

Standard 5: Working Safely

All organisations involved with children, young people or vulnerable adults must ensure they adopt safe working practice in every area.

Introduction- why do we need this standard?

All organisations working with children, young people and vulnerable adults should operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation. It will also help to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults not only when they are participating in activities run by the organisation but also in their day-to-day lives.

Faith Fact: *Places of worship are often involved in a variety of different activities and they can operate from different locations (e.g. crèche, Sunday school, detached youth work, internet café, lunch club for adults with learning disabilities). This makes it even more important to have guidelines in place for specific activities as well as be working to general standards of good working practice.*

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Duty of Care

The Children Act 2004 (England) places a duty on organisations involved in providing services for children and young people to safeguard and promote their well-being. This means all workers should treat those they are caring for with respect and dignity as well as demonstrate competence and integrity. (There are similar expectations in other parts of the UK.)

The duty of care is in part exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships but also by workers taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of those they have responsibility for, particularly in relation to sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Before individuals start working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent to their role.

In addition, under Health and Safety at Work legislation, organisations have a duty of care towards the well-being of all workers and to ensure they are treated fairly. They are required to provide a safe working environment and guidance on safe working practice.

5.2 Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in positions of trust. It is therefore vital workers ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately.

Workers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult worker and a child (under the age of 18) is never acceptable and if concerns arise in this area, this should be recorded and reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The trusting relationship between worker and child, young person or vulnerable adult means the worker should never:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual

5.3 Data Protection, Human Rights and Safeguarding

The Data Protection Act 1998 is designed to provide privacy protection for individuals about whom certain personal information is kept. It lays down 'best practice' principles for those who keep the data and it applies to paper records as well as computerised information. The Act covers the whole of the UK, and all organisations, including places of worship, must comply with the rules on processing data.

Where disclosing information might place a child, young person or vulnerable adult at risk, then safeguarding considerations take precedence over data protection. In certain circumstances the Data Protection Act allows for disclosure of information without the consent of the person involved, including for the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. The European Convention of Human Rights also makes provision for the disclosure of information in connection with 'the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others and for the prevention of disorder or crime.... Disclosure should be appropriate for the purpose and only to the extent necessary to achieve that purpose'.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm and therefore information relating to concerns that a child, or any other vulnerable person, is at risk of significant harm should not be withheld on the basis that it might be unlawful.

Information about allegations or concerns of abuse should not be shown to a parent or carer. Advice should always be sought from Children's Social Services, Adult Services, or the police. CCPAS can also advise in such circumstances.

InFocus: Data Protection Principles

Useful Contact:

The Information Commissioner's Office,

Head Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Helpline: 0303 123 1113, email: casework@ico.org.uk, web: www.ico.org.uk

5.4 Anti-bullying Policy and Practice (Children & Young People)

There should be a known zero tolerance to bullying so if it does occur children and leaders are able to report the matter and it can be dealt with promptly and effectively. There can be an expectation that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will report it.

Whilst the child being bullied needs protection, the person/people doing it need to address the reasons for their behaviour and be encouraged to relate to others in more positive ways.

The organisation has a clear responsibility to respond appropriately to this issue and one way is operate a clear anti-bullying policy.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Children can bully each other, be bullied by adults and can sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour within any organisation. Some common forms of bullying can be:

Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing including via emails or text messaging

Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts

Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Sexual - sexually abusive comments or gestures

Racial - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of racial differences

Homophobic - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation

Unofficial activities such as initiation ceremonies and practical jokes which may cause children physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended

Online bullying (or Cyber-Bullying) is becoming an increasing issue with the growth in the use of the Internet and social media by children (see section 5.32 and InFocus:

Cyberbullying - Keep Children Safe Using ICT) on cyber-bullying

InFocus: Anti-bullying Policy

5.5 Information Communications Technology (ICT) and E-Safety

E-safety stands for electronic safety, it is not just about keeping safe on the internet but also keeping safe on all electronic devices such as mobile phones, games consoles, use of e-mails, social networking and other information communications technologies (ICT).

ICT offer excellent resources and effective communication tools but there are unscrupulous individuals who use the technologies to gain access to exploit and even harm children, young people and vulnerable adults. Workers, parents and carers, children, young people and vulnerable adults all need to gain an understanding of e-safety.

E- safety considerations are very fluid as technology is constantly changing. Those with

safeguarding responsibility may feel less able to address this area as they may struggle both to embrace the technology and understand the differing risks aspects of the dangers such technologies can present. Coupled with how children and young people often appear to be more technologically savvy, this can prevent an appropriate engagement with children. It is worth remembering that although children are digitally competent at an early age they don't have the maturity to deal with and the understanding of the dangers being online can expose them to.

We can teach children to be safe both offline and online, as safeguarding principles apply equally in every environment. There is now a merging between the two, and therefore it's not helpful to draw a distinction where safeguarding is concerned.

PROCEDURAL IMPLICATIONS

5.6 Peer-group Activities (children and young people)

All peer-group activities should be overseen by named adults who have been selected in accordance with agreed recruitment procedures and have the backing of the leadership of the organisation.

Before setting up a peer-led activity the following should be taken into consideration:

- The appropriateness of the venue for the activity

- Any medical issues, dietary needs and allergies will be appropriately managed.

- Emergency contact numbers are to hand for all members under the age of 18 years.

- If the provision of food is part of the activity, leaders must ensure that food is prepared in accordance with Basic Food Hygiene standards.

Whilst there may be a valid argument for groups of age 16+ being led and run by their peers, adult leaders should always be in the vicinity and should contribute to any programme reviews and planning. Peer-group leaders must be trained and supported by at least one adult worker.

Faith Fact: *It is not uncommon for peer-group activities such as youth cell groups or children's cell groups to operate in the home of a participating child or young person.*

The following should also be followed:

- If there are children/young people under 16yrs at an activity, adults workers should be present or within earshot.

- No person under the age of 16 should be left with the sole responsibility of caring for or supervising other children or vulnerable adults.

- Young people (over 16) who assist with caring for other children/young people should be subjected to the same recruitment process as adults and have undertaken safeguarding training.

Peer-group leaders should be aware of safeguarding procedures, including reporting concerns (e.g. abuse, bullying) to their supervising adult and that sensitive information should not be shared openly in the group.

Parents/carers must always be kept informed about what peer-group activities are for, who the leaders are, how they are run, where they meet and what parents can do to support them.

NB. CCPAS recommend that best practice is when adults aged 18 or over are responsible for working with children or vulnerable adults. Although it is possible to undertake DBS checks for those over 16 (where legal), there are implications for those holding DBS certificates because where something goes wrong it may result in a blemished DBS certificate. Extreme caution needs to be exercised about 16-18 year olds having such a responsibility before the necessary level of maturity is reached.

5.7 Risk Assessments

Taking care of children, young people and vulnerable adults involves taking responsibility for their well-being at all times, being prepared for unforeseen eventualities, anticipating situations where they could be harmed and taking steps to minimise the risks.

Organisations have a responsibility to assess the risk involved in the activities that are provided. This can include an informal check before the start of an activity that the building is safe and that the planned activities have been assessed for any risks.

It is advisable to appoint someone specifically for carrying out risk assessments. An easy and effective way of doing this is to compile a checklist for the activity, identifying any risks that could be encountered, the action required, and the person responsible to carry this out and when any action has been completed.

The following are some areas that should be considered:

- Identification of hazards.

- Consider who might be harmed and how this might happen.

- Assess the risks and take action to remove or reduce them as far as possible.

- Record details of the action taken.

InFocus: Carrying out a Risk Assessment

5.8 Health and Safety (Buildings and Equipment)

Buildings being used for groups or activities should be properly maintained. The external fabric of the building, plus all internal fixtures, fittings, lighting, fire exits and equipment should meet the required safety standards. An annual review should also be carried out and, where necessary, action taken. All electrical equipment should have undergone an electrical safety test. In the UK these are known as PAT (Portable Appliance Inspection) tests.

In a building the following may be considered hazardous: loose-fitting carpets, uneven floors,

over-filled cupboards, very high shelves, blocked fire exits, glass doors, missing light bulbs, overloaded power points, trailing electrical cables, loose window fastenings.

Outside play areas should be appropriately fenced off with secure/boltable gates to prevent small children from straying from the premises.

Safety requirements could also be publicly displayed on posters in appropriate locations around the building.

InFocus: Checklist for Building Safety and Equipment

5.9 Health & Safety (Food Hygiene)

Any food that is made and/or consumed on the premises should meet food safety regulations. It follows therefore that there should be someone within the organisation who has responsibility for this. They should possess a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate or equivalent and be knowledgeable in areas such as food preparation, handling, storage, disposal of waste etc. This is relevant to all organisations and especially to those running camps and other residential activities.

These regulations do not apply to activities like shared suppers when food is brought from members' homes to be shared on the premises. However, it remains important that basic standards of food hygiene be adhered to and shared food should be accurately labelled in terms of its ingredients.

If food and drink are provided during an activity, the following should be considered:

Workers should follow good personal hygiene

Basic health and hygiene regulations should be adhered to.

All food and drink is stored appropriately

Hot drinks should not be carried through an activity area and not placed within the reach of young children

Snacks and mealtimes are appropriately supervised

Fresh drinking water is available at all times

Systems are in place to ensure that children, young people or vulnerable adults do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic. Typically this can be peanuts, nuts, milk, eggs, fish, shell fish and gluten - found in wheat, barley, oats.

Useful contact

The Food Standards Agency is an independent Government department set up by an Act of Parliament in 2000 to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food.

Telephone helpline: 020 7276 8829

email: helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.food.gov.uk>

InFocus: Food Safety Registration and the Food Safety Act (1990)

5.10 First Aid

Provision should be made for an appropriately qualified first-aider to be available at all activities together with an adequate First Aid kit.

Under the Health & Safety (First Aid) regulations it is the duty of every employer to provide at least one first aid container for each work site. Its contents should be stored in a waterproof container and the designated worker should regularly check the contents.

InFocus: First Aid Kit

Useful Contacts

St. John Ambulance, 27 St. Johns Lane, London, EC1M 4BU. Tel: 08700 104950 Web: www.sja.org.uk

St. Andrew's Ambulance Association, 48 Milton Street, Glasgow, G4 0HR. Web: www.firstaid.org.uk

British Red Cross, 44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL. Tel: 0844 871 11 11 Web: www.redcross.org.uk

NI First Aid Services, 102 Craighil, Antrim, BT41 1QQ, N. Ireland. Tel: 028 9446 6126 Email: info@nifas.com

5.11 Keeping Records

Organisations need to keep records of their activities for management and accountability purposes. These records should be proportionate and purposeful and personal data should only be kept when there is a good reason for doing so (see section 5.3 above)

Keeping a Register

When a child becomes a member or becomes involved in an activity run by an organisation, it is important at the outset that a general information and consent form is completed and returned giving contact details of parents/carers, plus medical and other details such as allergies or special dietary requirements. This form should be renewed annually.

Link: General Information and Consent Forms



A register of those attending a club or activity should also be maintained, together with a register of workers. This should include a record of arrival and departure times, particularly if the participant does not attend the whole session. It is also good practice to keep parents/carers informed of the nature of activities.

Faith Fact: *Parents/carers may or may not attend a place of worship even though a child,*

young person does. It is important that they are given information about the group and activities including contact telephone numbers.

b. Logbook

A logbook should be maintained for all activities where workers can write down unusual events or conversations that they witnessed. This may be very helpful if, for example, leaders have to deal with a difficult member who subsequently makes an accusation of assault or a young person repeatedly makes sexual comments about workers that may, at a later date, result in an allegation of abuse. In this situation, written records would enable any allegations to be seen in context.

Patterns of behaviour or concerns might also emerge from log records that might not otherwise be so obvious - for example, bruising noted on a regular basis or a number of young people making similar comments about one worker that raises concerns. Other information might include records of incidents such as fights and the action taken. Logbooks safeguard both children and workers.

Every child, young person, vulnerable adult, parent or carer should be able to view what is recorded about them in the logbook. This information would need to be kept in a way that does not breach the confidentiality of an individual. Whilst it is important to observe data protection requirements, remember safeguarding is always the priority. Information about the prevention and detection of crime is exempt from data protection requirements. It may, therefore, be inappropriate to release information to a parent that has been disclosed by a young person, without first consulting the statutory agencies.

Information of a sensitive nature (e.g. a child disclosing abuse) will need to be kept separately in a secure place. However, a cross reference could be recorded in the logbook along the lines of "Jenny spoke to Bill tonight - see separate note in her file". In certain circumstances this information would need to be cross referenced between records. The experience of CCPAS is that concerns can be raised many years after an event and therefore records should be kept indefinitely as advised by insurance companies.

c. Accident Book

All accidents, however minor, should be recorded in an accident book. In the event of an accident, the parent/carer of a child or young person should be asked to read and sign the accident book. Whether a vulnerable adult can sign the book will depend on the nature and extent of their disability.

If the child, young person or vulnerable adult is not collected at the end of a session, a letter should be sent to the parent or carer explaining what has happened in much the same way a school would respond.

Link: Accident and Incident Form



5.12 Suggestions and Complaints by Parents/Carers

Where a parent or carer wishes to make a complaint or make a suggestion about any activity or group the organisation is providing, it should be taken seriously. It is a good idea in the first instance for them to speak to the group leader who should endeavour to resolve the matter.

This should be followed up by a written response to the issue that has been raised and should be recorded and stored appropriately. The group leader should also be kept informed.

If a complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the parent or carer then the matter should follow complaints procedures within the organisation. This should be readily available for anyone to see.

Faith Fact: *In a place of worship or church, an unresolved complaint may be dealt with by a minister or management committee (e.g. Parochial Church Council). If still unresolved it may be referred on to someone else within the group or denomination such as an archdeacon, bishop or other senior/regional leader.*

The above refers to complaints of a general nature. In the case of safeguarding concerns, these should follow the procedures in the safeguarding policy. Some denominations have their own Complaints Policy which should be followed.

5.13 Websites for Organisations

There are certain do's and don'ts when it comes to protocols and the displaying of information when organisations use ICT and/or have their own website. These include:

When designing a web site, make clear what is available for copying and what is not and don't refer to other sites without permission.

Parental/carer's permission must be obtained before using any picture of a child or young person, and from the vulnerable adult themselves and/or their carer.

Avoid using photos of individual children, young people or vulnerable adults. In preference use a group photograph. However, do not use any photos in which the subject/s can be identified by their name or location and never reveal these in website information. Doing this could inadvertently help a sex offender to identify or gain access to a child.

Personal email or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers must not be divulged.

Organisations should seek to have their web site rated through the Family Online Safety Institute (ICRA) or similar.

Make web content accessible to people with disabilities.

If web access is being provided e.g. for a youth project providing a cyber café, then consider using filtering software to prevent access to inappropriate web sites such as, Surfwatch or similar. Your Internet Service Provider may also have filtering software.

If you are providing web access e.g. cyber café ensure that all users complete an internet permission form that includes where appropriate, parental/carer's permission.

Useful Contacts

Family Online Safety Institute for ICRA rating (formerly the Internet Content Rating Association): www.fosi.org/icra/

SafeSurf Rating Standard: www.safesurf.com

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (disability): www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

5.14 Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

The giving of gifts or rewards to children, young people and vulnerable adults can be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. In some situations, the giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of children, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual child or young person will be part of an agreed plan with the knowledge of a manager and the parent or carer.

Any gifts should be given openly and not be based on favouritism. Adults need to be aware however, that the giving of gifts can be seen as a gesture to bribe or groom a young person.

Adults should exercise care when selecting children and/or young people for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection should always be transparent and subject to scrutiny.

Care should also be taken to ensure that adults do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when children, young people or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to workers, for example, on special occasions or as a thank-you, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

InFocus: Government Definitions: 'Duty of Care', 'Position of Trust' and 'Abuse of Trust (sexual relationships)'

Link: Quick Reference Guide - Abuse of Trust

5.15 Safeguarding Principles for Group or Activity

Some general principles for running a club, activity or service include:

Ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.

Consideration for the number of workers needed to run the group and whether they should be male, female or both.

A clear strategy for summoning additional help (if needed) in situations where a worker is working alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) required appropriate to the needs of the individual.

Clear guidelines on personal privacy e.g. when working with children avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.

Not allowing anyone under 16 years of age to be left in charge of children of any age or those attending the group being left unsupervised.

Only workers assigned to the group being allowed to participate in the activity. Other adults should not be allowed free access.

Making a note of other people in the building during the activity and any other events taking place at the same time.

5.16 Adult to Child Ratios

In order to supervise children's activities safely it is necessary to have sufficient adult leaders and helpers. In the past CCPAS has relied on OFSTED recommendations but since the introduction of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>) the following ratios should be applied:

For children under 2 years old in any group setting, there needs to be at least one member of staff for every 3 children. There are a number of additional provisos in regard to the qualifications and the experience of those staff, but in terms of children aged 2-3 in an early years setting, there needs to be at least one member of staff for every 4 children.

Children aged 3 and over in a registered early years provision, there needs to be at least one member of staff for every 13 children. Again there are a number of provisos, namely that this is between the hours of 8.00 am and 4.00 pm, and the provisos relate to the qualifications of those staff members. At other times outside of the hours of 8.00 am – 4.00 pm, and where it is within those hours but people have less qualification then the ratio alters to one staff member for every 8 children.

Most of the activities that churches run for young children- parent and toddler groups, for example, or crèches during worship services- would not need to be on the early years register and are therefore not regulated to the same extent. However, good practice guidelines for protecting children, such as those outlined in this guidance, still apply.

Children aged 3 and over in independent schools, including reception classes, the ratio is one member of staff for every 13 children, again with a number of provisos. Children aged 3 and over in maintained schools and nursery schools where the provision is led by a school teacher, then the ratio is one member of staff for every 13 children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage does not place ratio and qualification requirements on reception classes in maintained schools because they fall within the legal definition of an infant class. These classes fall within the legislation of an infant class and must not contain more than 30 pupils. There are also specific requirements in regard to child minders and maximum number of children they can have.

A risk assessment should be carried out for activities and especially where it is:

Outdoors

high risk or dangerous

when catering for people with disabilities or special needs

The results of the risk assessment may mean ratios need to be increased. The most important thing is to be specific in written guidance about the expectations within your organisation.

InFocus: Arrangements for Childcare and Ofsted

Link: Standard 5.7 - Risk Assessments

5.17 Special Needs and Disabilities

Workers should be aware that any child, young person or vulnerable adult attending an activity who has a special need or disability may need extra help in areas such as communication and mobility (e.g. use of sign language and assistance in going to the toilet). They may behave in a non-age appropriate way. For example, a young person of 17 might behave more like a 2-3 year old, particularly in demanding cuddles or sitting on a worker's lap. So it is important to set appropriate boundaries that take their needs into account, but also protect workers from false accusation.

The organisation should:

Ask the child, young person or vulnerable adult attending the activity, and parents or carers how their needs can be met, ensuring all workers involved with them are aware of their expectations. This includes the number of workers needed to assist for a specific activity to prevent injury. Some of these needs may be more easily met than others, so be realistic. A family may ask for changes to enable easier access to the building (ensure you meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010). Listen, and give feedback to the person, family or carer as to what can or can't be achieved and the reasons why.

Ideally ensure that a worker of the same gender assists if they need help with toileting, but again discuss with the person, their family or carer to discuss their preference and your ability to provide this. For example you may have a Sunday School with only female workers, so is a male child happy for a female to provide personal care, are the parents comfortable with this? Generally these issues once discussed can be agreed upon.

Make buildings accessible (e.g. ramps, toilets for the disabled and hearing loop

system) and encourage integration within the group.

Developing appropriate disability awareness including the use of different forms of communication (e.g. sign language) and language etiquette.

InFocus: Communication and Etiquette (disabilities)

5.18 Intimate Care

In places of worship and organisations intimate care may be provided for small children e.g. those attending crèche, and for children and adults with disabilities. Workers should therefore be operating clear guidelines in this area.

Workers involved with intimate care need to be sensitive to the individual needs of each person and that some care tasks could be open to misinterpretation. False allegations of sexual abuse are rare but guidelines will safeguard both the children and adults. People feel safer if expectations are clear and methods of working are, as far as possible, consistent.

InFocus: Intimate Care Guidelines

Useful Contacts:

Every Disabled Child Matters

c/o Council for Disabled Children, National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakely Street, London, EC1V 7QE.

Tel: 020 7843 6448

Email: info@edcm.org.uk,

Web: www.edcm.org.uk

Through the Roof

PO Box 353, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5WS.

Tel: 01732 737041

Minicom: 01372 749955

Email: info@throughtheroof.org

Web: www.throughtheroof.org.

5.19 Challenging Behaviour

Sometimes children and young people become angry, upset or disruptive. Occasionally their behaviour may endanger themselves or others. The Government has developed national standards in relation to early years and day care and the following guidelines can be adopted by organisations providing services to children and young people.

If someone is being disruptive:

Ask them to stop.

Speak to them to establish the cause(s) of the upset.

Inform them they will be asked to leave if the behaviour continues.

Warn them if they continue to be disruptive, this might result in longer-term exclusion from the group.

If they are harming themselves, another person or property then others in the group should be escorted away from the area where the disruption is occurring. At the same time, and with a second worker present, request them to STOP. If your request is ignored, you might need to warn the individual that you will consider calling the Police. As a last resort, in the event of them harming themselves, other people or property, physical restraint may be needed until the Police to arrive.

Training in appropriate restraint techniques may be available through the local Police or Area Youth and Community services.

The workers involved should always record what happened in writing as soon as possible after the incident. This should include:

What activity was taking place.

What might have caused the disruptive behaviour.

The person's behaviour.

What was said and how the worker and others responded.

A list of others present who witnessed the incident.

A copy should be given to the leader, a copy retained by the worker and a copy kept with the logbook. Parents should be informed if their child has been restrained.

It may be helpful, after such an incident, for the worker involved to meet with their line manager to talk things through, reviewing what happened and considering whether there is a way of doing things differently so that the incident could be de-escalated avoiding the need for restraint.

Link: Accident and Incident Form



InFocus: Guidelines for Discipline

5.20 Drop-in Centres

The idea behind a 'drop in' centre is precisely that; people come and go, so it is difficult to keep track of who is actually in the building. It is therefore important that organisations providing a drop-in service:

Conduct regular fire drills to ensure that the building is evacuated completely and within a set time scale.

Ensure all the users of the drop in centre only have access to specific areas of the building.

Have sufficient workers to supervise those who visit the centre.

5.21 Unexpected Attendance at Activities

Sometimes children, young people or vulnerable adults will want to join in with an organisation's activities without the knowledge of parents or carers e.g. children playing outside or wandering the streets with no adult supervision. In these circumstances it is important to:

Welcome them but try to establish their name, age (children), address and telephone number. Record their visit in a register.

Ask if a parent/carer is aware where they are, and what time they are expected home. If this is before the session ends, they should be encouraged to return home, unless the parent/carer can be contacted and they are happy with the arrangement. In the case of children in particular, suggest the child seeks the parent/carer's permission to return the following week.

Link the visiting person with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and explain about the activity.

On leaving, give the person a leaflet about the group with contact telephone numbers etc and perhaps a standard letter to the parent/carer inviting them to make contact.

Without an interrogation, you will need to find out as soon as possible whether they have any special needs, (e.g. medication), so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.

5.22 Parents/Carers Staying With Children's Groups

There may be occasions where parents ask if they can stay to watch the children's group's activity. It is important not to appear guarded but there may be concerns, particularly where the expectation is that all adults who work with children in any capacity should undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Organisations should therefore consider the following:

Parents can be permitted to observe groups but not take part. A distinction should be made.

It can help certain children settle into a group, if the child knows that a parent/carer is there. After the settling in period, if a parent/carer wishes to continue to stay, consideration could be given to them becoming a helper/worker but they would be required to undertake the same recruitment and selection procedure as with any other worker.

Whilst a person watching may be a parent/carer for one or more of the children, to the rest of the children they are strangers.

Organise an open evening from time to time as part of the on-going children's programme to build relationships and encourage parents to take an active role in supporting the group.

Be aware that for some children with special needs, it may be appropriate for their parent/carer to stay with them for an extended period. This should be considered on an individual basis to help the child become fully integrated into the group/activity.

5.23 Outings

If the organisation arranges day trips or visits for children and young people under 18, parents or carers should complete and sign a consent form for the activity. The organisation should also carry out a risk assessment of the activity to ensure all eventualities are covered and all adults in the team know what to do in the event of an accident or emergency.

On the day it is important to remember to take a fully charged mobile phone, all essential records and equipment and allocate named children to named pairs of adults.

InFocus: Organising an Outing

Link: Standard 5.7 - Risk Assessment

5.24 Home Visits

Workers and leaders may need to make home visits from time to time. In these circumstances the organisation should issue formal identification to the person doing the visit.

Guidelines for visiting:

Inform a supervisor or another worker of the proposed visit.

In the case of children and young people never go into a home if a parent or carer is absent unless the child would be at risk of significant harm if you do not do so.

Keep a written record of the visit detailing the following:

Purpose

Time you arrived and left

Who was present

What was discussed

If the parent/carer is absent when the call is made, leave some means of identification and explanation for the visit that can be given to them.

An invitation to a worker's home should only be extended with the knowledge of the team/leadership and the permission of the parent/ carer.

5.25 Baby-sitting

Although babysitting may be done on a voluntary basis, organisations that run this service should adopt the same care in the selection process as when appointing a worker. Even

babies are sexually abused and studies show that abuse can begin when children are under five years of age. All applicants for a babysitting circle should complete an application form and supply details of referees. They should also be interviewed and undertake a criminal records disclosure check.

Before any babysitting arrangement is agreed, the parent/carer and the babysitter should meet to exchange details about themselves and discuss:

- The child's needs/routine

- Expectations about bedtime

- An emergency contact number

- The anticipated time of the parent/carer's return.

In ensuring that the ground rules are established, the parent/carer can repeat the rules about bedtime etc. in front of the child. This minimises the possibility of any manipulation of the babysitter by the child.

If a child does not like a particular babysitter, then they should be changed without the need for further explanation or justification.

If a parent or carer is unhappy that a babysitter has not followed the ground rules, they should discuss the matter direct with the babysitter.

If a child expresses concerns about an aspect of the babysitting arrangements, the parent should talk to the babysitter to clarify the situation.

Should a child shares anything that suggests he/she might have been abused, or the child has an unexplained injury, the parent should report this to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and appropriate action should be taken e.g. contacting Children's Social Services or police.

If any safeguarding concerns arise about an individual on the babysitting rota, they should be asked to stand down immediately until an investigation has been completed. All parents should be notified not to use this person until further notice.

If the babysitter has a concern that a child for whom they are babysitting is being abused, they should inform the Safeguarding Co-ordinator who should take appropriate action e.g. contact Children's Social Services.

5.26 Sleep-overs

Sleepovers should be discussed and arranged in advance by the workers so that agreements can be made on the best way of caring for the children given the venue, number of children, age and gender mix etc. Children are best protected in an environment where the adults caring for them are aware of the possibility of abuse by adult and child alike and accept the need to be watchful.

The following issues need to be considered when organising a sleep-over:

There must be adequate insurance cover on the building to cover this activity including any limits on numbers.

Prior to the sleepover the building should be checked for suitable fire exits and workers should know where the water, electricity and gas can be turned off and the location of fire extinguishers. A fire drill should be carried out as soon as possible after entering the premises for the night.

Parents/carers must complete a medical consent form and an activity consent form in respect of their children's medical care, travel and collection arrangements, sleeping conditions, food, other specific activities (e.g. games).

Parents/carers should be given written details of the arrangements for the night with the contact number of an identified children's worker, not simply the phone number of the premises.

Specific responsibilities should be designated to workers to ensure clarity of roles. Make sure there is a qualified first-aider in attendance.

Males and females should sleep separately. If is a mixed sex group, female and male leaders will be needed.

Adults should not sleep in the same room as the children unless it is considered the group needs to be supervised at all times. It may be more appropriate to appoint an adult to conduct random night patrols.

Appropriate night attire must be brought.

Changing and showering facilities should be single-sex and separate for children and adults. If there are limited facilities, timetables need to be drawn up.

All medical information and emergency contact numbers must be easily accessible and workers should have access to a telephone or mobile phone.

InFocus: Tick list for sleepovers

Link: [Standard 10.9 - Children and Young People Placed with Host Families](#)

Link: [Checklist for children staying with host families and organised trips away from home](#)



5.27 Transportation

Where children, young people or vulnerable adults are being transported by mini-bus the organisation needs to ensure there are guidelines in place and that these apply to all drivers and journeys carried out on behalf of and with the knowledge of the organisation. This does not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between adults with parental responsibility.

Advice for transporting children, young people or vulnerable adults is as follows:

Driving should be restricted to those who have gone through the organisation's recruitment procedures for workers.

All drivers must have read the safeguarding policy of the organisation and agree to abide by it.

Parents / carers should be asked to sign a Transportation Consent Form (or include it in the General Information and Consent Form).

The driver should hold a full driving licence, the vehicle must be adequately insured and the vehicle road worthy.

Having checked drivers, it is reasonable to expect that they may be alone with a child for short periods. Consideration should therefore be given to dropping off the least vulnerable last and plan routes accordingly. Two workers in a vehicle does not in itself guarantee safety - there have been incidents where workers have acted abusively together.

Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in the vehicle with someone they are transporting. If, for example, a child wants to talk to a driver about something and has waited until other children have been dropped off, the driver should explain that it isn't convenient to talk there and then, but arrange to meet them at a location where there are other adults around with the knowledge of the group leader. (Remember they may want to talk to the driver about an abusive situation).

When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle it is good practice to insist those being transported stay in the same groups on the out-going and return journey. This will avoid anyone, at worst, being left behind.

At collection or dropping off points no child or young person should be on their own and the driver should make sure they are collected by an appropriate adult. This may also apply to a vulnerable adult, depending on the nature of their vulnerability and/or disability.

It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular individual e.g. where there has been a disagreement or they have romantic feelings for a driver.

If parents or carers do some transporting, ensure they are made aware that such arrangements are their own responsibility and not the organisation's.

Link: Transportation Consent Form



InFocus: Tick List for Transportation

InFocus: Regulations for transportation

5.28 Swimming Trips

There should be an increased adult to child ratio for all swimming trips and, in advance of the trip, the swimming ability of a child/young person should be established. A swimming consent form for each child (or a copy) should be taken by the group leader on the trip. A copy should also be retained by the contact person in your organisation / place of worship.

Before any visit to a swimming pool check:

there will be a qualified lifeguard present at all times

first aid/rescue equipment is readily available and this would preferably include a poolside telephone/alarm.

If appropriate to your party, check that the pool caters for children with disabilities. There should be adequate signs indicating the depth of the pool and depending on the age of the group you are taking, it is advisable to make sure that the shallow end is shallow enough! If the maximum depth of the pool is less than 1.5 metres, diving should not be permitted.

Checks should be made that the changing rooms are safe and hygienic and there is a changing room for each sex. They should be supervised while children are in there by at least two leaders per changing room. They should be of the same gender as the children, but supervised in such a way that the leaders do not watch the children actually getting changed. Children and children's workers should follow the rules of the pool. It is important children and young people know how to behave and take their lead from workers' own behaviour. Group leaders should supervise behaviour at all times and there should be a minimum of two leaders present while the children are in the pool.

Whilst the pool's lifeguard will be on duty to supervise swimmers this does not reduce the duty of care of leaders and workers, including being able to account for the whereabouts of all those participating in the event.

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters is a potentially dangerous activity and should only be allowed as a supervised activity after a risk assessment. Sensible precautions should be taken and swimming should preferably be in a recognised bathing area with a lifeguard present.

Link: Activities and Day Visits Consent Form



Link: Swimming Consent Form



5.29 Residential Holidays, Camps & Retreats

If using an established residential centre, checks should be made that it operates a safeguarding policy and carries out Disclosure checks on workers. Organisations providing residential holidays, camps or retreats should also carry out full risk and health and safety assessments. On a campsite or in the open countryside the hazards may be guy ropes and other fastenings, fires, calor gas and other flammable substances, access to fields where animals graze.

It is easy to assume that workers automatically know how to organise and run activities, and that children, young people and vulnerable adults have been taught personal safety. This is not necessarily the case so it is doubly important the organisation's expectations are clear and are communicated effectively.

InFocus: Residential Holidays

InFocus: Model Safeguarding Policy: Residential Activities

Link: Standard 5.7 - Risk Assessments

Link: Standard 5.8 - Safety of buildings and equipment

5.30 Internet Safety for Children, Young People and their Parents/Carers

The internet opens up a world of entertainment, opportunity and knowledge. To help children enjoy it all safely, the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has developed the **Click Clever, Click Safe** child internet safety strategy. UKCCIS brings together organisations from industry, charities and the public sector to work in partnership to keep children safe online:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>

By following the digital code '**Zip it, Block it, Flag it**', parents and children can adopt a few simple strategies to help them stay safe online, while continuing to enjoy the internet. The code highlights three things that parents can encourage their children to do:

Zip It: Get your children to keep their passwords private

Block It: Make sure your children know how to block people that upset them

Flag It: Ask your kids regularly if they have seen or done anything online that has upset them

InFocus: UKCCIS Digital Code, 'Zip it, Block It, Flag It'

5.31 Sexting

One of the down sides to the recent advances in internet and related technologies is the potential for inappropriate material to be made public. This can include sexually explicit images that have been shared between young people where perhaps a relationship has ended and they have been posted on networking sites or sent to friends. Whatever the circumstances, young people need to be made aware of the consequences, including the possible legal implications of both taking and sharing inappropriate images.

InFocus: Sexting

Link: Quick Reference Guide – Sexting

5.32 Cyber-Bullying

Bullying of any sort, whether of the traditional kind or through digital technologies such as mobile phone or social networking sites- known as cyber bullying- should not be tolerated. Bullying is always distressing for a child and, with cyberbullying, the bullying can seem inescapable because there is nowhere out of reach of the bullies. Even the child's bedroom is not a sanctuary if there is a computer or mobile device present. Children need support in being able to speak out about cyberbullying, especially as it is so pervasive, both on and off line.

InFocus: Cyberbullying - Keep Children Safe Using ICT

Link: Quick Reference Guide - Cyberbullying

Useful Contacts:

Bullying UK (part of Family Lives)

CAN Mezzanine, 49-51 East Road, London, N1 6AH

Phone: 020 7553 3080

Helpline: 0808 800 2222

Web: <http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

Kidscape

2 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH.

Phone: 020 7730 3300

Helpline: 08451 205 204

Web: www.kidscape.org.uk

Email: webinfo@kidscape.org.uk

Childline (A service provided by NSPCC)

Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH

Phone: 0800 1111

5.33 Abusive Images of Children

CCPAS receives many calls from organisations dealing with those who have been charged or convicted of offences involving possession of abusive images of children. There are two specific offences. Under section 1(1) of the 1978 Protection of Children Act, it is an offence for a person to:

take, or permit to be taken, or to make any indecent photograph or pseudo-photograph of a child

distribute or show such indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs

have in his/her possession such indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs, with a view to their being distributed or shown by himself/herself or others

publish or cause to be published any advertisement likely to be understood as conveying that the advertiser distributes or shows such indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs, or intends to do so.

Under section 160(1) of the Criminal Justice Act 1988, possessing an indecent photograph or pseudo- photograph of a child is a criminal offence.

InFocus: Pornography and Sex Offences Using the Internet

Useful Contacts

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre

33 Vauxhall Bridge Road London SW1 2WG[BS1] .

Phone: 0870 000 3344

Web: www.ceop.gov.uk

CEOP's ThinkUKnow web resources: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

Childnet International

Studio 14, Brockley Cross Business Centre, 96 Endwell Road, London SE4 2PD,

Phone: 020 7639 6967

Email: info@childnet-int.org

Web: www.childnet-int.org and www.chatdanger.com

Childnet International 'Know IT All' Resources, web: www.childnet-int.org/kia/

Internet Watch Foundation

Phone: 08456 00 88 44

Web: www.iwf.org.uk (for reporting abusive images)

5.34 Filming and Taking Photographs

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or film footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or that filming is prohibited, but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe.

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. The worker should write to parents or carers to explain what is happening and leave the onus on the parent/carer to contact them if they have any objections. In addition to this:

It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.

When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.

Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website.



Link: Image Use Consent Form

Link: Standard 5.3 - Data Protection

5.35 Tobacco and Alcohol

There is a smoking ban in all enclosed public spaces throughout the UK and a no-smoking policy should therefore be enforced within any buildings where the organisation operates. There are exemptions to this in places such as care homes. From October 2014, the ban on smoking has now been extended to smoking in a vehicle with children present (in England and Wales).

It is also illegal for anyone under the age of 18 in England and Wales to be sold cigarettes (or other products like roll-up tobacco and cigars) over the counter or at a vending machine. The organisation is able to impose a no-smoking policy, so it is important all those attending the activity are aware of and agree to abide by it.

There are also strict regulations on the sale and consumption of alcohol where children and young people are concerned. Workers do not have the right to confiscate alcohol found in a young person's possession but they can enforce a no-alcohol policy.

There may be occasions where it is felt necessary to inform parents /carers that a child/young person has been drinking, particularly if they are under the influence of alcohol at the group or there are concerns for their health or safety. This should be discussed with the activity and Safeguarding coordinator.

5.36 Solvents and Illegal Substances.

Workers should be alert to possession and use of illegal substances.

If a worker becomes aware a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be abusing solvents they should be encouraged to seek professional help from their doctor or a counsellor specialising in this area.

Having said this, it is a criminal offence to allow anyone attending an activity run by an organisation to supply illegal drugs or use them on the premises. It is important to adopt zero tolerance on all illegal substances and draw up a protocol with the local police for dealing with such situations should they arise. All those attending the activity should be made aware of this protocol which should be clearly displayed. For the individual involved:

Ask them to stop, warning them of the consequences if they do not e.g. suspension or ban from the group.

Inform parents/carers if the young person is under 16 years.

Inform the parents/carers if the young person is over 16 years (with their permission).

Discuss with the young person the proposed course of action, particularly if they re-offend (e.g. informing the police).

Write down the content of any discussion with the young person, including the action taken and keep this in a secure place.

Liaise with the police to devise a strategy for dealing with the use of illegal substances.

5.37 Gangs and Gang Crime

It is not uncommon for groups of children to gather in a public place. This is quite normal, and though some might become disorderly or anti-social, this does not mean they are part of a gang. However, there is a strong association between gang membership and violence and crime and sometimes a young person may not realise they are in a gang, they just think they are socialising with a group of friends.

Young people join gangs for a number of reasons such as belonging to a group, feeling acceptance, being respected by their peers, having power over other people and feeling safe.

Belonging to a gang isn't against the law, it's only criminal offences committed by gang members that are illegal. Having said this, if an offender is part of a gang they may be given a harsher sentence if they are found guilty of:

- possessing drugs like cannabis, cocaine and ecstasy

- carrying a knife if there is intent to use it as a weapon (even if it belongs to someone else)

- carrying or keeping a gun without a licence, including fake or replica guns

The Police will search anyone they think may be carrying a gun or a knife and, working with school staff, may search young people for weapons at school. If there is reason to believe children and young people are involved in criminal gang activity, they need to be told if they carry a gun or a knife they could be arrested; also that a court appearance and a criminal record could jeopardise their chances of employment, going to university or college, or even travelling abroad.

The best way workers can help prevent children getting involved in a gang is by talking openly about gangs, finding out what children think about gangs and warning them of the dangers of becoming involved.

Infocus: Gangs – signs of involvement and how to respond

Further information

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-who-may-be-affected-by-gang-activity>