



BELFAST ACTIVITY CENTRE

A policy for the protection and procedures regarding children and vulnerable adults.

1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Belfast Activity Centre (BAC) accepts that in all matters concerning child protection, the welfare and protection of the young person is the paramount consideration.
- 1.2 It is the policy of BAC to safeguard the welfare of all young people and others involved in BAC activities by protecting them from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional harm and neglect.
- 1.3 BAC will strive to provide an environment where children are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers of the organization.

This will be promoted by:

- Giving parents, children and staff information about what they can expect from BAC
- Making sure that staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supported by line management.
- Informing parents and children how to voice their concerns, complaints and comments on the quality of the service which they have received.

2 PROCEDURES

This document covers three main areas:

- 2.1 The checking of staff and volunteers directly involved with young people through BAC
- 2.2 Procedures for staff and volunteers in the event of a child protection issue arising
- 2.3 Photography and videoing policy

3. THE CHECKING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH BAC

- 3.1. As part of BAC recruitment procedure, any adult who will undertake a role that will give them substantial unsupervised access to young people under the age of 18 years will be checked. These checks include taking up references and using the Access NI procedure. In N. Ireland Access NI is the regional equivalent to CRB (Criminal Record Checks) in England, Scotland and Wales.
- 3.2. Prospective employees / volunteers should give their consent to any necessary checks to be made at any time, but they will normally be made after a conditional offer of appointment. Checks will be

required by every one, even those who have already been the subject of vetting by another 'approved' youth organization.

- 3.3. Adults who are considered to be directly or indirectly involved with young people or vulnerable adults within BAC's care will subject themselves to a risk assessment by a senior member of BAC staff. This will be to ensure that the partner organisation has appropriate Child protection procedures and that where required they have been vetted by that organisation. (I.e. expedition assessors, teachers, care workers, and classroom assistants). These people may already be engaged working with the young people on the programme and so only come into contact with BAC on a temporary basis. Where there is longer term contact or contact in a residential setting BAC reserves the right to ACCESS NI check persons who are not employees or volunteers of BAC but however have involvement in BAC programmes.
- 3.4. Prospective employees and volunteers are required to disclose all convictions whether spent or not. Anyone convicted of an offence involving abuse or causing harm to any young person will be liable to instant dismissal and prohibited from operation directly or indirectly for the Centre in any capacity.

4. PROCEDURES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE EVENT OF A CHILD PROTECTION ISSUE ARISING

- 4.1. All allegations / suspicions, whether or not the allegations are made against a member of Centre staff, volunteer or an individual from an associated organization, are to be treated as strictly confidential and must be referred immediately and directly to the Child Protection Officer.
- 4.2. The Child Protection officers at BAC are:
- Stephen Dickson – CEO
Nicola Campbell – Senior Project Worker
- 4.3. No investigation or questioning is to be undertaken as to do so might jeopardise any future enquiry. All allegations / suspicions are to be referred no matter how insignificant they seem to be or when they occur.
- 4.4. What happens if you suspect a young person is being abused?
- Ensure no situation arises which could cause any further concern/harm
 - Ensure the young person has access to an independent adult
 - Immediately tell the Child Protection officer at the Centre, or if unavailable, the Centre Director or Senior Member of Staff on duty at the time
 - Record the facts as you know them including the young person's name, address and , where possible, information about a parent/guardian, and give a copy to the Child Protection Officer
- 4.5. What happens if a young person discloses to you abuse by someone else?
- Allow the young person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
 - Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgment

- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass on the information
- Same steps as 4.3 as in suspecting a young person is being abused

4.6. What happens if you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself?

- Immediately tell the Child Protection Officer, or if unavailable, the Centre Manager or Senior Member of staff on duty at the time
- Record the facts as you know them and give a copy to the Child Protection Officer
- Try to ensure no one is placed in a situation that could cause further compromise

4.7. If any information is received about any suspicious behavior or circumstances it must be immediately passed to the Child Protection Officer the Centre Manager or Senior Member of Staff on duty at the time, and treated as strictly confidential. This will be passed to the local Police Child Protection Unit or the local Social Services within 24 hours.

4.8. In the case of the allegation being against the Nominated Officer, contact the Chairperson of the Board.

4.9. You must refer – You must not investigate

4.9 The NSPCC provides a free 24-hour Child Protection Helpline, staffed by experienced social Workers.

5 PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOING POLICY

- 5.1 BAC recognises that video footage and images can be an extremely powerful means to record and review the extraordinary experiences that young people have when participating in outdoor activities, but BAC also recognises the concerns of parents and guardians regarding the use of these images. BAC endeavours to take a responsible attitude towards the use of video and digital images.
- 5.2 BAC will only take video and/or use images if permission has been obtained from parents or guardians of any students under the age of 18 at the Centre.
- 5.3 Permission is sought on our medical forms.
- 5.4 When using images for publicity purposes (either on our website or for other publications), group shots would be used where possible in preference to shots of individuals
- 5.5 No images of young people partially clothed will be used
- 5.6 No images of young people making inappropriate gestures or gestures that could be interpreted as inappropriate will be used
- 5.7 No full names of pupils will be used in conjunction with any images
- 5.8 If you feel that any image used on our website is inappropriate then we shall remove it as soon as possible.

Tom Scott

CHAIRMAN

January 2016

Date for renewal: January 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'T. Scott', written over a horizontal line.

Stephen Dickson

CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Stephen Dickson', written over a horizontal line.