



Safeguarding Policy

Date of last revision: 20 September 2019

Working with Children and Young People Safely

As Yorkshire Camps run residential holidays for children and young people, it is essential that everyone should be aware of their responsibilities, how best to work with children safely, how to spot signs of abuse, and how to respond if a problem comes to their attention. All staff and volunteers at Yorkshire Camps have a duty of care for all children and young people.

It is important that Yorkshire Camps is safe for children and young people and that parents, youth leaders, and churches have confidence to know that their children are safe.

There is a considerable body of legislation designed to ensure that children are protected, and it is important to understand that everyone is responsible for the safety of children. The main Acts include:

Children Act 1989

The intention of the Children Act is to protect children and ensure that their welfare and development is paramount and promoted. The Act gives those who work with children the responsibility to ensure that they work together with all relevant agencies. The Act says that only the police, Social Services, and the NSPCC have the legal right and responsibility to investigate concerns about child abuse.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

This Act allows people not to declare convictions to employers. People, however, who are involved in situations where they have sustained and prolonged access to children are exempt from the legislation and have to declare all criminal convictions relating to children, however long ago. These should be taken into account when deciding on their suitability for working with children.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

Yorkshire Camps is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people to learn more about the Christian faith through a wide range of activities.

We do this by:

1. Recognising that all children have the right to freedom from abuse.
2. Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.
3. Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse and by providing leaders, parents, and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
4. Appointing Safeguarding Officers who will take specific responsibility for child safety and act as the main point of contact for staff, volunteers, parents, children, and outside agencies.
5. Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted to the Safeguarding Officer and select staff members or the appropriate external authorities.
6. Reviewing the effectiveness of our Safeguarding Policy and activities annually.

The Yorkshire Camps Safeguarding Officers are:

- Andy Peace - Tel: 0758 1171774
- John Green - Tel: 0759 7562953

Further guidance is available from:

- Thirtyone:Eight (formerly CCPAS) Tel: 0303 0031111

Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers

Do:

- treat all young people with respect and dignity befitting their age; use appropriate behaviour and language and take notice of their reactions to your tone of voice and manner.
- remember that it is okay to touch children in a way that isn't intrusive or disturbing to him/her or to observers.
- make sure that any allegations or suspicions are reported to a Safeguarding Officer.

Do not:

- engage in rough physical games including horseplay or sexually provocative games.
- touch a child in an intrusive or sexual manner.
- make sexually suggestive or offensive comments or ridicule a child, even as a joke.
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves such as helping them go to the toilet, wash or change clothes. (There may be exceptions where such help is necessary, before doing anything please speak to the Programmer).
- allow yourself to be alone with a young person. Where you find that you are alone (perhaps due to a child being unwell or other young people leaving a room) protect yourself by ensuring that doors are open and that another team member knows where you are. Wherever practically possible, have another adult within sight of you at all times for your own protection.
- make private or individual arrangements with a child or young person without first discussing it with a Safeguarding Officer. This includes giving lifts to or from camp, even where the child is a family friend.
- allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- we would strongly discourage you from 'friending' or 'following' a young person on social media or allowing them to 'friend' or 'follow' you.
- likewise, we would strongly discourage you from sending private messages to any young person either by social media, texts or letters. Authorised contact can be made where appropriate through the Yorkshire Camps office.

All of the above are valid even if the young person is a family member or close friend of you or your family. In law, a young person aged under 18 is a minor regardless of their family or familial ties with you. As a responsible adult aged over 18, be very careful in your interactions with those who are younger.

If you see another member of the team acting in ways that might be inappropriate or misconstrued, be prepared to speak to him/her and/or to the Programmer or Safeguarding Officer about your concerns.

What to Do If You are Told About or Suspect Child Abuse

Most people who look after our children are safe, but sadly, some adults are very skilled at making friends with children with the intention of harming them. There are many forms of child abuse but they fall into four main categories: sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, and emotional abuse.

Holidays with Yorkshire Camps are likely to involve discussion that could, for some children and young people, make them reflect on their lifestyle and events in their life. There is the possibility that a young person may wish to talk about sensitive issues.

If a child or young person tells you about abuse, you should:

- listen attentively and let him/her know it is right to tell someone about their worries.
- stay calm and make sure that the child feels safe and knows that he/she is not to blame for what has happened even if a rule has been broken.
- never promise to keep what the child has said a secret.
- explain that you will have to tell someone else about the abuse if it is to stop.
- only ask questions that establish exactly what you are being told; do not push for information.
- make a note of what the child said and the date and time of your conversation. You may want to avoid making notes in front of the young person.
- not worry that you may be making things worse by reporting your concerns; few things are worse than allowing child abuse to continue.
- seek guidance from the Safeguarding Officer.

Helpful things to say or show

- *I believe you (or show acceptance of what you are told.)*
- *Thank you for telling me.*
- *It's not your fault.*
- *I will help you.*

Do not say:

- *Why didn't you tell anyone before?*
- *I can't believe it.*
- *Are you sure?*

If you suspect child abuse, talk to a Safeguarding Officer immediately.

Guidelines for Good Discipline

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching, and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life, is evidence of love, and is God's heart. (Hebrews 12:5-12 and Proverbs 22:6)

- Work on each child's positives; do not compare them with each other, but encourage and build them up, giving responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model, setting a good example. Children cannot be expected to observe ground rules if staff do not observe the rules.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention and don't allow some children to take all your time and energy.
- Take care to be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said--this avoids manipulation.
- Look honestly at the programme and activities--if children are bored, they misbehave. Is the programme at fault?
- NEVER smack or hit a child, and don't shout--change voice tone if necessary.
- Discipline out of love NEVER anger. (Call on support from others if you feel you may deal with a situation unwisely.)
- Ensure children/young people foster respect for each other and for property; e.g. no swearing, racism, or calling each other unpleasant or offensive names.
- Each child/young person is unique, special, and individual; and each person needs a different method of being dealt with. We need to ask why the child/young person is behaving that way.
- Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. Give them a chance, warn them, and only as a last resort separate if they are disruptive.
- Have the child work next to you or get another team member to be with them.
- Be proactive and encourage others in the team to be proactive. Deal with situations as you see them, don't wait to be asked.
- Take the child aside and talk to them; challenge him/her to change whilst encouraging him/her on their strengths.
- Avoid sending a child away from an activity into an unsupervised area.
- If a child/young person is constantly disruptive, seek advice from one of the senior staff members.

Guidelines on Touch (Physical Contact)

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child/young person rather than worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or child/young person.
- Everyone has the right to decide on the limit of how much physical contact they have with others except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. We all have a responsibility to point out anything that could be misconstrued.

Reporting and Recording of Incidents or Concerns

Concerns about abuse **MUST** always be written down and reported to a Safeguarding Officer. The Programmer on camp will help you to do this where appropriate.

The Safeguarding Officer must then report to the relevant authorities within 24 hours. CCPAS will advise as to the best course of action as an appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer may need to be contacted.

The Programmer or one of the senior Yorkshire Camps team members should be made aware of any inappropriate behaviour that has been witnessed. Any disciplinary or preventative measures that are to be taken with any team members or volunteers involved should be noted and passed to the Safeguarding Officer.

All accidents or incidents **MUST** be recorded on an accident/incident form located in the far office. Records of activities, children/young people, staff, and volunteers are kept indefinitely in case of future investigation or reference. Any information, even if considered trivial at the time, about a child/young person or about an incident or concern, should be recorded and given to the Safeguarding Officer. This will then be filed.

Safe recruitment

It is important that the people who work with Yorkshire Camps (whether paid or voluntary) have been recruited using correct recruitment and vetting procedures to prevent unsuitable people from having access to children/ young people.

The recruitment process enables thorough checks to be made on all applicants. Once an application has been received, at least two references are taken up, one being from a person in

Christian leadership who has seen the applicant in a role working with children or young people. Applicants are asked to read, agree with and sign the Doctrinal Basis of Yorkshire Camps. Where relevant, an interview is conducted to find out more about the applicants background and experience. Finally, each team member must have a valid DBS check in place.

Prior to attending a camp, each team member has an induction process and is asked to read, agree to abide by and sign a copy of the Safeguarding Policy.

Before being asked to Dorm Lead and have primary access to children/young people, we ask that new team members first serve in a behind the scenes role to allow us to get to know them and fully integrate them to the workings of a camp. This allows them to supervise them during their times with children and young people and check their suitability for a primary role.

Disclosure & Barring Service

As part of the effort to assure the campers' safety, the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) will be used to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust as well as overnight visitors who will be on site during camps.

A DBS disclosure will be required for all personnel 18-years-old and older who are trustees, permanent staff, regular volunteer workers, team members, support team members, and/or visiting leaders. The DBS disclosure will be rechecked every two years.

Due to the volume of visiting leaders, their infrequent and short-length of stay, and them only having supervised access to the campers, a DBS disclosure obtained from sources other than Yorkshire Camps will be accepted. Yorkshire Camps will not accept an individual if the DBS disclosure states, "Please refer to letter under separate cover" unless additional follow-up work is done. The disclosures must be less than two years old. The trustees recognise this precludes access to 'soft information'. However, it is deemed an acceptable level of risk considering the reasons listed above; and the time and cost involved to process DBS disclosures on visiting leaders would be impractical and prohibitive.

Due to the volume of behind the scenes volunteers, their infrequent and short-length of stay, and their having only supervised access to the campers, a DBS disclosure obtained from sources other than Yorkshire Camps will be accepted for them. These disclosures must be less than two years old.

Yorkshire Camps will initiate DBS disclosure for all trustees, permanent staff, regular volunteer workers, and team members. Access to the application (and accompanying documentation) will be completed by the Safeguarding Officer and/or Office Administrator.

Non-U.K. citizens and Non-U.K. residents will require a DBS disclosure equivalent from their country. If nothing like that is available, four referees will be required.