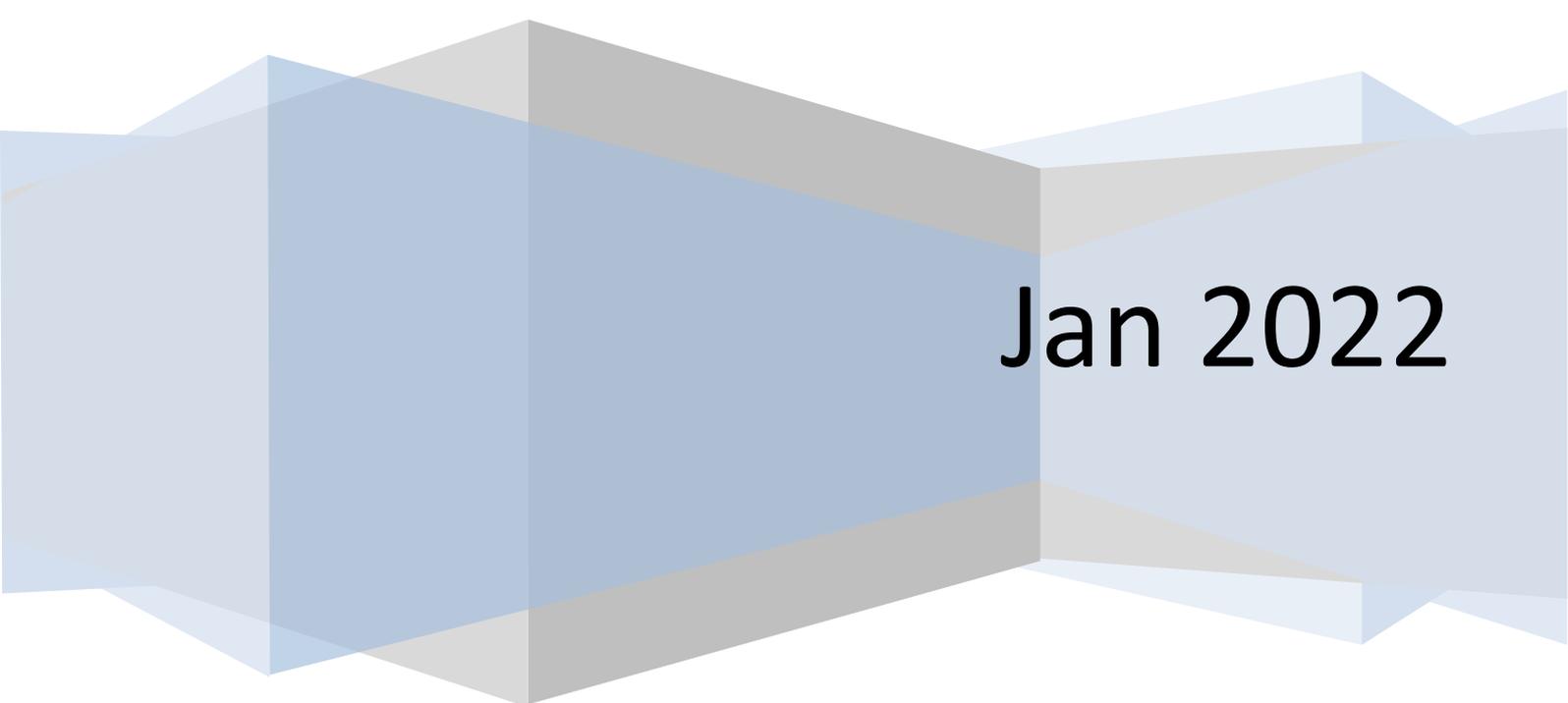


Version 2.4

# Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

Sutton Coldfield Adventure Unit

Review Date: January 2023



Jan 2022

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## 1. Introduction

SCAU will endeavour to ensure that all children in our care will be safe and protected at all times. If we have any concerns that any child is at risk of harm, with us or outside of SCAU, it is the responsibility of every leader to intervene appropriately.

This document is the Safeguarding Children Policy for Sutton Coldfield Adventure Unit (SCAU) which will be followed by all members of the Unit and followed and promoted by those in the position of leadership within the organisation.

It is accepted that as an organisation working with children, we are responsible for ensuring that staff are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.

The purpose of the SCAU is to provide youngsters from 7-19 years the opportunity to advance in the areas of:-

- Education & Life Skills
- Citizenship & Community Development.

We know that being a young person makes them vulnerable to abuse by adults. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any adult in the context of the work carried out by the organisation are transparent whilst safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people.

This document is written with reference to the 'Every Child Matters' Document, the Children's Act 2004, Keeping Children Safe in Education and the HM Government document 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and NSPCC guidance<sup>1</sup>.

### 1.11 Principles upon which this Safeguarding Children Policy is based

- The welfare of the child is paramount.

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- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/writing-a-safeguarding-policy/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-young-people>
- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/779401/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard-Children.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf)

- All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families will be respected and listened to.
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the organisation will work in accordance with the interests of children and young people and follow the policy outlined below.

### 1.12 Overall aims

- Clarifying standards of behaviour for Volunteers and children;
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust ethos in the Unit, built on mutual respect, and shared values;
- Encouraging children and parents to participate;
- Alerting DSLs to the signs and indicators that all might not be well;
- Developing volunteer awareness of the causes of abuse;
- Developing volunteers' awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities children may face;
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage.

## 2.Safeguarding Children & Young People

This section covers a collection of safeguarding measures which have been designed to safeguard children and young people from harm. They are as follows:

### 2.1 Safe Recruitment & Selection

We have a policy and procedure which ensures that all adult leaders and helpers recruited to the organisation are vetted to ensure that all possible steps are taken to keep the children and young people safe in our care. All our adult leaders will have a folder within which there will be recorded their personal details, and from January 2016, any application form, voluntary disclosures, references, record of interview (as at 2.1.2) and role review (as at 2.2.2)

All adult leaders and helpers will:-

#### 2.1.1 ...complete a registration form

This includes: address, evidence of relevant qualifications, the reasons why they want to work with children and young people, paid and voluntary work experience and all criminal convictions.

#### 2.1.2 ...undergo an interview

This may be formal or informal and will involve at least two interviewers. This needs to be evidenced and included in the prospective leaders file

#### 2.1.3 ...provide at least two references

These will be followed up before a post is offered. One reference is from the last employer or an organisation that has knowledge of the applicant's work or volunteering with children or

young people. If the applicant has not worked with children or young people before, then they should confirm this and give an alternative referee.

#### **2.1.4 ...consent to a 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (DBS) check**

This will be at an enhanced level. DBS Disclosure checks should be approved by a section leader and updated every 3 years.

#### **2.1.5 ...are supervised until DBS disclosure**

New leaders/helpers who are awaiting DBS Disclosure will be supervised by a leader who holds an enhanced DBS Disclosure check approved by a section leader.

#### **2.1.6 ...will 'self-disclose'**

New staff and volunteers awaiting a DBS Disclosure will complete a self- disclosure form declaring details of any criminal convictions or convictions pending. This includes any "spent" convictions.

Furthermore the organisation complies with all other safeguarding regulations in that:

2.1.7 ...we understand that a person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with these groups.

2.1.8 ...we understand that an organisation which knowingly recruits someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.

2.1.9 ...we understand that if our Unit dismisses a volunteer because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or would have done so if they had not left, we must tell the Disclosure and Barring Service: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

2.1.10 All members of the Executive Committee involved in recruitment will undertake Flick Learning's "Safer Recruitment" module.

## **2.2 Management & Support of Volunteers**

### **2.2.1 Role Profile**

All leaders are provided with a role profile outlining their main responsibilities including ground rules for appropriate behaviour. This includes a requirement to comply with our Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

### **2.2.2 Role Review**

All prospective leaders complete a role review at the end of their induction period before being confirmed in post. Inductions will be completed within 6 months.

### **2.2.3 Leader Support**

All leaders are given regular support sessions either formally or informally, on the decision of the relevant section leader. (This may include one to one or group support, mentoring or shadowing opportunities).

#### **2.2.4 Safeguarding Training**

All leaders and trustees will attend regular<sup>2</sup> ongoing safeguarding training. All leaders will receive an induction, which includes information on all the Unit's policies and procedures. All leaders will undertake Flick Learning's "Safeguarding – Level 2" module every 2 years

#### **2.2.5 Contravention of Policies**

Where a leader/ helper acts in a way that contravenes the safeguarding policy or ground rules for appropriate behaviour, the section leader will take appropriate action at their discretion which may include any combination of the following :-

- Informal discussion with section leader and advice
- Formal discussion with section leader and advice in presence of another leader
- Formal discussion with section leader and advice in presence of Trustee
- Dismissal from the organisation
- Referral to appropriate authorities (Police, Social Services, etc)

Where it is alleged that a section leader has acted in a way that contravenes the above mentioned policies, then two trustees as appointed by the Chairperson will consider the above options with an additional option being the removal of the leader from the role of 'section leader' but retention as a leader.

Where the individual under investigation wishes to appeal against any decision as made by the section leader or Trustees, then a meeting will be called for all Trustees to consider the appropriate course of action. The burden of proof in such circumstances will be 'upon the balance of probabilities'.

A record of all discussions as described in this section needs to be recorded and retained whilst the leader/ helper is involved in the unit.

### **2.3 Providing Safer Activities and Trips**

#### **2.3.1 Appropriate Training/ Risk Assessments**

All leaders undertaking activities should be suitably trained where necessary. Activities will be risk assessed to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent young people being harmed. These will be available for scrutiny upon request. It is expected that Risk Assessments are dynamic documents and respond to needs as they arise.

#### **2.3.2 Insurance**

Employer's liability and/or public liability insurance has been taken out to ensure that all activities and services and all people taking part, are covered. Third party organisations providing activities will provide suitable insurance where necessary and this will be checked by Unit leaders prior to engaging in such activity.

#### **2.3.3 Planning**

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<sup>2</sup> Safeguarding training – 'regular' deemed as a minimum of once every two years.

All activities being provided are properly planned and organised. Planning ensures that the activities are: age-appropriate, appropriately supervised, take account of staff ratio and use qualified instructors. (ratios – Hydra 1:7 +1 Lynx 1:12 +1 Orion minimum of 4 leaders)<sup>3</sup> These ratios are based on Scout association guidelines, however all activities will be risk assessed and appropriate ratios applied. An additional adult leader will be designated exclusive of ratios to supervise Young Leaders

#### 2.3.4 Taking of Photographs

The organisation has a Photography and Media Policy about taking and using photographs of children and young people and a consent form for the use of photographs and filming.

## 2.4 Transport

We ensure that our transport has:

- Appropriate insurance cover
- Tax MOT
- Appropriate seats (including seatbelts)
- A first aid box
- Drivers hold the correct driving license

## 2.5 Computers

#### 2.5.1 Internet Access

All computers used by children and young people are operated either within a suitably secure wireless network or within the monitoring of a leader.

All children and young people will be guided through an agreement about using the internet. This includes appropriate use of social networking sites.

Children and young people are supervised whilst using the internet and webcams.

#### 2.5.2 CEOP Training

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre training around internet safety is completed by children & young people, staff and volunteers where appropriate.

## 2.6 Code of Conduct

We have a Code of Conduct for appropriate behaviour for children and young people. This is posted on the organisation's web site at [www.scau.co.uk](http://www.scau.co.uk). We also have a 'Ground Rules' document for leaders and helpers regarding safeguarding which can be found in Appendix 1 of this document.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://members.scouts.org.uk/documents/POR%20Updates%20Jan%202012.pdf> recommended ratios for scouts  
Point 3.7f Beavers aged 6-8 1:6+1 point 3.8g Cubs 8-10 1:8+1 3.9f Scouts no recommendation indoors but 1:12+1 off site

## 2.7 Complaints Policy

### 2.7.1 By Parents/Carers

Complaints should be directed in the first instance to any leader present. If this is not deemed appropriate, then the section leader can be contacted either on a Friday evening (or on location if the complaint arises off site on camp or other activity) or via contact details as recorded on the web site, [www.scau.co.uk](http://www.scau.co.uk). If the complaint is either not appropriate to be dealt with by the section leader or is in connection with the section leader, all complaints should be directed to the Chair Person, contact details located on the web site.

### 2.7.2 By Others

Any complaints regarding the conduct of youngsters, leaders or anyone connected to SCAU or in relation to any operating procedure of SCAU should be addressed directly to the Chair Person of the Executive – contact details located on the web site.

## 3 Child Protection

### 3.1 Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families.

**IN ALL CASES IT IS VITAL TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD THE CHILD OR CHILDREN CONCERNED**

If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via their powers to use police protection.

### 3.2 Recognition of Abuse or Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

#### 3.2.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

#### 3.2.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child though it may occur alone.

### 3.2.3 Sexual Abuse

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

### 3.2.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### 3.2.5 Differing origins of abuse.

Individuals within the organisation need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources including abuse by members of the organisation.

The organisation should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children and where there are concerns about a child's welfare. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

## 3.3 When to discuss your concerns with parents/carers

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. In general, seek to discuss your concerns with the child, as appropriate to their age and understanding and with the parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to children's social care. However, you **MUST NOT** discuss your concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- where sexual abuse or sexual exploitation is suspected
- where organised or multiple abuse is suspected

- where Fabricated or Induced Illness is suspected
- where Female Genital Mutilation is the concern
- in cases of suspect Forced Marriage
- where contacting parents/carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk

These decisions should not be taken in isolation. Consult with the designated safeguarding lead or where they are not contactable, the deputy safeguarding lead.

### 3.4 What to do if children talk to you about abuse or neglect

It is recognised that a child may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when you are present. In these situations YOU MUST:

- Listen carefully to the child. DO NOT directly question the child
- Give the child time and attention.
- Allow the child to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality.
- Reassure the child that:
  - they have done the right thing in telling you;
  - they have not done anything wrong;
- Tell the child what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.

**DO NOT** ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.

### 3.5 What to do if you have a child protection concern or are worried about a child.

#### 3.5.1 Cause for concern?

Because of your observations or information received you may become concerned about a child who has not spoken to you. The next step will be very much according to the circumstances, and will be down to the individual involved. It may be appropriate to ask the child how they came by a bruise or cut (avoid using closed questioning or asking who caused the injury) or to enquire why the child is upset or down. This area is addressed in more detail in the Safeguarding training but such questions can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse.



#### **3.6.4 Risk from person not known to child**

If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from someone not known to the child or child's family, you should make a telephone referral directly to the Police and consult with the parents.

#### **3.6.5 Risk from adult in position of trust**

If your concern is about harm or risk of harm from an adult in a position of trust, see Section 3.8: Allegations against Adults Who Work with Children.

#### **3.6.6 Information required when making a referral**

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral.

- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child/family e.g.: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for the concern.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with Parental Responsibility has been given to the referral being made.

### **3.7 Action to be taken following the referral**

- Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time.
- Accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

### **3.8 Allegations against adults who work with children**

#### **3.8.1 Against adults who work with children within SCAU**

If you have information which suggests an adult who works with children within SCAU has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

....you should speak immediately with your section Leader, safeguarding officer, deputy safeguarding officer or Chair Person (whoever is most appropriate). The relevant leader will consult with/make a referral to the Integrated Assessment Team, EDT or Police, whichever is deemed appropriate. If in doubt, a referral should be made.

### **3.8.2 Against leaders working within another organisation**

Where you are aware that a member of staff/volunteer against whom an allegation has been made, works with children/young people for another organisation, you must inform a manager in that organisation of your concerns and actions and also make an appropriate referral to the Integrated Assessment Team/ EDT or police.

## **3.9 Confidentiality**

The organisation should ensure that any records made in relation to a referral should be kept confidential and in a secure place. Information in relation to child protection concerns should be shared on a "need to know" basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child's need for protection.

## Appendix 1: Ground Rules: Sutton Coldfield Adventure Unit

### Dealing with disclosures

#### Do:

- Stay Calm
- Listen
- Reassure
- Explain what you are doing to do
- Record accurately
- Seek support for yourself

#### Don't

- Panic
- Promise to keep secrets
- Ask leading questions
- Make the child repeat the report
- Start to investigate
- Do nothing

#### Always

Put the welfare of the child first

- Treat all young people equally with respect and dignity
- Maintain appropriate distance with young people
- Keep a written record of any inappropriate body contact with a child
- Report without delay any accusations made against you or your colleagues

#### Never

- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use foul, sexualised or discriminatory language unchallenged
- Make sexualised suggestive comments to children even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon
- Undertake personal care of children
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home
- Share mobile phone details with children - yours or theirs - unless agreed with parents
- Send text messages to children unless agreed with parents and parents included in on text<sup>4</sup>
- Take photographs/videos of children for personal use in line with SCAU Child Protection policy

#### Best practice in recording and record keeping - Why?

- Not relying on memory
- Good communication
- Evidence
- School procedures
- Professional duty/accountability - it is your protection under your "duty to care"

#### Best practice in recording and record keeping – When?

- As soon as possible
- Note date and time

## **Social Networking**

Individuals who work with children and young people should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries<sup>5</sup> and not attempt to establish any relationship which might include/result in:

- Communication of a personal nature
- Inappropriate dialogue through the internet
- The sending of emails or text messages of an inappropriate nature

## **Being alone with Adventurers**

- Ensure that adults/children are close by
- Leave door open/adult can sit in view
- Avoid taking children on their own in your car

**DO NOT RELY ON YOUR GOOD NAME TO PROTECT YOU**

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<sup>4</sup> Where children from Orion are involved, text messages relating to activities may be necessary. Parents will be advised of this in membership forms.

<sup>5</sup> This relates to children known by the adult, solely due to their membership of SCAU. Having a son/daughter's friend on their Facebook account who happens to be a member of SCAU is not subject of this document.