

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Safeguarding Officer: Mary Fallon, Youth Team Manager

Deputy Safeguarding Officer: Jade Costello, HCC Manager

The Trustees and Management Teams of Young Deaf Activities are firmly committed to the welfare of all young people who use their facilities and protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Y.D.A. will aim to ensure that all young people meet in a safe environment with people they can trust. It will also ensure that all risks which young people encounter are carefully assessed and the necessary steps taken to minimize and manage them.

All adult leaders and helpers will be provided with a copy of this policy and will be requested to indicate their commitment to it by completing a signed copy which will be kept in the records held by the two managers.

Recruitment

All paid helpers and volunteers should complete an application form supplying the following information:

- Personal details
- Previous experience and/or qualifications
- Any criminal convictions
- Names of two independent referees

All leaders and helpers should complete a Disclosure Form (DBS) at enhanced level which will be processed through Action4Youth and the HR Department at Buckinghamshire County Council.

These clearances will be renewed every 3 years.

All new helpers will be closely supervised until references have been received and DBS checks completed.

In accordance with guidance from the Criminal Records Bureau a record will be kept of the disclosure number, completion date and whether or not the check is satisfactory. The actual certificate will be destroyed within 6 months of receipt.

Code of Conduct

The Trustees and Management Teams adhere to the following guidelines as to how children and young people and adults interact with each other:

- Abusive behaviour and language, violence, aggression, bullying or discrimination will not be tolerated and leaders will respond quickly and effectively to any such reports.
- The appropriate ratio of helpers to children will be applied: no more than **1:3** with a ratio of **1:1 (or 2:1)** for those children identified as needing it.
- Children should be picked up and collected by parents or carers at the beginning and end of meetings or by identified Y.D.A. helpers.
- Parents or carers who are regularly involved in YDA sessions should be DBS checked.

Training Provision

This policy will be included in the Handbook given to all helpers and they will have the opportunity to attend Safeguarding training courses offered at regular intervals by Action4Youth.

The Managers will ensure that all helpers attend these courses or have completed one at their place of work so they understand their responsibilities with regard to issues of child protection.

Dealing with Allegations

The following procedures will apply in the identification or suspicion of abuse towards a young person.

Abuse

There are four types of abuse to which young people can be subjected:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse

If any of these occur young people often display problems in the following areas:

- Behaviour
- Education
- Mental Health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Physical evidence eg. bruising
- Relationships

A young person may disclose that he/she is being abused: he/she may show signs of abuse or he/she may speak about third party abuse.

If abuse is **Suspected**:

- Observations, conversations or concerns will be recorded, signed and dated
- The matter must not be investigated with anyone other than the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer (the two Managers)
- The Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and, within 48 hours, contact Bucks Safeguarding Team if necessary.

If abuse is **Reported/Alleged**

- The child/young person will be listened to and encouraged to speak without interruption, comment or judgement.
- It will be explained that information may need to be shared in certain circumstances.
- The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than the Safeguarding Officer.
- A written account of the report allegation will be made, signed and dated and the information passed to the Safeguarding Officer or Deputy.
- The Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and within 48 hours contact Bucks Safeguarding Team.

*See attached flow chart for reporting procedure

Protecting Leaders

The Trustees and Management Teams of Y.D.A. recognise the importance of protecting all leaders and helpers from possible allegations of abuse and recommend the following guidelines:

All leaders and helpers should not:

- Be alone with a child or young person
- Transport them in a car or mini bus without another adult being present
- Take a youngster to their own home
- Make inappropriate contact i.e. develop relationships outside the club setting
- Leave youngsters unattended
- Leave them in the presence of adults who are not suitably trained
- Leave them in the presence of adults not known to leaders
- Leave them in the presence of adults who have not had relevant DBS checks
- Show favouritism

Allegations about Helpers

If any allegation is made or suspicions emerge regarding any of the helpers these should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer. If an allegation is made against that Officer the report should be made to the YDA Chair of Trustees.

If any further action is required the following procedure will apply during which all information will remain confidential:

- A detailed factual record of the allegation and action will be made
- Information will be passed to the Chair of Trustees who may contact Action4Youth
- Consideration will be given to suspension of the person involved taking into account the risks to young people and other helpers
- If the allegation involves a young member then contact will be made with parents to advise them of the process
- Relevant external bodies will be advised.

Photography

Since children may be photographed while participating in club events and activities written permission from parents/guardians will be obtained which will also allow photographic material to be used in the public domain.

This Policy was adopted at the Trustees Meeting on:

Signed by:

The Safeguarding Officer, Mary Fallon:

The Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Jade Costello:

The Chair of Trustees:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees.