



SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

**LAST REVIEWED
AUGUST 2024**

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Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding Policy

At Schools Out, safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people in our care is our paramount concern. We are committed to creating a secure, caring, and stimulating environment where every child feels safe, valued, and able to learn and grow. This policy sets out the framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children who attend our camps and outlines the responsibilities of all staff, volunteers, and partners in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of those in our care.

We recognize that safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm but involves a wide range of responsibilities, including ensuring that children feel supported and are encouraged to develop their full potential in a safe and positive environment. Our approach to safeguarding is proactive, aiming to prevent harm before it occurs and to identify and address concerns promptly and effectively.

This policy applies to all staff members, volunteers, and any individuals or organizations working with or on behalf of Schools Out. It is essential that all adults working with children understand their responsibilities in safeguarding and act in the best interests of the children at all times.

Policy Objectives

The key objectives of this Safeguarding Policy are:

1. **To protect children from harm and abuse:** Ensuring that all children in our care are safe from all forms of abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect.
2. **To create a safe and nurturing environment:** Providing an environment that promotes the health, development, and welfare of children and young people.
3. **To establish clear safeguarding procedures:** Setting out clear procedures for identifying, reporting, and responding to safeguarding concerns, ensuring consistency and accountability across the organization.
4. **To promote a culture of vigilance and responsibility:** Encouraging all staff, volunteers, and partners to be vigilant in identifying signs of abuse or harm and to take responsibility for safeguarding the children in their care.
5. **To comply with legal and regulatory requirements:** Ensuring that our safeguarding practices meet the requirements of relevant legislation, including the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance, and other applicable laws and regulations.

6. **To provide ongoing training and development:** Offering regular training and development opportunities for all staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to safeguard children effectively.
 7. **To foster a partnership with parents, guardians, and external agencies:** Working collaboratively with parents, guardians, and external agencies to safeguard children and ensure that they receive the support and protection they need.
 8. **To continuously review and improve safeguarding practices:** Regularly reviewing and updating our safeguarding policies, procedures, and practices to reflect best practices and respond to emerging issues and challenges.
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Introduction

Safeguarding is a fundamental responsibility that underpins all aspects of our work at Schools Out. It involves taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimized and that where there are concerns about a child's welfare, appropriate action is taken to address those concerns.

Scope of the Policy:

This Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document applies to:

- All children and young people attending Schools Out programs.
- All staff members, including permanent, temporary, and part-time employees.
- Volunteers, interns, and individuals undertaking work experience.
- Contractors, partners, and any third parties working with or on behalf of Schools Out.
- Parents, guardians, and visitors to the camp premises.

Key Principles:

- **Child-Centered Approach:** The safety and wellbeing of children are the primary considerations in all actions and decisions related to safeguarding.
- **Zero Tolerance:** We have a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of abuse or harm directed at children.
- **Respect and Dignity:** All children, regardless of their background, race, religion, gender, or abilities, are treated with respect and dignity.
- **Confidentiality:** Information related to safeguarding concerns is handled with the utmost confidentiality and is only shared on a need-to-know basis to protect the child's welfare.
- **Collaboration:** Safeguarding is a shared responsibility, and we work in partnership with parents, guardians, and external agencies to protect children.

Legal Framework:

- This policy is informed by the following key pieces of legislation and guidance:

- **Children Act 1989 and 2004:** Establishes the framework for the protection of children in the UK and places a duty on organizations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
 - **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018):** Provides guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
 - **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023:** Sets out the statutory duties for schools and educational institutions to safeguard and protect children.
 - **The Equality Act 2010:** Prohibits discrimination, harassment, and victimization and promotes equality of opportunity.
 - **The Prevent Duty (2015):** Requires organizations to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
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Governance and Accountability

Governance Structure:

The safeguarding governance structure at Schools Out ensures that safeguarding responsibilities are clearly defined and that there is a robust system in place for monitoring and evaluating safeguarding practices.

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** The DSL holds overall responsibility for safeguarding within the organization. The DSL is a senior member of staff with the authority to take action on safeguarding concerns and ensure that safeguarding procedures are effectively implemented. The DSL is also responsible for liaising with external agencies and ensuring compliance with safeguarding legislation.
- **Deputy Safeguarding Leads (if applicable):** Deputy DSLs support the DSL in their role and are trained to take over safeguarding responsibilities in the absence of the DSL.
- **Safeguarding Committee:** The Safeguarding Committee is composed of senior leaders, the DSL, and key staff members. The committee meets regularly to review safeguarding practices, address emerging issues, and ensure continuous improvement in safeguarding across the organization.
- **Leadership Team:** The leadership team, including the Head of Camps and senior managers, is responsible for promoting a safeguarding culture within the organization and ensuring that all staff members are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- **Policy Implementation:** Ensures that the Safeguarding Policy is implemented consistently across all areas of the organization.

- **Training:** Coordinates safeguarding training for all staff members and volunteers, ensuring that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to safeguard children effectively.
- **Liaison with External Agencies:** Acts as the primary point of contact for external agencies, including local authorities, law enforcement, and safeguarding boards, and coordinates responses to safeguarding concerns.
- **Record Keeping:** Maintains accurate and up-to-date records of all safeguarding concerns, incidents, and actions taken. Ensures that records are stored securely and in compliance with data protection regulations.
- **Monitoring and Review:** Regularly monitors and reviews safeguarding practices within the organization and makes recommendations for improvement to the Safeguarding Committee.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- **Support:** Assist the DSL in carrying out their duties, including responding to safeguarding concerns and providing guidance to staff members.
- **Training:** Ensure that they are fully trained and able to step into the DSL role when necessary.

Safeguarding Committee:

- **Review and Oversight:** Provides oversight of safeguarding practices within the organization and ensures that safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly.
- **Risk Management:** Identifies and addresses any safeguarding risks or challenges that arise within the organization.
- **Support to DSL:** Provides support and guidance to the DSL and other staff members on safeguarding matters.

Leadership Team:

- **Safeguarding Culture:** Promotes a culture of safeguarding within the organization and ensures that all staff members are aware of their responsibilities.
- **Resource Allocation:** Ensures that sufficient resources are allocated to safeguarding, including training, staffing, and facilities.
- **Compliance:** Ensures that the organization complies with all relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance.

All Staff Members:

- **Vigilance:** Remain vigilant in identifying and responding to signs of abuse or harm.
- **Reporting:** Follow the established procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns and ensure that concerns are reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL without delay.
- **Professional Conduct:** Adhere to the organization's code of conduct and model positive behavior in their interactions with children.

Safeguarding Operational Procedures

Our safeguarding operational procedures provide clear guidelines for staff to follow in the event of a safeguarding concern. These procedures are designed to ensure that concerns are addressed promptly, consistently, and effectively.

1. Reporting and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns:

Identifying Concerns:

- **Observation:** Staff members should be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or harm. This includes physical injuries, changes in behavior, unexplained absences, and comments made by the child.
- **Listening:** Staff should listen carefully to children and take seriously any disclosures of abuse or harm. It is important to remain calm, supportive, and non-judgmental during these conversations.

Immediate Action:

- **Ensure Safety:** If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, staff must take immediate action to protect the child. This may include contacting emergency services or removing the child from the source of harm.
- **Seek Medical Attention:** If a child requires medical attention, staff should ensure that they receive the necessary care as quickly as possible.

Reporting Procedures:

- **Internal Reporting:** All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL as soon as possible. Staff should document the concern, including any relevant details, and submit the report to the DSL.
- **Documentation:** The report should include the child's name, the nature of the concern, any observations or disclosures made by the child, and the actions taken by the staff member. The report should be factual and objective, avoiding assumptions or personal opinions.

Confidentiality:

- **Confidential Handling:** Safeguarding information should be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis to protect the child's welfare.
- **Data Protection:** All safeguarding records must be stored securely and in compliance with data protection regulations. Access to records is restricted to authorized personnel only.

Investigation Process:

- **Initial Assessment:** The DSL will conduct an initial assessment of the safeguarding concern, gathering additional information if necessary. The assessment will determine the level of risk and the appropriate course of action.
- **External Referral:** If the DSL determines that the child is at significant risk, they will make a referral to external agencies, such as children's social services or the police. The referral will include all relevant information and documentation.
- **Internal Action:** If the concern does not meet the threshold for external referral, the DSL will determine the appropriate internal action. This may include providing additional support to the child, monitoring the situation, or conducting further inquiries.

Support for the Child:

- **Emotional Support:** The child should be provided with appropriate emotional support throughout the investigation process. This may include counseling, access to a trusted adult, or referral to external support services.
- **Safety Planning:** If necessary, the DSL will develop a safety plan to protect the child from further harm. The safety plan will be tailored to the child's needs and may include additional supervision, changes to the child's environment, or adjustments to their participation in activities.

Support for Staff:

- **Guidance:** Staff members involved in safeguarding concerns will be provided with guidance and support from the DSL. This may include debriefing sessions, access to counseling services, and advice on how to manage the impact of the situation.
- **Training:** Staff will receive ongoing training on safeguarding procedures to ensure they are confident in identifying and responding to concerns.

Communication with Parents/Guardians:

- **Informed Consent:** Where appropriate, parents or guardians will be informed of the safeguarding concern and the actions taken by the organization. The DSL will ensure that communication is handled sensitively and that the child's welfare remains the primary consideration.
- **Collaboration:** Parents and guardians will be encouraged to work collaboratively with the organization to address the safeguarding concern and to support the child's wellbeing.

2. Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Principles of Confidentiality:

- **Need-to-Know Basis:** Safeguarding information is shared on a need-to-know basis only. This means that information is only shared with individuals who require it to protect the child's welfare or to manage the situation effectively.
- **Respect for Privacy:** The privacy of the child and their family is respected at all times. Information is handled with sensitivity and care, ensuring that the child's dignity is preserved.
- **Legal Compliance:** All information sharing is conducted in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, including data protection laws.

Information Sharing Protocols:

- **Internal Information Sharing:** Within the organization, information is shared between the DSL, Deputy DSLs, and relevant staff members as necessary to manage the safeguarding concern. Information is shared in a secure and confidential manner.
- **External Information Sharing:** When sharing information with external agencies, such as children's social services or the police, the DSL ensures that information is accurate, relevant, and provided in a timely manner. The DSL follows established protocols for information sharing, including obtaining consent where appropriate.

Record Keeping:

- **Accurate Records:** All safeguarding concerns, actions taken, and outcomes are documented accurately and comprehensively. Records include details of the concern, the actions taken by the organization, any communication with external agencies, and the outcome of the investigation.
- **Secure Storage:** Safeguarding records are stored securely, with access restricted to authorized personnel only. Records are retained in compliance with data protection regulations and organizational policies.
- **Monitoring and Review:** Safeguarding records are regularly reviewed by the DSL to identify trends, assess the effectiveness of interventions, and inform future safeguarding practices.

Safer Systems

1. Safer Recruitment:

Vetting and Screening:

- **Enhanced DBS Checks:** All prospective staff and volunteers undergo enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as part of the recruitment process. This

ensures that individuals with a history of abuse or harm are not permitted to work with children.

- **Reference Checks:** References are obtained from previous employers or organizations where the candidate has worked with children. These references are verified to ensure the candidate's suitability for the role.
- **Qualification Verification:** Candidates are required to provide evidence of their qualifications and experience. This includes verification of professional licenses, certifications, and training relevant to the role.

Interview Process:

- **Safeguarding Focus:** Safeguarding is a key focus of all recruitment interviews. Candidates are assessed on their understanding of safeguarding issues, their ability to recognize signs of abuse or harm, and their commitment to promoting a safe environment for children.
- **Behavioral Questions:** Interview questions are designed to assess the candidate's behavior and decision-making in safeguarding situations. Candidates are asked to provide examples of how they have handled safeguarding concerns in the past or how they would respond to hypothetical scenarios.

Safer Recruitment Policy:

- **Policy Overview:** The Safer Recruitment Policy outlines the organization's commitment to ensuring that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children. The policy includes detailed procedures for vetting, screening, interviewing, and selecting candidates.
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** The organization conducts ongoing monitoring of staff and volunteers to ensure that they continue to meet the standards required for working with children. This includes regular DBS rechecks, performance reviews, and safeguarding assessments.

2. Safer Environment:

Risk Assessments:

- **Comprehensive Assessments:** Regular risk assessments are conducted to identify and mitigate potential hazards in the physical environment. This includes assessments of camp facilities, equipment, activities, and outings.
- **Risk Management Plans:** Based on the findings of the risk assessments, risk management plans are developed to address identified hazards. These plans include specific measures to reduce or eliminate risks and to ensure the safety of children and staff.

Supervision and Ratios:

- **Staff-to-Child Ratios:** The organization adheres to recommended staff-to-child ratios to ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times. Ratios are determined based on the age, needs, and activities of the children.
- **Active Supervision:** Staff members are responsible for actively supervising children during all activities. This includes maintaining visual contact, being aware of the children's whereabouts, and intervening promptly if any safety concerns arise.

Health and Safety Procedures:

- **First Aid:** All staff members receive training in first aid and are equipped to respond to medical emergencies. First aid kits are readily available at all camp locations, and staff are trained in their use.
- **Emergency Procedures:** Emergency procedures, including fire drills, evacuation plans, and lockdown protocols, are regularly reviewed and practiced to ensure that staff and children are prepared for emergencies.
- **Safe Facilities:** Camp facilities are maintained to a high standard of safety and cleanliness. Regular inspections are conducted to ensure that facilities meet health and safety requirements.

3. Safer Communication:

Communication Guidelines:

- **Appropriate Interactions:** Clear guidelines are established for interactions between staff and children. This includes the appropriate use of language, tone, and physical contact. Staff are trained to communicate in a manner that is respectful, supportive, and professional.
- **Boundaries:** Staff are required to maintain appropriate boundaries in their interactions with children. This includes avoiding favoritism, maintaining a professional distance, and refraining from sharing personal information.

Digital Safety:

- **E-Safety Policy:** The organization has an E-Safety Policy in place to protect children from online risks, including cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, and online grooming. The policy includes guidelines for the use of digital devices, internet access, and social media.
- **Monitoring and Filtering:** Internet access provided at the camp is monitored and filtered to block access to harmful content. Staff are trained to recognize signs of online exploitation and to intervene if necessary.
- **Parental Controls:** Parents are provided with guidance on how to implement parental controls and monitor their children's online activities at home. The organization encourages parents to take an active role in their children's digital safety.

Parental Involvement:

- **Regular Communication:** The organization maintains regular communication with parents and guardians, providing updates on their child's participation in activities, any incidents or concerns, and general safeguarding practices.
- **Parent Workshops:** Workshops and information sessions are offered to parents on topics related to safeguarding, including online safety, recognizing signs of abuse, and promoting healthy development.
- **Feedback and Collaboration:** Parents are encouraged to provide feedback on the organization's safeguarding practices and to collaborate with staff in addressing any concerns related to their child's welfare.

4. Safer Workforce:

Ongoing Training and Development:

- **Safeguarding Training:** All staff members receive regular safeguarding training to ensure they are knowledgeable about current best practices and legislative requirements. Training covers topics such as recognizing signs of abuse, reporting procedures, and responding to disclosures.
- **Specialized Training:** Staff in specific roles, such as the DSL and Deputy DSLs, receive specialized training in areas such as child protection, online safety, and managing complex safeguarding cases.
- **Professional Development:** Staff are encouraged to pursue professional development opportunities in safeguarding and related fields. This may include attending workshops, conferences, or courses on topics such as mental health, trauma-informed care, and diversity and inclusion.

Code of Conduct:

- **Behavioral Standards:** The organization has a strict code of conduct in place that outlines the behavioral standards expected of all staff members. The code of conduct includes guidelines for interactions with children, professional boundaries, and ethical decision-making.
- **Accountability:** Staff are held accountable for adhering to the code of conduct. Any breaches of the code are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Staff Wellbeing:

- **Support Services:** The organization provides access to support services for staff members, including counseling, mental health resources, and employee assistance programs. This ensures that staff are supported in managing the demands of their roles and maintaining their wellbeing.

- **Work-Life Balance:** The organization promotes a healthy work-life balance for staff members, recognizing that this is essential for maintaining their effectiveness in safeguarding children.
- **Wellbeing Initiatives:** Regular wellbeing initiatives, such as stress management workshops and team-building activities, are offered to support staff in maintaining their mental and physical health.

5. Safer Data:

Data Security:

- **Secure Storage:** Safeguarding records and personal information are stored securely, with access restricted to authorized personnel only. This includes the use of encrypted digital systems and secure physical storage.
- **Data Protection Compliance:** The organization complies with all relevant data protection laws, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Staff receive training on data protection principles and are required to adhere to data protection policies.
- **Data Breach Protocols:** In the event of a data breach, the organization has protocols in place to respond quickly and effectively. This includes notifying the relevant authorities, informing affected individuals, and taking steps to mitigate the impact of the breach.

Information Sharing:

- **Protocols for Information Sharing:** The organization follows established protocols for sharing information, both internally and with external agencies. Information is shared on a need-to-know basis, and the child's welfare is always the primary consideration.
- **Consent and Confidentiality:** Where appropriate, consent is obtained from the child or their guardian before sharing information. Confidentiality is maintained to the fullest extent possible, and information is shared in a manner that protects the child's privacy and dignity.

Record Keeping:

- **Detailed Records:** The organization maintains detailed records of all safeguarding concerns, actions taken, and outcomes. Records are regularly reviewed to identify patterns, assess the effectiveness of interventions, and inform future safeguarding practices.
 - **Retention and Disposal:** Safeguarding records are retained in accordance with legal requirements and organizational policies. When records are no longer needed, they are disposed of securely and in compliance with data protection regulations.
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Appendix 1: Key Safeguarding Contacts

This appendix includes a comprehensive list of key safeguarding contacts within the organization and external agencies that may be involved in safeguarding concerns:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Name: Jacob Browne
- Contact Information: 07702380087
- Email: jacob@schoolsout-holidaycamps.com

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

- Contact Information: 0300 123 1650
- Email: LADO@surreycc.gov.uk

Children's Social Services:

- **Contact Information:**
 - **North East Area:** 0300 123 1610 (Fairmount House, Bull Hill, Leatherhead, KT22 7AH)
 - **North West Area:** 0300 123 1630 (Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, GU22 7QQ)
 - **South East Area:** 0300 123 1620 (Consort House, 5-7 Queensway, Redhill, RH1 1YB)
 - **South West Area:** 0300 123 1640 (St Francis Centre, Southway, Guildford, GU2 8WZ)
 - **Adoption & Permanency Team/Complex Needs Team:** 0300 200 1006

Local Police (Non-Emergency):

- **Contact Information:** 101

NSPCC Helpline:

- **Contact Information:** 0808 800 5000

Childline:

- **Contact Information:** 0800 1111
- **Website:** www.childline.org.uk

Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB):

- **Contact Information:** Managed through the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership. For general advice and training, contact the Education Safeguarding Advisor at 01483 518158.

Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

- **Contact Information:**
 - **Phone:** 0300 470 9100 (Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm)
 - **Out of Hours Phone:** 01483 517898 (Emergency Duty Team)
 - **Email:** mash@surreycc.gov.uk
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Signatures

The following signatures confirm the approval and implementation of this policy:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Name: Jacob Browne

Signature: J.Browne

Date: 25 August 2024

Head of Camps/Management:

Name: Jacob Browne

Signature: J.Browne

Date: 25 August 2024