

**Making
Life Great
Outdoors™**



Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Empowerment

Protection

Prevention

Proportionality

Partnership

Accountability

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Adventure Therapy exists to improve the emotional and physical wellbeing of children, young people and adults with unique health conditions, impairments or limitations through outdoor and adventure-led activities.



Registered Charity Number 1173646

Safeguarding Children Policy

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, volunteers, carers and service users and includes anyone who is working on behalf of the registered charity, Adventure Therapy.

The definition of a child or young person for the purposes of this policy is an individual below the age of 18 years. Those who have attained the age of 18 years should refer to our Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children and young people who receive services from Adventure Therapy. This includes the children of adults who use our services and the siblings of children using our services if they are below the age of 18 years.
- To provide staff, trustees and volunteers with overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Adventure Therapy believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children. Namely:

- Children Act 1989 (revised 2004)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998

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- Protection of Freedoms Acts 2012
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice, 0—25 years. Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities (HM Government 2014).
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government 2015, revised 2018).
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government 2015, revised 2018).
- Safeguarding Children and Young People (HM Government, Charity Commission for England and Wales 2017, revised 2019).

We recognise that:

- The welfare of a child is paramount as enshrined in the Children's Act 1989.
- All children should be treated equally, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other organisations is essential to promoting young peoples welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Ensuring a designated member of the board acts as a Designated Safeguarding Trustee for children and young people and a Deputy Safeguarding Officer is appointed in their absence.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff, trustees and volunteers.

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- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring that all necessary checks are completed.
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with organisations and agencies who need to know and involving children, young people, families and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff or volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- Ensuring that we have an effective complaints and whistleblowing policy in place.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- It is important to recognise that in providing its services Adventure Therapy utilises external providers which include activity instructors, outdoor guides and activity centres. We expect any provider of services to Adventure Therapy to have robust policies and procedures in place to protect children and we will request a copy of these documents for our records. As part of our association with external companies and providers who will be supporting children on referral from Adventure Therapy, we will always provide a copy of our Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and we would expect the content of this to be adhered to, without exception. Any company or person found to be in breach of our Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures will have any agreement with Adventure Therapy terminated in addition to the relevant authorities being informed, if applicable.

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Safeguarding Children Procedures

Adventure Therapy acknowledges that the children and young people who may benefit from its services, including those who are disabled, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and accepts a responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

Adventure Therapy does not tolerate any form of child abuse and such behaviour will result in the Adventure Therapy Child Protection Policy and Procedures being implemented. This will include disciplinary action and if upheld, dismissal of any employees, trustees or volunteers and the matter being referred to the Police.

Should Adventure Therapy become aware of past or current convictions or upheld disciplinarys for gross misconduct that suggest there may be a risk to children, these will be considered in accordance with relevant legislation and alongside the requirements of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Responsibilities

Whatever your concern - whether you have been told something by a child or by another person or whether you have seen or heard something that has made you uncomfortable or whether you have become aware of a breach of policy you must share it.

It does not matter how you have become aware or how a child has come into contact with Adventure Therapy.

If you have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a child you must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee. You can be confident that you will not suffer any personal detriment through sharing your concerns.

If you have any online safeguarding concerns, whether related to online grooming or child abuse images these must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee immediately.

Recognising the types of abuse

- Physical Abuse is deliberately hurting a child and causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.
- Emotional Abuse is the emotional maltreatment or neglect of a child. It is sometimes referred to as psychological abuse and it can cause children serious harm. It could lead to a child thinking that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may include an expectation that a child is able to do more than their stage of development would allow. This could include expecting a baby to feed themselves, to be toilet

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trained or not to cry, as well as being over protective and preventing children from having opportunities to explore or participate in normal social interaction.

It might also include a child seeing or hearing domestic abuse or being subjected to or witnessing bullying (including cyber bullying). This can cause a child to feel frightened or in danger. Whilst it might exist alone, emotional abuse is a factor in all forms of abuse.

- Neglect of a child is the ongoing failure to meet their basic needs. It is dangerous and children can suffer harm over the longer term. Neglect can also occur during pregnancy because of maternal alcohol or drug misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter; lack of supervision, access to medical care or keeping the child safe from danger. It could also include unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.
- Sexual Abuse is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This does not have to be physical contact, but could involve children being subjected to or being the subject of, sexual images. It could include encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. It is important to note that sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult men and women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- Grooming is defined as developing the trust of an individual or his or her family for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Grooming can happen in person and online.
- Online Abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, whether it is through social networking or playing games online. Sexual abuse can happen online, too.

Some adults will try to groom children over a period of time while others may act opportunistically. It is therefore up to all who work at or volunteer for Adventure Therapy to create a safeguarding culture and a safe environment where the potential for abuse is minimised and prevented.

We want to ensure that anyone working with children has sufficient knowledge and confidence to report any concerns that they might have for a child or about the behaviour of an adult or other young person, towards a child, through an understanding of this policy and if appropriate, related training.

What should I do if I am concerned about the welfare of a child?

Types of Concern

You might have a justifiable concern for the welfare of a child for a number of reasons. For example: you may have

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observed an injury or witnessed an interaction between a child or children and an adult. You may be concerned about bullying or inappropriate use of mobile phones or know of someone who has been, or is, accessing or sharing inappropriate images. A child could exhibit inappropriate sexualised behaviour or awareness or look neglected or withdrawn in their behaviour. A child may make a disclosure to you that they or someone they know is being abused.

If a child says they want to tell you a secret or they disclose information that may suggest they are at risk of or have been abused it is important that you tell them that you are unable to keep secrets and that, depending upon what they tell you, you may have to tell someone else in order to keep them safe. In the majority of cases the child will disclose to you anyway as they will have already prepared themselves to make a disclosure.

It is important that you remain calm and do not show surprise or disbelief. Listen carefully to what is being said and do not ask for detailed information, probing or leading questions. Tell them that you take what they are saying seriously and what you are going to do next: that you will only tell people who you think need to know. Let them know that when you have spoken to someone, they will be told what is going to happen next.

If you feel that the child is in immediate danger you must contact the police (dial 999) and once you have done that, refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible.

You must not ignore a concern and do nothing. As a charity, we do not expect you to make a decision of what is significant or whether abuse has occurred. However, you are expected to share information with the people or agencies who are able to make those decisions. Contact the Designated Safeguarding Trustee immediately and share your concerns with them. They will be able to advise you on the next step. If you are unable to contact the Designated Safeguarding Trustee you should contact the Deputy Safeguarding Officer. In their absence, contact the Independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Never delay in taking whatever course of action is necessary to safeguard a child.

Once you have shared your concern, the Designated Safeguarding Trustee, Deputy Safeguarding Officer or Independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will decide what the most appropriate course of action should be and they will then be responsible for taking this forward.

Dependent on the seriousness of the concern, a potential outcome might be a referral to a statutory agency such as the Police, Children's Services, the NSPCC or to the child's school or parent who will know the child better. The information you hold may be important in building a bigger picture and in helping to safeguard the child.

In certain circumstances children may present with injuries or behaviours which in isolation might not seem significant. It is advisable however, to maintain a record of when children present with unexplained injuries or

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behaviour as, over a period of time, a picture may emerge that raises concern and this should be dealt with by following these policies and procedures.

If the parent is not aware of the disclosure or they are the alleged abuser, where possible it is better to wait for guidance from the Police or Children's Services as to how much information can be shared. Where the parent can be informed it is likely to be distressing for them so you will need to think about who is best placed to do this.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee or Deputy Safeguarding Officer must be kept informed and advice sought before saying anything as this situation would need to be handled sensitively.

It should not affect your decision to report concerns, but please be aware that, dependent on the seriousness of your concern, it may not be possible to maintain your anonymity. This will be discussed with you and you will be offered support throughout. Social workers will always consider how to protect the person reporting the concern but ultimately such decisions must be made in the best interests of the child and in any event, it is always possible that the alleged perpetrator may guess who made the referral.

Should the child be in immediate danger or require medical attention, dial 999 and ask for the appropriate emergency service. Once you have ensured the child is safe, inform the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or Deputy Safeguarding Officer immediately.

It is very important that you keep a clear record of what has happened. A written account of events may be required in the future. Adventure Therapy will provide a form to record this information and you should ensure it is completed accurately, is factual and written as close to the event as possible.

Safeguarding Children Online

If you have any safeguarding concerns on the internet, whether related to online grooming or child abuse images, these must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or Deputy Safeguarding Officer immediately. They are in a position to be responsible for taking the necessary action to refer and alert the appropriate agencies. Regardless of how you have become aware of online child abuse images, be it via your personal or work e-mail account, you must refer it in accordance with this policy as the referral policy will ensure that agencies such as the Internet Watch Foundation are able to remove child abuse images from the internet.

Photography

Adventure Therapy may find it useful to be able to use the image of a child or children in the promotion of our services and activities. This may include marketing literature, on our website, social networking or additional

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promotional materials. We will always request permission and signed authorisation from parents or guardians should we wish to do this.

Useful Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Trustee

Geoff Hills
Adventure Therapy
5 Seaview Estate
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Telephone 01271 865285 e-mail geoff.hills@adventuretherapy.org.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Rob Emery
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