not their parents or carers
- i. not have a good quality relationship with their adult carers
- j. be one among a number of unrelated children found at one address
- k. receive unexplained or unidentified phone calls whilst in a care placement or temporary accommodation.

There are also signs that an adult is involved in child trafficking, such as:

- a. making multiple visa applications for different children
- b. acting as a guarantor for multiple visa applications for children
- c. having previously acted as the guarantor on visa applications for visitors who have not left the UK when the visa expired.

### **Female genital mutilation**

#### **What is female genital mutilation?**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting.

The age at which FGM is carried out varies. It may be carried out when a child is new-born, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy (Home Office et al, 2016).

FGM is child abuse. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It's dangerous and a criminal offence.

#### **Spotting the signs of female genital mutilation**

A child at risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But they might talk about or you may become aware of:

- a. a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- b. relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- c. a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- d. a female relative being cut – a sister, cousin or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- e. missing school repeatedly or running away from home.

A child who has had FGM may:

- a. have difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- b. spend longer in the bathroom or toilet
- c. appear withdrawn, anxious or depressed
- d. have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- e. be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- f. ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

### **Reporting requirements**

Regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales must report 'known' cases of FGM in under-18s to the police (Home Office, 2016).

### **Radicalisation and Extremism**

#### **What are radicalisation and extremism?**

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

The process of radicalisation may involve:

- a. being groomed online or in person
- b. exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- c. psychological manipulation
- d. exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- e. the risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts.

It happens gradually so children and young people who are affected may not realise what it is that they are being drawn into.

#### **Vulnerability factors**

Anyone can be radicalised but there are some factors which may make a young person more vulnerable. These include:

- a. being easily influenced or impressionable
- b. having low self-esteem or being isolated
- c. feeling that rejection, discrimination or injustice is taking place in society
- d. experiencing community tension amongst different groups
- e. being disrespectful or angry towards family and peers
- f. having a strong need for acceptance or belonging
- g. experiencing grief such as loss of a loved one.

These factors will not always lead to radicalisation.

#### **Spotting the signs of radicalisation**



If a child or young person is being radicalised their day-to-day behaviour may become increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause. For example, they may:

- a. spend increasing amounts of time talking to people with extreme views (this includes online and offline communication)
- b. change their style of dress or personal appearance
- c. lose interest in friends and activities that are not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- d. have material or symbols associated with an extreme cause
- e. try to recruit others to join the cause

(Home Office, 2020).

## **Online Abuse**

### **What is online abuse?**

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, facilitated through technology like computers, tablets, mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices.

It can happen anywhere online that allows digital communication, such as:

- a. social networks
- b. text messages and messaging apps
- c. email and private messaging
- d. online chats
- e. comments on live streaming sites
- f. voice chat in games.

Children and young people can be re-victimised (experience further abuse) when abusive content is recorded, uploaded or shared by others online. This can happen if the original abuse happened online or offline.

Children and young people may experience several types of abuse online:

- a. bullying/cyberbullying
- b. emotional abuse (this includes emotional blackmail, for example pressuring children and young people to comply with sexual requests via technology)
- c. sexting (pressure or coercion to create sexual images)
- d. sexual abuse
- e. sexual exploitation.

Children and young people can also be groomed online. Perpetrators may use online platforms to build a trusting relationship with the child in order to abuse them. This abuse may happen online or the perpetrator may arrange to meet the child in person with the intention of abusing them.

### **Spotting the signs of online abuse**

Online abuse can lead to:

- a. anxiety
- b. self-harm
- c. eating disorders or eating difficulties
- d. suicidal thoughts

- e. falling behind at school
- f. depression
- g. other mental health difficulties
- h. self-blame
- i. flashbacks or intrusive thoughts
- j. difficulties sleeping
- k. nightmares
- l. extreme tiredness
- m. difficulties concentrating
- n. difficulties keeping up with school work
- o. behavioural problems at school
- p. low self-esteem
- q. social withdrawal
- r. panic attacks
- s. being uncomfortable around cameras
- t. feeling powerless and frightened
- u. alcohol or other substance misuse
- v. risk taking behaviour.

**Further information:**

Further information on these and other types of abuse including

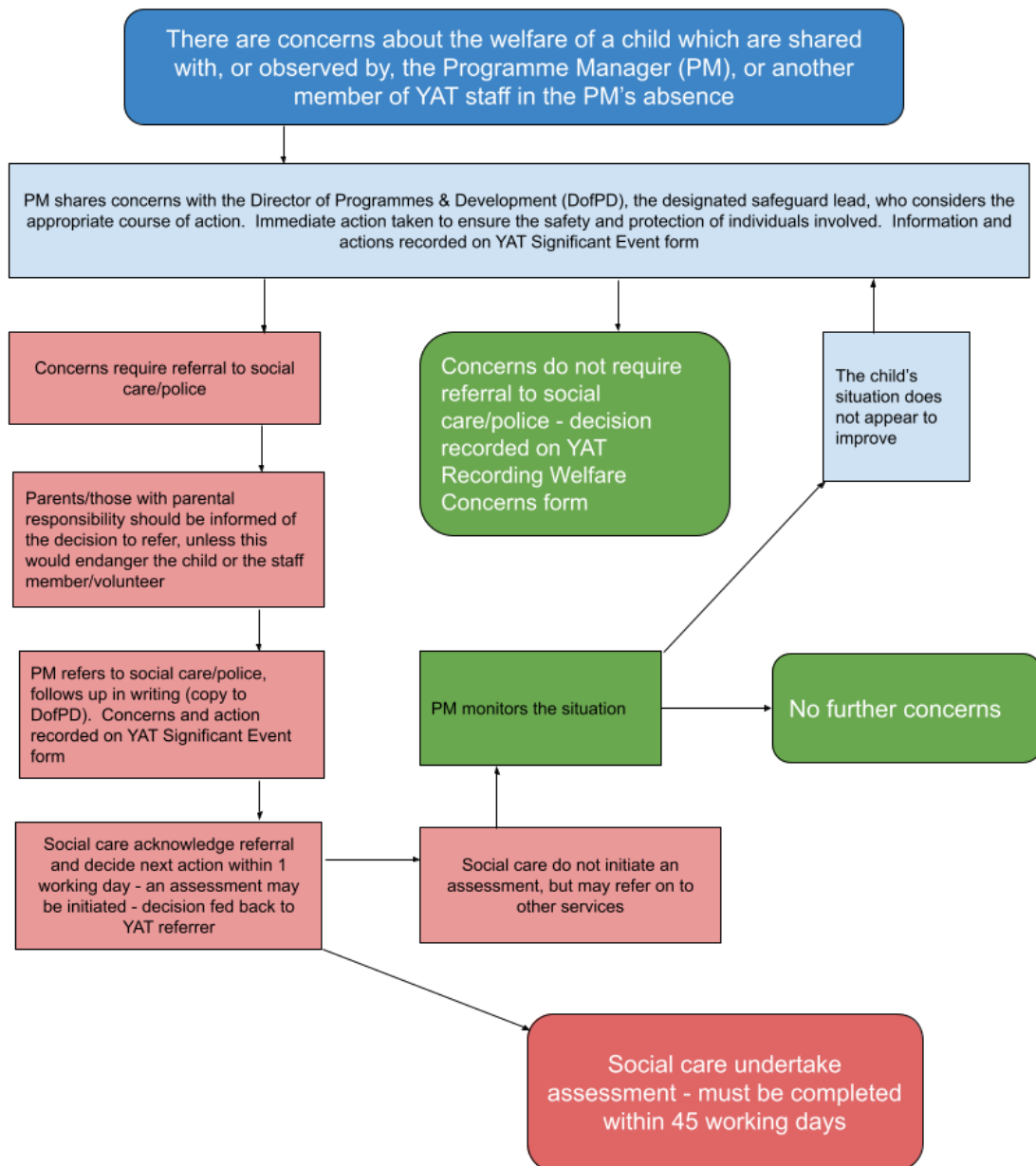
- grooming
- criminal exploitation, county lines and gangs
- peer on peer abuse
- non-recent abuse

can be found at:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect>
- <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/radicalisation>

### Appendix III Action in Response to Safeguarding Concerns Flowchart

**NB** If at any point there is risk of immediate serious harm to a young person, the police and children's social care should be immediately informed. Anyone can make a referral.



## Appendix IV Significant Event Form



### Significant Event Form

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**

This form should be used to keep a log of actions taken in response to a significant event during the YAT programme including;

- a. A medical emergency
- b. A missing person (where police become involved)
- c. An allegation of abuse, inappropriate or dangerous behaviour relating to a volunteer, staff member, instructor or other associated adult, another young person or a parent
- d. Any safeguarding issues or disclosures which are passed on to an external agency (where a decision is made not to pass a concern on, a Welfare Concern Form should be completed instead)
- e. An emergency as the result of a natural phenomenon such as lighting strike, flooding
- f. The death of a young person, volunteer, YAT staff member or other associated adult during the YAT programme

When complete, this report should be sent to the Director of Programmes & Development who will share it with the Chief Executive. Please attach any other relevant reports.

<b>Date and time of the initial event:</b>	
<b>Location of the initial event:</b>	
<b>Camp or Day Activity where the Significant Event has occurred?</b>	

<p><b>Full name, DOB and address of any Young People involved, and description of their involvement</b> i.e. alleged victim, witness, named by others as involved etc:</p>	

<p><b>Details</b> (including full name, home address or employer address, position) <b>of any other people involved including volunteers, staff members, instructors, alleged perpetrator, other witnesses</b> (witness statements should be attached to this form):</p>	
<p><b>Details</b> (including full name, home address, relationship to those involved) <b>of anyone else contacted about this significant event:</b></p>	

**DATE / TIME**

**DETAILED LOG OF THE SIGNIFICANT EVENT,**  
**ACTION TAKEN & ANY FOLLOW UP / OUTCOMES**  
(including names of any other people involved at that time)

**Name and signature of person completing form:**

**Job title:**

**Date:**

**Name & signature of Director of Programmes & Development:**

**Date:**

**Name & signature of Chief Executive:**

**Date:**

## Appendix V (Staff) Young Person Welfare Concern Form



### (Staff) Young Person Welfare Concern Form

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**

This form should be used to keep a log of any welfare concerns regarding a young person during the YAT programme, when the decision is made NOT to refer the concerns onto Social Care at that time.

When complete, this report should be sent to the Director of Programmes & Development.

***NB: If you suspect a young person may be suffering abuse, you have received a disclosure of abuse or you have heard about an allegation of abuse, you must complete a YAT Significant Event form instead, and follow safeguarding procedures as a matter of urgency.***

Young Person's name:	DOB:	M/F:
Young Person's address:		
Date and time of initial welfare concern:	Date and time of writing this report:	
Details of welfare concern (do not interpret information – use the same language that was used by the young person where applicable):		
Details (including where known full name, home address or employer address, position) of any other people involved including volunteers, staff members, instructors, alleged perpetrator, other witnesses (witness statements should be attached to this form):		
Details of any action taken, including discussion with the young person concerned, parents and other agencies/involved parties:		



<b>Are any other young people potentially at risk? If so, record their names where known, and action taken in relation to them:</b>
<b>Any other relevant information</b> (distinguish between fact and opinion):
<b>Details of decision not to refer information to Social Care at this stage:</b>

<b>Name and signature of person completing form:</b>
<b>Job Title:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

<b>Name &amp; signature of Director of Programmes &amp; Development:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

## Appendix VI (Volunteer) Young Person Welfare Concern Form



### (Volunteer) Young Person Welfare Concern Form

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**

This form should be used to keep a log of any welfare concerns a volunteer has regarding a young person during the YAT programme, including any disclosures, conversations that create concern, observations or incidents.

When complete, this report should be sent to the Director of Programmes & Development.

<b>Young Person's name:</b>	<b>DOB:</b>	<b>M/F:</b>
<b>Young Person's address:</b>		
<b>Date and time of initial welfare concern:</b>	<b>Date and time of writing this report:</b>	
<b>Details of welfare concern</b> (do not interpret information – use the same language that was used by the young person where applicable):		
<b>Details</b> (including where known full name, home address or employer address, position) <b>of any other people involved including volunteers, staff members, instructors, alleged perpetrator, other witnesses</b> (witness statements should be attached to this form):		
<b>Are any other young people potentially at risk? If so, record their names where known.</b>		

<b>Any other relevant information</b> (distinguish between fact and opinion):
<b>Who did you report the welfare concern to, including that person's role?</b>
<b>When and how did you report it?</b>
<b>Details of any action taken in relation to the welfare concern:</b>

<b>Name and signature of person completing form:</b>
<b>Role:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

<b>Name &amp; signature of Director of Programmes &amp; Development:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

## Appendix VII Low-Level Concern Form



### Low-level Concern Form

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY**

This form should be used to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the YAT staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold, or is otherwise not serious enough to merit a referral to the LADO.

When complete, this report should be sent to the Director of Programmes & Development who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If for any reason you would prefer, you can send the form to the Chief Executive instead.

<b>Name of staff member/volunteer the concern is about:</b>	
<b>Their job title / role:</b>	
<b>Details of concern:</b> <i>Make a concise, accurate, chronological record including the details of the low-level concern, brief context in which the concern arose, and relevant incident(s).</i>	

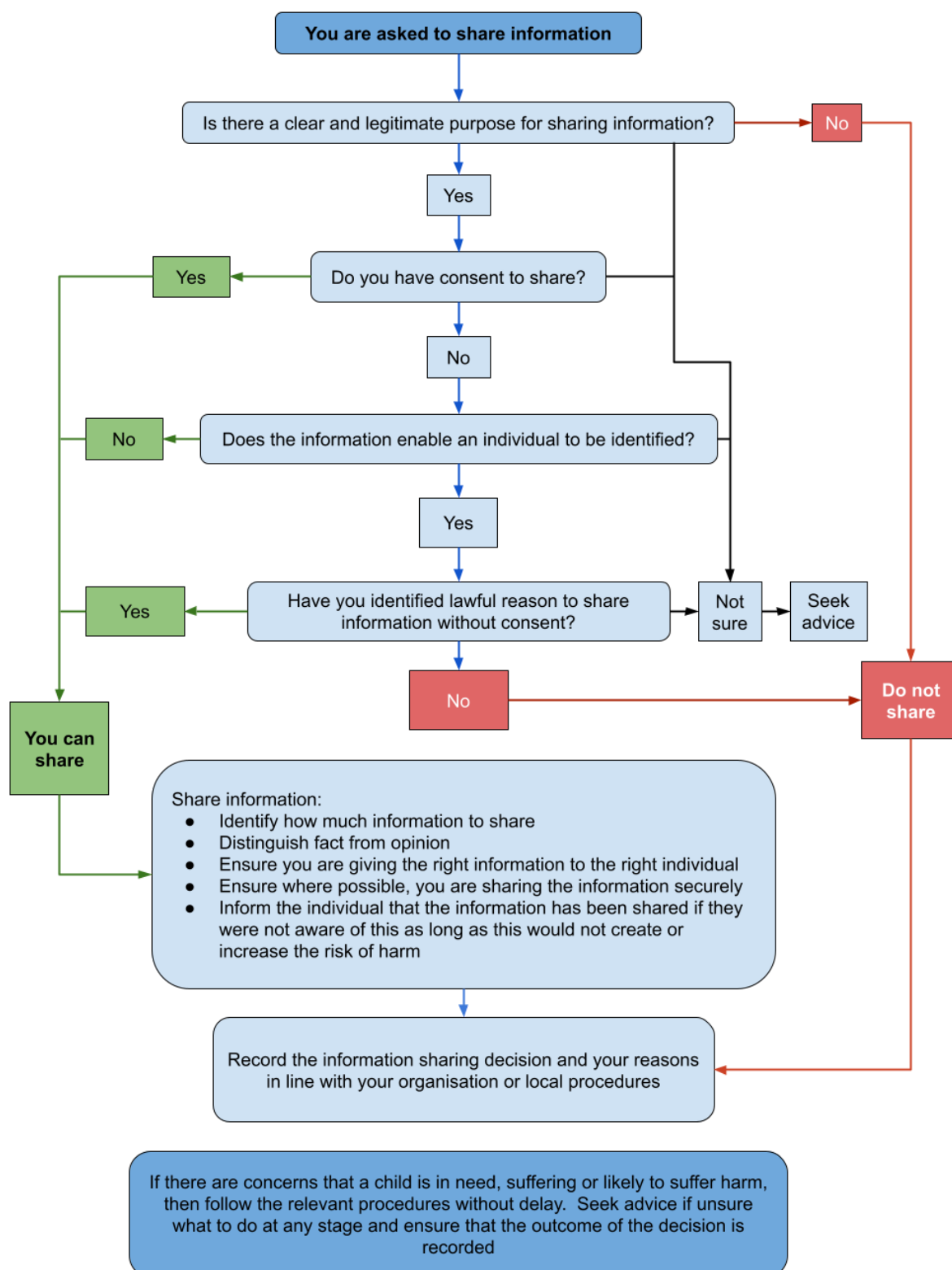
<b>Name of person completing form:</b>
<b>Role:</b>
<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Date and time:</b>

<b>Name of Director of Programmes &amp; Development:</b>
<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Date and time received:</b>

<b>Action taken:</b>
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This record will be held securely in accordance with YAT Low-Level Concerns policy. Please note that low-level concerns will be treated in confidence as far as possible, but the Youth Adventure Trust may in certain circumstances be subject to legal reporting requirements or other legal obligations to share information with appropriate persons, including legal claims and formal investigations.

## Appendix VIII Flowchart of When and How to Share Information



Information taken from HM Government document "Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners" July 2018

## Appendix IX Remote Contact with Young People

IX.1 This policy appendix is relevant to all Youth Adventure Trust staff and volunteers. It is an addition to the Safeguarding Policy, and staff and volunteers are reminded that the wider policy remains in place and should be reviewed and adhered to. Staff and volunteers should make themselves familiar with all the information contained in this policy including responsibilities, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, how to recognise, respond to, record and report concerns.

IX.2 The Youth Adventure Trust will permit remote contact with young people via video call in the form of remote mentoring under the following conditions only, and where it has been agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust.

**Staff members and volunteer must sign to agree to follow these conditions in advance of any remote contact:**

- a. Video calls must only be made using the platform agreed by the Youth Adventure Trust in advance, and with the unique call link being sent only to the young person.
- b. The unique call link for every video call session must be shared by the staff member / volunteer with the mentoring relationship manager.
- c. Calls, text messages or emails must only be made by the staff member or volunteer using the email address or phone number given to them by the Youth Adventure Trust. The contact number and email address to be used must be agreed by the Youth Adventure Trust in advance. Personal contact details must not be shared with a young person or their family.
- d. Young people must only be contacted on the email address or phone number agreed with their parent/carer in advance.
- e. Staff members and volunteers are not permitted to make any contact with young people using any forms of social media or communication platforms other than those agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust, unless they are directly asked to do so by the Youth Adventure Trust and then only using the Youth Adventure Trust's official channels.
- f. Parents/carers must be made aware of the session call in advance by a Youth Adventure Trust representative, and they must agree to the specific session taking place. A message should be sent an hour before the call is scheduled to take place by a Youth Adventure Trust representative. Confirmation from the parent/carer must be received before any video call can go ahead.
- g. Unless with prior agreement from the Youth Adventure Trust, there should be no additional contact with the young person outside the arranged video call, other than to arrange or confirm the next video call time. If the staff member or volunteer receives any other communications from the young person or their family outside of the call and arrangements, it must be reported to the mentoring relationship manager straightaway and before responding so that next steps can be agreed. If the mentoring relationship manager is not available, they should contact Tessa Woodrow, Director of Programmes & Development at the Youth Adventure Trust, on 07813 771551.
- h. All calls should take place between the hours of 9am to 5pm, on Mondays to Fridays, unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust.
- i. Calls must take place in the young person's main home, the address the Youth Adventure Trust has on record for them, unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust. The permitted address will be agreed with the mentor, young person and parent/carer in advance of mentoring starting. Should the young person be at a different location when a

video call is started, the mentor should end the call and contact the mentoring relationship manager to discuss next steps.

- j. All calls should take place in a communal room/open space within the young person's home or garden, unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust and the parents.
- k. Staff members/volunteers and the young person must be appropriately and fully dressed. This includes not conducting the session in overly casual clothing such as pyjamas. If a young person or any member of their household appears inappropriately dressed, the staff member/volunteer must immediately end the call and report to their mentoring relationship manager or Tessa Woodrow, Director of Programmes & Development at the Youth Adventure Trust, on 07813 771551.
- l. Staff members/volunteers should be mindful of what is in the background of where they conduct the video call from, ensuring there is a neutral and non-identifiable background, for example making sure there are no family photos in the background, or that the house number or location are not in view.
- m. Staff members/volunteers must ensure no other member of their household is present at any time during the video call.
- n. It is not permitted for anyone to create visual or voice recordings, photograph, screenshare, screenshot, share the call link with anyone else or in any other way share the video call unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust, parent/carer and young person.
- o. Staff members/volunteers must log session times and the video call link on the calendar shared with them by the Youth Adventure Trust.
- p. Staff members/volunteers must use the YAT CRM platform Salesforce to check in and out of all sessions unless otherwise agreed by the Director of Programmes & Development. Failure to do so will require their mentoring relationship manager to contact the staff member or volunteer until a response is received from them.
- q. Staff members/volunteers must record session notes on Salesforce to summarise the content of the video call.
- r. A Youth Adventure Trust staff team member may join the video call session at any point to ensure it is being conducted under the conditions outlined in this agreement.
- s. Video calls should be made whilst connected to Wi-Fi or broadband.
- t. If staff members/volunteers have any concerns about anything that has happened, been said or was witnessed during the call, either to do with the young person or other household members, or they have any other concerns such as the home environment, they must report it to their mentoring relationship manager as a matter of urgency. If the mentoring relationship manager is not available, they should contact Tessa Woodrow, Director of Programmes & Development at the Youth Adventure Trust, on 07813 771551 as a matter of urgency.

**Parents must sign to agree to follow these conditions in advance of any remote contact:**

- a. Video calls will only take place on a day and at a time agreed with me in advance, and only using the platform agreed by the Youth Adventure Trust in advance. No other video calls will be permitted outside of these agreed times.
- b. My child will only be contacted on the phone number or email address agreed with the Youth Adventure Trust in advance. My child will only contact the Youth Adventure Trust representative on the phone number or email address agreed in advance.
- c. Calls between my child and their mentor should take place between the hours of 9am to 5pm, on Mondays to Fridays, unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust.



- d. Video calls will only go ahead if I give permission directly in advance of the call. A Youth Adventure Trust representative will send a message to me on the agreed number an hour before the scheduled call time. The video call will not go ahead if confirmation it can proceed is not received from me ahead of the call.
- e. Video calls will only take place in a shared and open space within the home or garden unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust. Video calls must take place at my child's main home, the address the Youth Adventure Trust has on record for them, unless agreed with the Youth Adventure Trust in advance.
- f. My child and everyone in the household will be dressed fully and appropriately during the video call, this includes not wearing pyjamas or similar.
- g. I agree it is not permitted for anyone to create visual or voice recordings, photograph, screenshare, screenshot, forward the call link or in any other way share the video call unless agreed in advance by me, my child and the Youth Adventure Trust.
- h. I agree that a member of the Youth Adventure Trust staff team may join the video call session at any point to ensure it is being conducted under the conditions outlined in this agreement.
- i. Apart from the video call sessions, my child can communicate with their mentor through email only for the purposes of arranging the next video call.
- j. If I have any concerns about my child's contact with their mentor, I will immediately get in touch with the mentoring relationship manager to discuss my concerns. If they are not available, I will contact Tessa Woodrow, Director of Programmes & Development at the Youth Adventure Trust, on 07813 771551.

**Young People must sign to agree to follow these conditions in advance of any remote contact:**

- a. Video calls will only take place on a day and at a time agreed in advance and only using the platform agreed by the Youth Adventure Trust in advance. No other video calls will be allowed outside of these agreed times.
- b. Calls should take place between the hours of 9am to 5pm, on Mondays to Fridays, unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust.
- c. Video calls can only go ahead if my parent/carer gives permission to a Youth Adventure Trust representative before the call is due to take place. The representative will send a message to my parent/carer on the agreed number before the scheduled video call time so they can give permission for the call to go ahead. The video call will not go ahead unless the representative receives this permission in advance.
- d. Calls can only take place in a shared and open space within the home or garden unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust. Calls must take place in my main home which is the address the Youth Adventure Trust has on record for me, unless agreed in advance by the Youth Adventure Trust.
- e. Me and everyone in the household will be dressed fully and appropriately during the video call, this includes not wearing pyjamas or similar.
- f. I agree it is not allowed for anyone to create visual or voice recordings, photograph, screenshare, screenshot, forward the call link or in any other way share the video call unless agreed in advance by me, my parent/carer and the Youth Adventure Trust.
- g. I agree that a member of the Youth Adventure Trust staff team may join the video call session at any point to ensure all the conditions in this agreement are being followed.
- h. I can email my mentor for the purposes of arranging the next video call only. I will only contact them on the email address agreed in advance with the Youth Adventure Trust. I will not contact them on any form of social media or other communication platform.

- i. If I have any concerns, I will immediately get in touch with the mentoring relationship manager to discuss these. If they are not available, I will contact Tessa Woodrow, Director of Programmes & Development at the Youth Adventure Trust, on 07813 771551.

IX.3 With reference to statement **3.4 Social Media / Communication Statement** of this policy, staff and volunteers should still not have private communication with young people, only that agreed and observed in line with the above agreements. Where all agreements and consents are in place, and all guidance outlined in this policy are followed, staff members and volunteers are permitted to have direct communication with young people via phone, text, email and video call as per the outlined stipulations. All communication must be noted in session recordings using Salesforce.

## **Appendix X Key Telephone Numbers**

### **Youth Adventure Trust Key Contacts:**

Chief Executive – Mark Davey: 07811 261516

Director of Programmes & Development and Designated Safeguarding Lead – Tessa Woodrow: 07813 771551

Senior Programme Manager – Rob Warren: 07551 464449

Programme Manager and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Kerrie Lee: 07393 215835

Programme Manager - Scott Stevenson: 07799 687559

Programme Manager - Alice McAlear: 07708 218057

Resilience Programme Manager - Jonathan Hope: 07511 775246

Senior Volunteer Manager – Jon Rich: 07469 886523

Senior Mentoring Manager – Becky Brotherton-Brown: 07592 664679

Mentoring Manager - Abbie Allender: 07724 887005

Chairman of Trustees – Pete Redfern: 07771 842378

Board of Trustees Safeguarding Lead – Gaby Wood: 07450 294166

**If you think a young person is an immediate risk of harm, call 999 straight away.**

**If you have concerns for a young person's welfare that you cannot raise with the Youth Adventure Trust team, please contact either the NSPCC on 0800 800 5000 / [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk), or the relevant local Child Protection team, details below.**

### **Local Child Protection Contacts:**

#### **SWINDON**

During office hours - call 01793 466903 (normal office hours are 8.30am to 4.40pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4.00pm Friday)

Out of hours - contact Emergency Duty Service on 01793 466900

#### **WILTSHIRE**

During office hours – call the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0300 456 0108 (normal office hours are 8.45am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.45am to 4.00pm Friday)

Out of hours - contact Emergency Duty Team on 0300 456 0100

### **Reporting Radicalisation and Extremism:**

If you think a child or the people around them are involved in radicalisation and there is an immediate risk of harm, call 999 straight away.

If it isn't an emergency you can:

- Report the concern to YAT's Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Call the police anti-terrorism hotline on 0800 789 321
- Call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000
- Report suspicious activity online at <https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>

## **Appendix XI Procedures Update Details**

March 2023

- [4.2 Addition of Radicalisation and Extremism section](#)
- [8 Amendments to Procedures Review section](#)
- [Appendix II Additions to Definitions of Child Abuse; Online Abuse, Radicalisation](#)
- [Appendix X Amendments to Key Telephone Numbers section](#)

