

SAFE GUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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1. Statement

Path Hill Outdoors ".....is part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child- centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child"

Quote from *Keeping Children Safe – DfE 2016*.

Employees at Path Hill Outdoors work with and come into contact with some of the most disadvantaged and excluded young people in society, many of whom are vulnerable to abuse. Path Hill Outdoors recognises our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, radicalisation, neglect and bullying. Every young person who participates in our activities should be able to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult working with or for Path Hill Outdoors, whether a paid member of staff, on contract work or a volunteer.

In the context of this policy a child or young person is defined as

- Anyone aged under 18.

In the context of this policy an employee of Path Hill Outdoors includes paid staff, contractors and volunteers.

2. Policy Framework

Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by

- Childrens Act 2004
- Child Sexual Exploitation- guide for practitioners (DfE 2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016)
- Safeguarding Practice and Procedures Guidance from Local Safeguarding Children Boards of Berkshire and Oxfordshire (website updates 2017)

Path Hill Outdoors Framework

Path Hill Outdoors has the following policies and procedures in place that directly support and impact our approach to safeguarding children.

- Recruitment policy covering all aspects of employee recruitment. Revised 2017

For all posts the application form includes a statement that because of the nature of the work and the provision of Section 4

(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act applicants are required to consent to an 'enhanced level disclosure' through the Disclosure and Barring Service. The disclosure of relevant convictions will lead to the application being withdrawn from the recruitment process.

- **DBS policy Revised 2019**
New staff with a transferable enhanced DBS will be considered to have a valid DBS. This will be renewed by Path Hill Outdoors within two years. New staff without an enhanced DBS will not be allowed to work with children until they have been through the appropriate checks. Longer term employees will have an enhanced DBS check every three years.
- **Contract of Employment.**
This includes a Disciplinary Procedure that gives examples of behaviour likely to lead to disciplinary action and describes the formal process for taking disciplinary action.
- **Standard Operating Procedures**
Provided to all new Path Hill Outdoors employees and volunteers includes a Code of Conduct. This provides guidance on boundaries, gifts, personal behaviour, alcohol and drugs and other aspects of the work.
- **Whistle Blowing Policy**
The whistle blowing policy ensures that there is a mechanism for employees to report any incidence of serious malpractice, illegal or improper activity should it occur within the organisation. The policy gives protection in defined circumstances to employees who disclose information to a third party about an alleged wrongdoing.
- **Privacy Policy / GDPR Policy**
This policy outlines our responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- **Incident Reporting**
Path Hill Outdoors has an incident reporting procedure within its Health and Safety framework.
- **Transporting students by car - Guidelines**
These guidelines cover the procedures necessary to transport students safely when they are at Path Hill.

There is a daily de-brief session when students go home that involves all staff who have been involved in delivery for that day. Safeguarding concerns can be raised during these debriefing sessions. We keep a register of concerns that

allows us to record minor occurrences that may help us identify more significant safeguarding issues at an earlier stage.

All employees will have regular supervision with their line managers and it is essential that concerns about possible abuse be raised through supervision. If necessary these concerns should be reported to one of the designated safeguarding officers.

Path Hill Outdoors will provide appropriate training to ensure that all its employees are able to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and reporting of suspected poor practice and concerns about abuse. Training should cover the following elements: detection of abuse, response and procedures for dealing with evidence or disclosure of abuse and necessary recording and interagency working around these issues.

- Employees receive internal training in this area per term.
- Employees are expected to undertake external training in this area before they start employment. Our preferred external training is provided by Virtual College and has been informed by the NSPCC Child Protection Awareness Course.
- Employees involved in recruitment are expected to undertake Safer Recruitment and Selection training (provided by Virtual College).

There are three Designated Safeguarding Officer with responsibility in ensuring that this policy is adhered to. These are

- Mark Hillyer
- Julia Warwick
- Mike Cripps

Path Hill Outdoors will review its Safeguarding Children and Young People policies and procedures on an annual basis. As part of this annual review, all cases of incidents of abuse that were reported to Social Services in the previous year will be discussed.

3. Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, misuse of medication, misuse of restraint or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer feigns the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child for whom they are caring.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of somebody such as to cause severe adverse affects on their emotional development and well being. It may include threats of harm, deprivation of contact, humiliation, intimidation or harassment

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing someone to take part in or observe sexual activities to which they have not consented, or could not consent or were pressured into consenting.

Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse includes sexist or racist remarks or comments based on a person's impairment, disability, age or illness and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Neglect and acts of omission

Neglect and /or acts of omission describe the persistent withholding or deprivation of the means of meeting daily needs. It can involve withholding or failure to provide food, clothes, warmth, medical care, medicines, personal care and hygiene and access to appropriate health, social care or educational services.

Financial or material abuse

Financial or material abuse includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

Institutional abuse

Institutional abuse involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people.

4. Radicalisation

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed a duty on education providers to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the Prevent Duty.

It requires us to:

- teach a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and must promote community cohesion
- be safe spaces in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas
- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The Designated Safeguarding Officers at Path Hill understand how to identify those who may benefit from this support and how to make a referral.

5. The Signs of Abuse

Abuse of a student may arise through neglect or through harm or by failure to prevent harm. Students may be abused in a variety of settings by people known to them or by strangers. It is the responsibility of all Path Hill Outdoors employees and volunteers to be alert to the possibility of abuse and to be aware of the signs and indicators of abuse.

The following factors should act as indicators in situations of potential or actual abuse:

- Unexplained or suspicious marks, bruises, fractures, burns/scalds and injuries to the mouth and eyes.
- The client is in a poor physical condition or has delayed speech and language development.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- A statement by a client that s/he has been victimised.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty making friends.
- Preventing from socialising with other clients.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place.

6. Confidentiality around abuse issues

Information given by students to Path Hill Outdoors employees is confidential to the organisation. Confidentiality, however has to take second place to a child's right to protection from harm. All students referred to Path Hill Outdoors must be made aware and helped to understand the occasions when confidentiality may be broken, particularly where there are child protection issues.

Wherever possible the student will be informed of the decision to breach confidentiality beforehand, and the reason why. It is recognised that in exceptional cases this may not be in the best interest of the student, in which case every effort will be made as soon as it is deemed safe to do so, to inform them after the event. Employees must involve the Designated Persons for Safeguarding in this decision.

Current Designated Persons for Safeguarding are –
Julia Warwick – Director
Mark Hillyer – Director
Mike Cripps – One to One Manager
Sept 2019

If employees are contacted by Social and Health Care or the Police requesting information in connection with an assessment of a need for protection under Section 47 of the Children's Act, they must comply with that request.

7. Procedure for responding to disclosure, suspicions and allegations of abuse of a young person

It is not an employee's responsibility to decide whether a young person is being, or has been abused or whether or not someone poses a 'real' risk to a young person's welfare. It is however, each employee's responsibility if information is obtained that indicates abuse may have, or could occur, to take action to prevent the suffering of a young person.

It is essential that an employee shares any concerns relating to the abuse of a young person immediately with their line manager and/or safeguarding officer. The sharing of information can take place in the daily staff de-briefings or on a one to one basis with a member of the Senior Management Team.

The purpose of the discussion between the employee and the senior manager and/or safeguarding officer is to clarify the cause for concern and to decide whether there are sufficient grounds to refer to the Children's Social Care Duty Team in the respective local authority where the student lives.

A DSO should make the referral to the Children's Social Care Duty Team on the telephone. There is an Emergency Duty team for out of hours contacts.

Contact details for all Children's Social Care Duty Team in Berkshire and Oxfordshire are found in Appendix 1 amended to this document and are posted on the wall in the office at Path Hill Outdoors

When making the referral the DSO will need to state clearly that this is a child protection referral and be prepared to provide the following information:

- Your own details.
- Known information about the child or young person.
- The child or young persons address.
- Details of the concern.
- The source of the information.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- Details of witnesses to any incidents
- The parents or carers response to the concerns if aware.
- Whether the child or young person/family are already aware of the referral or have asked you to make it.

When making the referral the DSO should record the name and job title of the Social Worker to whom the details have been passed.

It is a legal requirement that all referrals should be confirmed in writing to the Children's Social Care Duty Team within three working days. All action taken must be recorded.

If the child or young person and/or family are not aware that a referral to Children's Social Care Duty Team is being made then they should not automatically be informed. This should be a decision between the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the duty officer of the Children's Social Care Duty Team

Children's Social Care Duty Team and the Police have procedures for investigating where a child or young person may be at risk. If appropriate an employee may participate in formal meetings and child protection conferences either to share information or in a support capacity. It is the responsibility of employees to Children's Social Care Duty Team after reporting the case and record the action they took. If their response is unsatisfactory the Safeguarding Officer must report concerns to Children's Social Care Senior Manager.

In some instances a child or young person may be making a disclosure about abuse that has happened in the past. If after discussion between the employee and the line manager it is agreed that there is no immediate risk to the child or young person or other people and that any referral may end the working relationship with the child or young person, a period of time may be beneficial for the child or young person to prepare for the referral or to self refer.

No one should ever delay emergency action to protect a child or young person.

7.1 Flow chart for responding to disclosure, suspicions and allegations of abuse for a young person

Information is obtained that indicated abuse has, or could occur in a young person



Immediately employee should share information with line manager / Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

**Current Designated Persons for Safeguarding are –
Julia Warwick – Director
Mark Hillyer – Director
Mike Cripps – One to One Manager**



If decision is made to contact social services department, the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) must contact social services duty team by phone that day



The (DSO) must confirm telephone referral in writing to the duty officer spoken to within 2 days



If the DSO has not received any communication from social services within one week regarding action taken, they must contact social services to gain such information. A record of the action taken by social services should be made.

8. Procedures for working with clients who are the perpetrators of abuse

The nature of the work carried out by Path Hill Outdoors and the complexity and vulnerability of some of our students means that some may have been or continue to be the perpetrators of abuse.

Path Hill Outdoors recognises that some of our students lead lifestyles whereby aggression, violence and abuse is the norm.

Employees should continually discuss issues and concerns around students they perceive as being the perpetrators of abuse. These discussions can be daily at debriefs or on a one to one basis with a DSO.

If a student presents a serious risk to others, Path Hill Outdoors staff will discuss the best way forward

Possible options will be

- An internal meeting with the student
- A period of 'time out' for the student
- A meeting between the student, Path Hill Outdoors staff, parents/guardians and the referring agencies

Though Path Hill Outdoors staff will endeavour to support students with these issues if other students continue to be put at risk then then exclusion from the programmes may be considered.

9. Suspected abuse by a Path Hill Outdoors employee

Any allegation of abuse made against an employee must be taken seriously. Path Hill Outdoors acknowledges that this will be a distressing and stressful situation for all involved. Path Hill Outdoors assures all employees that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports their concerns about a colleague's practice.

When a report of an allegation or suspicion is received, it should be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer immediately. The Lead Safeguarding Officer will investigate the incident to clarify the following:

- The nature of the allegation or suspicion.
- Details of the student involved.
- Any relevant information relating to the person against whom the allegation is made.
- Details and times of the incident if appropriate.
- Details of any others involved and/or any witnesses.

If the allegations are below the threshold of significant harm the matter will be dealt with through Path Hill Outdoors disciplinary policy. If the allegations are more serious they should be reported immediately to Social Services, prior to being dealt with through Path Hill Outdoors disciplinary policy.

A period of suspension may be appropriate whilst an investigation is ongoing. If the matter has been reported to Social Services the staff member must be suspended. Suspension should be seen as a neutral act designed to protect both students and the employee.

Appropriate care and support should be offered to the client, the person making the allegation and the employee involved.

Should the allegation be against the Lead Safeguarding Officer or a Designating Safeguarding Officer then they will be removed from the investigation and this will be led by the remaining members of the Safeguarding Team. Appropriate procedures to report concerns about senior management at Path Hill are stated in our Whistleblowing Policy.

Avoiding allegations

For adults working with young people, particularly those still of compulsory school age, it is important to be aware of potentially difficult situations. By following the simple guidance outlined below it should be possible to ensure that Path Hill Outdoors is a secure and productive environment for both the student and staff/volunteers.

Touch

Acknowledge/praise by placing a hand on a child's shoulder/upper arm (between shoulder and elbow). Shake hands with children as a form of meeting and greeting or recognition. If a child is clearly distressed, hug a child, keeping our hands around their shoulder and our waists apart. Place our arm around the shoulder of a child to provide support following an injury or incident.

Behaviour

Whilst it is important to reassure a young person who may be nervous in a new setting and reliant on your guidance, you should avoid being over familiar. Never permit 'horseplay' which may cause embarrassment or fear. Clear boundaries should be presented and followed.

Environment

Where possible avoid being on your own in an isolated or closed environment with a young person. If in a room, leave a door open and ensure other members of staff know you are there. Work with groups of 2 or more young people to one adult or vice versa. This will also protect you against malicious claims.

Travel

Ensure that there is a known destination and check-in times with a third party in situations where a young person will be travelling alone with an adult. Always take a mobile phone with you. Where possible avoid travelling on your own with a student.

Policy Revised: September 2021 Next Review: September 2022