



THE PEARSON CENTRE
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

SAFEGUARDING POLICY



Our commitment:

The Pearson Centre for Young People is committed to providing a safe environment in which children and young people can develop socially and emotionally and form positive relationships.

Code of Good Practice

All leaders should follow the code of good practice for adults working in the Development Programme at The Pearson Centre. Leaders working within The Boys' Brigade or The Girls' Brigade are required to follow the code of practice issues by these organisations. (<https://boys-brigade.org.uk/downloads/safeguardingpolicy.pdf>; <https://www.girlsbrigadeministries.org.uk/resource/guidelines-and-procedures-for-safeguarding/#:~:text=Safeguarding%20processes,-All%20GBM%20volunteers&text=All%20contact%20with%20children%20and,whom%20they%20can%20seek%20advice.>)

The code of good practice for Development Programme Leaders at the Pearson Centre is shown below:

- Have any inappropriate verbal or physical contact with young people or make suggestive remarks or gestures
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Rely on just your good name to protect you

What happens...

If you suspect a child is being abused; emotionally, physically or sexually:

1. Tell your Development Worker, Centre Manager or other Trustee & inform the MASH team so that advice may be given.

MASH Team contact details: Tel 0300 5008090; Out of hours 0300 456 4546. Email: Mash.safeguarding@nottscg.gov.uk

2. Record any facts which support your suspicions.
3. Agree with other adults involved what action, if any, to be taken



If a child discloses to you abuse by someone else:

- Allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, but do not investigate.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Same steps as in 1-2 as in suspecting a child is being abused.

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:

- Immediately tell your Development Worker, Centre Manager or other Trustee and inform the MASH team so that advice may be given.
- Record the facts as you know them.
- Try to ensure no-one else is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.

You must refer; you must not investigate

YOU MUST

- Treat everyone with respect
- Provide an example you wish others to follow
- Plan other activities which involve more than one other person being present, or at least which are within sight or hearing of others
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- Have separate sleeping accommodation for leaders and young people
- Provide access for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Avoid physical horseplay such as wrestling or tickling
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- Recognise that sensitivity is required in moments when you are discussing issues, such as bullying, bereavement, abuse or personal development

YOU MUST NOT

- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. Initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying)
- Play physical contact games with young people



All Development Programme leaders are expected to follow the policy of The Trustees, whilst leaders working within The Boys' Brigade or The Girls' Brigade should follow the policy set by their organisation.

The Pearson Centre for Young People acknowledges that in its work with children and young people it has a duty to provide a safe environment in all circumstances and to ensure that they are protected from any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or harm.

This means ensuring that meeting places etc. are free from hazards, that risk assessments are carried out and that when any activity is undertaken involving an element of risk, then the person supervising the activity is appropriately qualified and/or experienced.

Appendices

1. Recruitment of Leaders

1.1 The Pearson Centre has specific regulations and requirements for all adults working in the name of The Charity. All potential development work leaders will complete

- An informal interview with The Centre Manager
- An application form
- A DBS application form. All leaders will be subject to an enhanced check
- And provide the names for two references (not related to the applicant)

1.2 On receipt of the application form, The Pearson Centre will ensure a disclosure check has been obtained. The disclosure will include information on any convictions, cautions or investigations not resulting in convictions. Consideration will be given to the information contained on the disclosure and if all is satisfactory, the leader will be registered.

1.3 If there is information on the disclosure that indicates that the individual should not be appointed then they are written to, giving reasons. The Pearson Centre Trustees will also be informed.

1.4 An individual who is deemed unsuitable to work with children or young people has the right of appeal. The appeal should be made in writing to the The Pearson Centre's Safeguarding Panel.

1.5 In the case of a disclosure that contains information that makes it unclear whether or not an individual should be registered, then a referral to the Pearson Centre's Safeguarding Panel will be made. Members of the panel will consider the suitability of the individual, and conduct a risk assessment based on whether the nature of the information on the disclosure poses any risk to the welfare of children, young people or other adults. If the panel and Trustees agree that the applicant is suitable to work with children and young people, then The Pearson Centre will register the individual. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for an individual to be registered for a probationary period, with a date set for review. It may also be the case that an individual could be registered with certain conditions attached (for example that they do not drive a minibus etc)



1.6 An individual who is turned down by the Panel has the right of appeal. The appeal should be made in writing to the Chair of the Trustees, and should be made within three months of notification of unsuitability.

2. Training of Leaders

2.1 All new leaders, on the first time of starting work within the Development Programme should receive induction from the Development Worker, or delegated person. This induction will include emergency procedures and an explanation of the code of good practice for adults working in The Pearson Centre. The new leader will be issued the code of good practice card.

2.2 Any registered helpers taking responsibility for groups of young people must have attended a Child Protection and Safety module.

3. Understanding abuse and maltreatment

3.1 There are many different forms of child abuse, the main categories being physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. The NSPCC website www.nspcc.org.uk has more information about the types of abuse and spotting the signs of abuse or neglect.

3.2 Some children are in situations that make them more vulnerable to abuse. These situations could include living in care or in violent or abusive homes, having disabilities or learning disabilities, using drugs or alcohol or living with parents or carers who use drugs and alcohol and living with mental health problems.

3.3 Common Misunderstandings:

Myth: "Children often fantasise or make up stories about being abused - they have very active imaginations"

Fact: In fact it is extremely rare for children to lie or make up stories about being sexually abused. The far bigger problem is that children are often too frightened to tell anyone. Abusers often tell their victims that no one will believe them if they report what has happened.

Myth: "Disabled children are less likely to be abused."

Fact: Disabled children are more likely to be abused because they are more vulnerable, dependent on others and may be less able to communicate what has happened to them.

Myth: "Child abusers have deprived backgrounds and are of below average intelligence."

Fact: Abusers come from a very wide range of social and intellectual backgrounds and may be well liked and respected members of society. Although a small minority of women abuse, the vast majority of abusers are male. Many people want to be able to identify a category of men who are more likely to abuse children. In fact, there is no 'type' of man who is an abuser - they come from every class, professional, racial and religious background. They are heterosexual and homosexual. They are also often very skilled at manipulating people and situations, at creating trust and respect within their community and profession.



Myth: “Children are always safe in groups.”

Fact: This is not always true: young children have, for example, been sexually assaulted in nursery school while other adults and children were present.

4. Allegations and disclosures of abuse or maltreatment

4.1 Procedure Following Allegations or Suspicion of Abuse by a Leader:

All allegations of abuse or suspicions of abuse concerning leaders are to be referred immediately and directly to the Development Worker or Centre Manager, who must refer immediately to Trustees.

4.2 No investigating or questioning is to be undertaken. If the Development Worker is implicated, refer directly to Pearson Centre Trustees. All allegations/suspicions are to be referred, no matter how insignificant they seem to be, or when they occur. The Pearson Centre Trustees should always be notified of allegations, even when they occur in non-Pearson Centre settings.

4.3 If the situation is immediately critical, then there is an out of hours contact number on the MASH Emergency Line (dial 0300 4564546). The Development Worker and/or Centre Manager may decide to contact the police or social services if they feel that a child/children is/are at risk.

4.4 Any individual under suspicion or against whom an allegation or complaint has been made may be suspended by The Pearson Centre Trustees until the conclusion of any investigations. A letter informing the individual of their suspension will be sent from The Pearson Centre Trustees and copies sent to Development Worker and Centre Manager.

4.5 An individual has the right to appeal against a suspension. The appeal should be made in writing to the Pearson Centre’s Safeguarding Panel, and made within three months of notification of suspension.

4.6 While under suspension a leader may not be involved in any Pearson Centre activities.

4.7 Support for the suspended leader, and for any other parties involved is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Trustee. All the other Pearson Centre Trustees remain neutral while investigations are carried out, and cannot offer any pastoral support to those individuals under investigation, but would look to the Church to fulfill this role.

4.8 Once the matter is concluded, the Safeguarding Panel will review the suspension.

4.9 Where the leader has left, or been asked to leave for reasons that are connected to child protection matters, it is our obligation to refer this to the appropriate vetting & barring authority.

4.10 Procedure Following Suspicion or Disclosure of Abuse Outside the The Pearson Centre

If a leader suspects that a child or young person is being abused emotionally, physically or sexually he or she should tell the Development Worker or Centre Manager and seek further advice from the MASH team.



4.11 Any facts that support the suspicion should be recorded.

4.12 There should be an agreement with the other adults consulted what action, if any, should be taken.

4.13 If a child discloses to you abuse by someone else, you should listen without interrupting, accept what is said, but do not investigate.

4.14 Advise that you will try to offer support but that you must pass the information on. Tell the Development Worker and/or seek further advice from The Pearson Centre

5. Dealing with the press

5.1 Where there is an approach by either the local or national press on the subject of child protection, Leaders should refer the enquirer to Centre Manager. Where a press release has been issued, the Development Worker will be sent a copy.

6. Bullying

6.1 What is bullying?

Bullying is aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, that intentionally hurts or harms, often repeated over a period of time. Bullying constitutes physical and/or emotional abuse. Research confirms the destructive effects of bullying on the lives of children and young people.

Although some can shrug it off, bullying can induce feelings of powerlessness, isolation from others, undermine self-esteem and often convince the victims that they are at fault. For some, it can lead to serious and prolonged distress and long term damage to their

Social and emotional development.

Bullying can take many forms and fits into one of two categories: emotionally or physically harmful behaviour. The focus of bullying can be more or less anything that distinguishes an individual and represents a deviation from a presumed 'norm,' for example size, body shape, hair colour, skin, eyesight, dress, language, or mannerisms.

(Care should be taken not to confuse 'bullying' with the wider problems of racism or sexism or homophobia where unfair treatment or harassment is perpetrated against a group or an individual because of their race, sex or sexual orientation. This type of discrimination is widespread and institutional, and involves the systematic oppression of groups of people.)

Bullying can be conducted in different ways. It can be one-off or sustained and it is damaging either way. It can be painfully obvious that bullying is taking place, or it can be surreptitious and subtle. Bullying can be perpetrated by an individual, one on one, or by a group on an individual or on another group. Bullying can include physical violence, destroying or damaging personal property, spreading malicious gossip and lies, name calling; bullying can also be perpetrated by mobile phone text messaging and social networking sites.



6.2 Prevention.

Effective strategies to combat bullying will include:

- Having ground rules for behaviour; children and young people should be involved in drawing these up. New rules may be required for camps and holidays when companies are joining together for these activities
- Including activities in the programme about fairness and games which are inclusive
- Having time in the programme when young people can talk together
- Informing all leaders when bullying has been observed
- Listening carefully to what children and young people are telling you
- Making sure that activities are properly supervised with remote supervision for 'free time'
- Informing young people and parents of expected levels of behaviour and of the sanctions where bullying is being perpetrated. It might be appropriate to have a 'charter' for children and parents/carers to sign;
- Sanctions might include informing a parent or carer, exclusion from any extra curricular activities (i.e. trips and visits), exclusion from The Centre for several weeks, or permanent exclusion.

6.3 What to do if bullying occurs

Ignoring bullying or telling a young person to, 'just ignore it', or 'don't worry about it' is not an effective strategy, it is disempowering.

Tackling bullying is time consuming and requires a commitment from leaders in The Centre to work to a strategy to ensure that all members of The Centre feel safe from bullying and harassment.

The presence of bullying within The Pearson Centre is never acceptable. The victims of bullying must be given appropriate support. It is also important that the perpetrator is dealt with sensitively; perpetrators can sometimes be victims in other areas of their lives.

Additional resources and information can be found on the Internet including:

www.antibullying.net and www.bullying.co.uk

7. Working with children and young people to enable them to stay safe

7.1 It is part of our purpose to work with children and young people to enable them to assess the risks that face them - both in and away from The Pearson Centre. We aim to help young people to develop their confidence to manage risk and to be aware of sources of help and support. Many of our programme activities include an aspect of risk management, and Leaders can develop the habit of including young people in routine risk assessments and talking to them about other risks that may exist in their lives



7.2 Part of enabling young people to manage risk includes listening to them and knowing how to recognise the signs of when a young person is willing to talk. The risks young people may face in their lives may include physical, emotional, legal or financial. Pearson Centre leaders should recognise the importance of self esteem in young people as a factor in risk management. The Pearson Centre setting can be one of the most important places where self esteem is built and positive choices made.

7.3 Research has shown that most young people tend to under-estimate the risks that can be present in some online activities. "Think You Know" is a good web resource for young people, and has specific areas for different age ranges. www.thinkyouknow.com See section 10.3 below

8. Safe working practices

8.1 Risk Assessments and Trips & Holidays

The BB Safety Handbook contains useful guidance and policy on a range of issues connected with safe working practice and can be found on the BB website, here: <https://boys-brigade.org.uk/safety-policy/> Development Volunteers are encouraged to regularly review the handbook as the online version is updated as circumstances and legislation changes.

8.2 Online and mobile technology

Leaders should make sure they are familiar with the potential risks posed by the internet and chat rooms for young people. (see websites given below).

Bullying by mobile phone is a relatively new phenomenon and must be followed up (see section 8.).

Boundaries

Pearson Centre leaders need to be clear about their boundaries and good safeguarding practice when using internet and mobile phone technology. Social networking sites can be valuable peer youth work tools in terms of relationship-building. However, adult leaders need to remember that as volunteer youth workers, they are in positions of trust, not "friends" and that the youth leader's role is only to be carried out in supervised settings.

Clear boundaries about when, where and how Pearson Centre leaders carry out their volunteering roles are essential. Clear boundaries serve two purposes:

- They protect young people
- They protect the leader from getting into situations that become difficult to manage.

Another way to think about this is that when you are working as a Pearson Centre leader at The Centre, there are other leaders around and there is an element of supervision by the Development Worker. If you are talking to a young person on social media outside of these hours, you have no supervision in place, and the young person has no clear understanding of the youth work relationship in an online setting.



Texting, MSN and networking sites can be useful for sending round messages about events or cancelled meetings etc but should not be used to develop a separate relationship with young people outside of The Pearson Centre.

Websites such as Facebook and X can be good for young people to use among themselves outside of The Pearson Centre, but leaders should not blur the boundaries between themselves and the young people they work with. Leaders should not be in one to one online communication with young people outside of Pearson Centre hours.

Care must be taken in using internet access for Pearson Centre activities. Any PCs or laptops used for Pearson Centre should be installed with control software to monitor website viewing and to restrict access to appropriate sites. Chat rooms on Pearson Centre websites are discouraged.

Useful websites:

Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org

Government Home Office site: www.thinkyouknow.com

BBC home pages: www.bbc.co.uk/chatguide

Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre www.ceop.gov.uk

8.3 Photographs and video

It is important that permission is obtained from the young people involved and their parents or carers before photographs are used for publicity purposes. The annual consent form contains a paragraph about the use of such photographs. Care should be given in the release of information, and addresses of children & young people should not be given, but it may be appropriate to include the names of those gaining their awards, receiving the trophy etc. If individuals indicate that they do not want their picture to appear, that wish must be respected.

Leaders should take care that the choice and dignity of the young person is preserved when taking photos and that any request to have a particular photo deleted should be respected.

8.4 Storing digital photographs:

Any Leader storing digital photographs of children and young people on their computer should ensure that picture files are held securely and password protected. In addition to this, Leaders are advised that photos are not to be sent to any person or website outside of The Pearson Centre without the prior consent of the subject or their parents/carers.



9. Whistle-blowing and making an anonymous referral

9.1 If any Leader is concerned by any practice or behaviour of another Leader, then their first port of call is the Development Worker. The concern should be discussed openly and confidentially, and Development Worker can then make a decision on what action to take, if any. If the concern is with the Development Worker then the Centre Manager or Trustees should be contacted.

9.2 If, for any reason, the Leader is unable or unwilling to talk to the Development Worker or feels that the matter is unresolved, then that Leader can choose to report the matter to Pearson Centre Trustees, with an option of remaining anonymous. This is known as “whistle-blowing”.

9.3 For any matter deemed to be of development work a report should be made to the Centre Manager.

