



SAFEGUARDING YOUNG AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

1. Introduction

Everyone involved in BLUE SPIRIT activities is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. Although BLUE SPIRIT itself does not implement the sail training activities it sponsors, it nevertheless has a duty of care to participating young people and a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people (someone under the age of 18) or vulnerable people, staff and volunteers of sail training organisations will provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

BLUE SPIRIT is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children and vulnerable people from harm and abuse. This means following procedures to protect them and report any concerns about their welfare appropriately ensuring that any protection concerns and referrals may be handled sensitively, professionally and in ways which prioritise the needs of the individual concerned.

With this in mind, the aim of the policy is to promote good practice, to provide young and vulnerable people with appropriate safety / protection whilst participating in activities organised or sponsored by BLUE SPIRIT. Through a culture of prevention, protection and support, it seeks to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues. It also seeks to ensure the protection of staff and volunteers through sound advice and where possible, training.

2. Policy Statement

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of young people and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic background, all participants who sail with BLUE SPIRIT partners

- have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe and suitable environment
- are protected from abuse during their voyage and at any other time when involved with BLUE SPIRIT

BLUE SPIRIT acknowledges that some young people and vulnerable adults, in particular those who participate in the experience it offers, may be vulnerable to abuse and takes reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of this safeguarding policy BLUE SPIRIT will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of young people and vulnerable adults



- work in partnership with parents, carers, young / vulnerable people, sail training organisations, community groups and communities, recognising that close working relationships are an essential factor in ensuring everyone's protection.
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

3. In Practice

The work of BLUE SPIRIT will be organised in such a way so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children or young people can occur.

Any personnel (Trustees, staff and volunteers) with responsibility for the safety, care or guidance of young people will be DBS checked and cleared.

We will ensure the partners we work with (sail training organisations and voluntary and community groups) have and implement their own safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable people before beginning to work in partnership with them.

Use of Photographic / Filming Equipment

All parents / carers and participants should be made aware that the use video and photographic equipment will be used during their sailing experience and the footage / pictures will be used for publicity. Individuals can opt out at any point.

4. Defining Abuse

Abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are many types of abuse: **physical, sexual, emotional, domestic, financial, online and peer abuse, radicalisation, female genital mutilation and neglect.** The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young or vulnerable person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person from causing harm.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow a young person into adulthood



People with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

See Appendix I for Types of Abuse and Appendix II for Indicators of Abuse (non-exhaustive)

5. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

It is not the responsibility of anyone working or volunteering for BLUE SPIRIT to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young or vulnerable person.

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

In all cases report to the designated lead for safeguarding as soon as you can.

6. Recording Information

When recording information, it is important that you do not carry the process beyond gathering the information about the allegation and into beginning an investigation. Unnecessary questioning of the young person or vulnerable adult could prejudice the integrity of evidence that may eventually have to be presented in court.

There are particular problems with regard to gaining information from young people or vulnerable adults with limited communication skills. Care should be taken to avoid 'leading' them.

The environment for recording needs to be considered carefully. Try to ensure that you are in sight of another adult at all times without the conversation being overheard. Remain positive and be supportive at all times and take care with respect to physical contact.

7. Reporting Abuse

If you have general concerns about a young person's or vulnerable adult's behaviour, it may be appropriate to speak to a group leader – it may be that the situation is easily explained by a recent incident e.g. a bereavement or a previously identified behaviour pattern.

In all cases, you should contact BLUE SPIRIT's Safeguarding Designated Lead named below. It is the responsibility of this person to make the decision – after consultation with those responsible for safeguarding in the youth group and sail training organisation that the young or vulnerable person is involved with – as to whether it meets the threshold of a Safeguarding/Child Protection matter in which case it will be referred to the appropriate County or City County Council who will

Blue Spirit
bluespiritsails@gmail.com
07943 663368



ensure the matter is dealt with appropriately regarding contact with the Social Services and/or Police.

Contact with the Designated Lead should, in the first instance, be made by telephone then followed up with a written report.

The Designated Lead for Safeguarding is:

Telephone No: 07943 663368

Jennifer Lees (commonly known as Solen Lees): solen@bluespirit.uk

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Solen Lees". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letters of "Solen" and "Lees" being capitalized and prominent.

Date: 11/03/2024



Appendix I: Types of Abuse

Please bear in mind that this is not a definitive definition of every kind of abuse.

Physical Abuse

Where an individual physically hurts or injures another e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, and drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute physical abuse.

This category of abuse can also include when a parent / carer reports non-existent symptoms or illness deliberately causes ill health in a young person they are looking after. This is called Fabricated or Induced Illness (previously 'Munchausen's syndrome by proxy').

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a person. This is likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young or vulnerable person they are useless, worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn. Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Bullying

May come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are three main types of bullying.

It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

Neglect

Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet a young or vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse.



Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child. It includes:

- sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus
- forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person and includes:

- encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- showing pornography to a child
- making, viewing or distributing child abuse images
- allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.

Online sexual abuse includes:

- persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves, this is sometimes referred to as sexting
- persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone
- having sexual conversations with a child by text or online
- meeting a child following online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.

Abusers may threaten to send sexually explicit images, video or copies of sexual conversations to the young person's friends and family unless they take part in other sexual activity. Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the abuse has stopped.

Abusers will often try to build an emotional connection with a child in order to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse. This is known as grooming.

Radicalisation

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources, some of which may be considered radical or extreme. Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm. The process of radicalisation may involve:

- being groomed online or in person



- exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- psychological manipulation
- exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- the risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts.

It happens gradually so children and young people who are affected may not realise what it is that they are being drawn into.

Female genital mutilation

What is female genital mutilation?

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting.

The age at which FGM is carried out varies. It may be carried out when a girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during pregnancy (Home Office et al, 2016). Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM.

However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It's used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long lasting damage to physical and emotional health.



Appendix I: Indicators of Abuse

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place.

Even for those experienced in working with abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a young or vulnerable person is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- a description which appears to be an abusive act involving them
- another young person or adult expressing concern about the welfare of someone
- unexplained changes in a person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with others
- displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

Signs of bullying

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down.
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.



Indicators of radicalisation

If a child or young person is being radicalised their day-to-day behaviour may become increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause. For example, they may:

- spend increasing amounts of time talking to people with extreme views (this includes online and offline communication)
- change their style of dress or personal appearance
- lose interest in friends and activities that are not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause
- have material or symbols associated with an extreme cause
- try to recruit others to join the cause

Signs of female genital mutilation

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about or you may become aware of:

- a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family
- relative or cutter visiting from abroad
- a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage
- a female relative being cut - a sister, cousin or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt
- missing school repeatedly or running away from home.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, cursive letters that appear to be 'JJO'.

Date: 11/03/2024