



Developing young people through personal challenge

# Safeguarding Policy

## Version Control

Version	Author	Summary of Changes	Date
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## Audit Control

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### Policy Statement

Youth Challenge Oxfordshire (YoCO) is committed to providing the best safeguards for children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved in its activities. This means that we must be satisfied that all involved adults are properly trained and adequately vetted to work unsupervised with those we have an obligation to protect. This policy applies to and should be adopted by all YoCO Trustees, Employees, Volunteers or anyone working on behalf of YoCO.

It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people (under 18 years of age) and vulnerable adults by protecting them from physical, emotional and sexual abuse or harm.

YoCO would like to make sure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe from harm whilst they are participating in its programmes and that YoCO Trustees, Employees, Volunteers or anyone working on behalf of YoCO are protected against false allegations.

YoCO Trustees, Employees, Volunteers or anyone working on behalf of YoCO should do this by:

- Making sure that every adult is carefully recruited and aware of safeguarding procedures.
- Observing the correct ratio of adults to children and young people.
- Ensuring that a single adult is never alone with a child or vulnerable adult for any length of time.
- Following guidelines for demonstrating, teaching and practising “hands on” skills such as basic life support (BLS).

### Relevant Legislation

YoCO will meet all statutory obligations under relevant legislation and, where appropriate, anticipate future legal requirements signalled under EU Directives. YOCO policy is guided by:

- [The Children Act 1989 \(as amended\).](#)
- [The Children and Social Work Act 2017.](#)
- [The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education.](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)

### Roles

All individuals in a position of trust must:

- Understand the different types of abuse and recognise the possible risks and Indicators
- Understand their responsibility to report any concerns that a child is being, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected. This includes reporting any concern they may have regarding another person’s behaviour towards a child or children
- If appropriate; liaise with other agencies, contribute to safeguarding assessments and attend child protection meetings / core groups / conferences
- Record and store information legally, professionally and securely in line with organisational Data Protection policies and procedures.
- Undertake the required level of training for their role in line with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board standards (currently every 3 years for those in general roles and every 2 years for Designated Leads)
- Understand the line of accountability for reporting safeguarding concerns and be fully aware of the organisation’s safeguarding lead and their role within the organisation.

The Trustee Safeguarding Governance Lead (SGL) has overall responsibility for safeguarding and provides a link between the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Board.

Youth Challenge Oxfordshire Board of Trustees is accountable for ensuring the safety of all services provided by YoCO, including the implementation of effective safeguarding procedures.

Trustee Safeguarding Governance Lead will:

- ensure safeguarding is an agenda item at every Board meeting.
- receive and disseminate quarterly safeguarding reports to the Board. The report is to contain a resume of all safeguarding activity for each quarter, concerns, referrals, policy updates, training and key organisational learnings.
- ensure that any concerns are cross-referenced with the risk register and will review any actions taken.
- be notified immediately when significant safeguarding issues arise

The DSL is responsible for day to day safeguarding oversight.

- this includes GDPR compliance, oversight of all safeguarding and risk escalation processes, referrals, ensuring all policies, procedures and practice guidance are adhered to and that safer recruitment practises are in place. Reviews of these will take place annually.
- they will report at least quarterly to the Safeguarding Governance Lead or in the event of a child protection referral or a criminal investigation.
- they will monitor and review staff and volunteer training and induction

## Safe Recruitment

Youth Challenge Oxfordshire recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and vulnerable adults in some way and will take reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and vulnerable adults. The following applies to all adults, who in some way work with children or vulnerable adults unsupervised.

When recruitment for a new Trustee, Employee or Volunteer. The person responsible for the hire must

- Draw up a role profile and person specification which highlights the key responsibilities and defines the skills and experience required for the role
- Ensure the applicant complete an application form providing Personal details, names of two independent referees, previous experience, competencies and sign a declaration
- Ensure that the applicant will be able to declare any past criminal offences on the application form.
- An enhanced DBS or Disclosure Scotland check will be completed. The date of this check will be kept on file.
- Check the applicants' identity via original documents (passport, driving license, etc)
- Take appropriate advice before employing someone with a criminal record. (DSL, LADO, NSPCC or NACRO)
- Ensure that more than one person looks at each application form
- Must allow no unaccompanied access to children and vulnerable adults until all the above have been completed

## Code of Good Practice for Working with Children and Vulnerable adults

Everyone at YoCO must take measures to avoid potentially compromising situations or opportunities for allegations/misunderstandings. By complying with the following code of good practice.

- Attend basic safeguarding course every two years
- Read and acknowledge this policy and any updates
- Know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is and how to contact them
- Report concerns to the DSL immediately

- Wherever appropriate, conducting one to ones with young people in an open environment, where others are present
- Treating all young people equally, and with respect and dignity
- Always putting the welfare of young people before organisational aims
- Building and maintaining a safe and appropriate relationship with young people
- Empowering young people to share in decision-making processes
- Positive role modelling for young people

## Behaviour and Attitudes

When dealing with young people and vulnerable adults everyone one at YoCO should;

- Be aware of individual needs and personalities, and never make any derogatory or discouraging remarks.
- Never dismiss or trivialise bullying.
- Avoid inappropriate language and subject matter. Be aware of the potential impact of the behaviour and opinions of others (helpers, other volunteers, parents, staff etc.) The opinion, prejudices, actions and comments of adults, particularly those in authority, can easily influence children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Be careful not to do or say something that could create a false impression or be misunderstood or interpreted as an 'innuendo'.
- Avoid showing favouritism or singling individuals out in any way.

## Supervision

Supervision ratios should take account of national guidance that states that the below points should be considered. YoCO minimum ratio is 2 adults to a maximum of 30 young people. Any deviation from this must be signed off by the CEO.

- The age and ability of the young people
- The activity being undertaken
- Children's growing independence
- Children's need for privacy
- The geography of the facility being used
- The Risk Assessment

## Participation Consent

Consent from the parent or guardian to participate in the overall YoCO programme should be gained before any young person attends any sessions after the introduction / recruitment day. Consent from the parent or guardian should be gained for activities or events that are not held at the groups normal operating base and/or where the activity is not the norm that has been described at the introduction / recruitment day or described in the overall signed consent.

## Adult Protection

- Avoid all one-to-one situations with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Where such a situation is unavoidable, always keep a door open indoors, or ensure someone else is close by.
- Ensure that all adults are aware of do's and don'ts of physical contact.
- Remember that if a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses information to you, or if you suspect any form of abuse or inappropriate behaviour, it is your legal duty to report your concerns to the DSL in the first instance

- Do not lock and unlock premises without another adult present
- Do not transport young people in a car/minibus or other vehicle without another adult present unless as part of a group of vehicles travelling to the same destination or unless there are the most exceptional circumstances or with prior parental agreement and the DSL.
- Do not take young people to their homes
- Do not make inappropriate contact with young people, i.e. develop relationships outside the group setting, including via personal social media websites such as Facebook
- Do not leave young people unattended
- Do not leave young people with adults not known to leaders or not suitably trained.
- Do not leave young people alone with adults who have not had relevant DBS checks
- Do not show favouritism to young people within the group
- Do not store any data relating to young people on personal devices.

## Disclosures and Reporting Concerns

ALL adults have a responsibility for action in cases of suspected child abuse. The following procedure should be followed if you have concerns about the safety of a young person or if a disclosure is made

If a young person or vulnerable adult discloses, they, or another young person, is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them, the person receiving this information should:

- Remain calm and in control.
- Reassure the young person or vulnerable adult by telling them they have done the right thing.
- Take what the young person says seriously.
- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Keep questions to a minimum – only ask for clarification and no leading questions.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Let the young person know you will need to share the information with other professionals to keep them and/or other young people safe.
- Record what is said on your Incident Report.
- Tell the young person what will happen next.

In all cases consider the welfare of the young person who has disclosed as the highest priority. If there is a concern the young person is in **immediate danger**:

- Contact the police and explain the situation to them.
- Stay with the young person.
- If necessary, move to a safe place away from immediate harm and ensure that no situation arises which could cause any further concern.
- Call for immediate medical attention if the young person requires it.
- Contact your DSL to let them know what is happening and ask for further advice and guidance.
- Make a factual record of events as soon as possible by using the Incident Form.
- Do not investigate further, share confidential information with others, or take any further action unless authorised to do so. The police will now be in charge and anything you do without their authorisation may harm their investigation.

If a young person is not in immediate danger but a disclosure has been made:

- Follow the disclosure process as above. Send the incident form to the DSL within 24 hours
- The DSL will then contact you to talk through this if necessary.
- The DSL will inform you of next steps to be taken and you will receive support from your manager.

Emergency: If a young person is in **immediate danger**, you should contact the police on 999

Non-emergency: If there is no immediate danger or advice or information is needed the DSL can contact the relevant LADO or Children's Social Care Team. If the concern is about a young person, contact the relevant LADO for the local authority where the incident occurred. If the concern relates to a YoCO Trustee, Employee, Volunteer or anyone working on behalf of YoCO, the LADO should be contacted (the details can be found on the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board [website](#)).

### Whistleblowing:

Whistleblowing is the process whereby a person raises a concern about malpractice, wrongdoing, risk, or illegal proceedings, which harms or creates a risk of harm to the young people who attend YoCO's Programme, employees, volunteers or the wider community.

Whistleblowing is not the same as making a raising a safeguarding concern, complaint or raising a grievance. Whistleblowing is different because it involves a situation where a person raises a concern about some form of malpractice that they have witnessed in their involvement with YoCO.

YoCO has adopted a whistle policy that can be found on it website. A whistleblowing concern is when a person witnesses an issue or risk that affects someone other than themselves. A young person maybe directly affected by an act or decision within YoCO or that YoCO has a safeguarding issue which is not being addressed.

If any allegations involve the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Safeguarding Governance Lead (SGL) or if for any reason you feel that the DSL or SGL is not the appropriate person to deal with the situation, you must escalate to a member of the Trustees at Youth Challenge Oxfordshire, the Local Authority or the NSPCC.

# Appendix



Link to Reporting Form is found [here](#)