



Yorda Adventures Child Protection Procedures

The management committee and staff of Yorda Adventures recognise our contribution to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff members including volunteers have a full and active part to play in protecting our service users from harm.

All staff and management team believe that our services should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child.

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child's development in ways that will foster security confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both paid and unpaid staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff
- To develop a structured procedure within Yorda Adventures, which will be followed by all members of staff in cases of suspected abuse
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies especially the police and social services.
- To ensure all adults within our setting who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability.

Our procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with LS and ACPC procedures detailed in the London Child Protection Procedures July 2005.

We will ensure that

- We have a designated member of staff who undertakes regular training
- We have a member of staff who will act in the designated member of staff's absence
- All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse
- All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses abuse
- All parents/carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures

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Our procedures will be regularly reviews and updated.

All new members of staff will be given a copy of our child protection policy as part of their induction.

The designated member of staff is responsible for:

- Adhering to the LCPP procedures about possible abuse.
- Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from other records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record keeping is marked on the general records.
- Ensuring that any young person currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to social services.

Supporting Children

We recognise that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child may feel self blame.

We recognise that our service may provide stability in the lives of children who have been abused of who are at risk of harm.

We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

We know that children with disabilities are the most likely to suffer abuse and least likely to be able to report it. We undertake to be vigilant in looking for signs or indications of abuse.

Yorda Adventures will support all children by:

- Encouraging self esteem and self assertiveness whilst not condoning aggression or bullying
- Promoting a caring safe and positive environment
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children.
- Notifying Social services as soon as there is a significant concern

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The designated member of staff will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

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All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working at Yorda Adventures who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the designated member of staff and to seek further support as appropriate.

Allegations Against Staff

We understand that a child may make an allegation against a member of staff.

If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Play Leader.

The Play Leader on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LEA lead officer for child protection.

If the allegation is made about the Play Leader the member of staff must contact one of the management committee.

Staff will have access to the grievance and complaints policy which outlines what happens if an allegation is made.

Whistle-blowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns where they exist about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

Physical Intervention

Our policy on physical intervention by staff is set out in our Managing Challenging behaviour – Restraint & Violence Against Staff policy and acknowledges that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

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Touch Cues and other Physical Contact

Escorting

We use escorting to help our children and young people transition from A to B. Where possible we encourage independence skills where children will transition without the need for escorting. We use escorting, which is linking arms with the children and young people, in busy areas, near roads and where necessary out and about in the community. We escort purely to keep the young people we are working with from harm as very few of them have a sense of danger.

Touch Cues

In order to widen communication for children and young people, we may use touch prompts. This may involve touching feet as a prompt to put on shoes and socks or doing hand over hand work in art or eating to teach motor function. Each child/young person has individual touch cues appropriate to their needs, which are stated in their Child Profile.

Massage Techniques

Often with the children and young people we work with, deep pressure and massage are key ways to calm and relax. We use foot rubs, foot soaks, deep pressure on the shoulders and back and exercises using gym balls.

Child Profiles

Each child or young person has a Child Profile. This profile states what behaviours the child may demonstrate and shows ways to calm and distract without using touch. The profile states what challenging behaviour the child may demonstrate and ways to deal with the behaviour. The profile also has a touch cue section which shows the touch cues we may use with that individual child or young person.

All parents are given a copy of the child/young person's profile and are very welcome to make any changes necessary. All staff are made aware of child profiles and follow the guidelines stated in the child profiles. Child profiles are reviewed annually.

Bullying

Our stance on bullying is set out in our Equal Opportunities Policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Racist Incidents

See above.

Prevention

We recognise that Yorda Adventures plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

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Yorda Adventures will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty

Health & Safety and Personal Care

Our health & safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children at all times.

Please see also the child protection procedure, set out below.

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Staff Procedure

Child Abuse is put into four categories:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Sexual

Unfortunately children and young people with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse than their non-disabled peers.

Child protection and the procedures at the Yorda Adventures are the responsibility of every play worker and member of staff.

We have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with at all times. If you are worried about anything that you feel might fall into one of the above categories please inform a leader straight away.

For further information refer to the child protection policy above and the flow chart from the Department of Health included in your induction packs.

Skills that everyone must learn that assist the child protection procedure are:

- Observation - look out for changes in the children's behaviour or unusual marks on their bodies.
- Listening - to what the child may be telling you.
- Reporting - inform your play leader about the things that are concerning you. (e.g if there is a mark on the child's body ask the leader to witness).
- Recording – record the date, time and facts about the evidence possibly using body map drawings. This may have legal implications at a later date.
- Professional conduct requires that you keep the information to yourself on a need to know basis.

If a child reports a sign of child abuse to you this is known as a disclosure. Whether it is partial or a full disclosure it important that you:

- Make the child aware you can not keep the information secret
- Don't jump to conclusions about what the child is telling you
- Ask open ended questions – don't suggest ideas
- Reassure the child they are doing the right thing by talking to someone
- Remain patient. Silence in the conversation should not always be filled by you. Let the child talk at their own pace.
- Write down what the child has said as soon as possible after the event.

It may be the case that social services are involved with a family of a child who attends the Yorda Adventures projects. The Play Leader may share information with you in order for you to be aware of certain behaviour from a child. It is

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important that you do not discriminate against the child or families no matter how you feel personally about a situation especially as in most cases you will not know all the facts.

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