



Safeguarding Policy

Mendip Outdoor Pursuits Education Centre

Introduction

The staff and Mendip Outdoor Pursuits fully recognise that all staff have a full and active part to play in protecting those who use our company from harm. All staff believe that Mendip Outdoor Pursuits should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child or vulnerable adult.

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child or vulnerable adult's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence
- To raise the awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse in line with Local and National procedures and guidance
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children or vulnerable adults known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- To emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff, schools and centre users.
- To develop a structured procedure within the company, which will be followed by all members of Mendip Outdoor Pursuits staff in cases of suspected abuse.
- To be aware of other agencies and contacts, especially within the Schools, Police and Social Services
- To ensure that all adults within our company who have access to children or vulnerable adults have been checked as to their suitability.

Procedures

Our company procedures for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults will be in line with recommend procedures.

We will ensure that:

- We have a designated member of staff for Safeguarding who undertakes regular training.
- We have a Deputy member of staff who will act in the Designated Person's absence and deal with any child or vulnerable adult's protection issues.
- All members of staff develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and all permanent staff have received training under the guidance of the designated member of staff following the NSPCC Safeguarding manual.
- All members of staff know how to respond to a young person who discloses abuse.
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding procedures as part of their induction into Mendip Outdoor Pursuits.

Responsibilities

The Designated Person is responsible for:

- Keeping written records of concerns about a child or vulnerable adult even if there is no need to make an immediate referral for action
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and are separate from general information
- Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping in terms of verbal advice given is logged on a specific form.
- Ensuring that any young person who may be at risk is accommodated accordingly in consultation with user groups and their Designated Person.

Supporting Children and vulnerable adults

We recognise that a child or vulnerable adult who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that a child or vulnerable adult in these circumstances may feel helpless and humiliated. We recognise that a child or vulnerable adult may feel self blame. We recognise that the schools and other voluntary organisations may provide the only stability in the lives of children and vulnerable adults who have been abused or who are at risk of harm. We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child or vulnerable adult in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Our company will support all young people by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-confidence whilst not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within their time at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits and when under our care away from the company.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- Notifying Children's Social Services as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support to a young person about whom there have been concerns whilst at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits, by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the user groups Designated Person.
- Having a standalone policy on bullying to compliment all other policies on Safeguarding.

Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to Safeguarding are confidential. The Designated Person at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits will disclose any information about a young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only. All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child or vulnerable adult to keep secrets.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits who have become involved with a child or vulnerable adult who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support as appropriate.

Allegations against staff

We understand that a young person may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff or company user receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Designated Person. The Designated Person on all such occasions, will discuss the content of the allegation with the North Somerset Local Safeguarding Children's Board, or in their absence, the Safeguarding Advisory Service. If the allegation made to a member of staff or company user concerns the Designated Person then will immediately inform the Deputy member of staff at Mendip Outdoor Pursuits who will consult with the Principal Officer for Schools & Early Years or the Safeguarding Advisory Service.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children or vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues or other users.

Physical Intervention

We have adopted a policy on Physical Intervention and understand that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person. We recognise that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child or vulnerable adult may be considered under safeguarding or disciplinary procedures.

Bullying

Our policy on bullying is set out in a separate document and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under safeguarding procedures. This would be documented an incident in its own right.

Prevention

We recognise that the company plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to young people by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

Mendip Outdoor Pursuits will therefore:

Establish and maintain an ethos where children and vulnerable adults feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to. Ensure that all children and vulnerable adults know there is an adult at the company whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty. Include in the Mendip Outdoor Pursuits syllabus, where

possible, opportunities to equip children and vulnerable adults with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to know to whom they should turn for help.

Health & Safety

Policies on Health & Safety are set out in a separate document. It reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children and vulnerable adults both within the company's environment undertaking trips and visits. This includes all staff working with children and vulnerable adults. Our staff adhere to high standards of instruction and follow National Governing Body Guidelines in all outdoor and indoor activities.