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**YMCA Lurgan**

# **Child Safeguarding Statement**

## **Policy Procedures and Guidelines**

Oct 2022

## 1. YMCA Child Safeguarding Policy Statement

Whilst the association recognises that the primary responsibility for the care of children and young people rests with parents and guardians, the community as a whole has responsibility for their well being and for protecting them.

The YMCA is committed to taking every appropriate step to ensure the safety and well being of the young people with whom it works, regardless of class, gender, race or creed. This policy applies to all children and young people with whom the YMCA is involved with regardless of age. The supplementary Good Practice Guidelines should also be read alongside our Keeping Adults Safe policy and procedures document

All YMCA staff or volunteers must be aware of this policy and it is their duty to guarantee its implementation.

The policy states:

***“All children and young people should enjoy YMCA facilities and activities without fear of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. The welfare of children using YMCA services is of paramount importance”***

YMCA Lurgan is truly committed to safeguarding the well being of its members, staff and volunteers, who should at all times show, and be shown, respect and understanding regarding their rights, safety and welfare.

## 2. Introduction

This policy seeks to lay out the value base, procedures and guidelines required for YMCA staff & volunteers to ensure effective safeguarding and child protection. It can and should be added to where circumstances and programmes require it eg residential centres.

For the purposes of this document: -

'Worker'	refers to a person (18 years or over) who is involved in leadership of any organisations or groups.
'D.C.P.O'	Designated Child Protection Officer

### Legislation

The key legislation upon which this policy is based is as follows:

- Children (N.I.) Order 1995
- Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (N.I.) Order 2003
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults 2007

The policy also follows the Guidelines as set out in

- Choosing To Protect
- Getting It Right
- Our Duty to Care
- Dept Health (SBNI) "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" August 2017
- Department of Education circulars for Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools

This statement outlines YMCA Lurgan's Child Safeguarding Policy, pursuant to the Children (NI) Order 1995 dealing with the care and protection of children and young people and is drafted with particular reference to the unique nature and structure of the organisation.

YMCA Lurgan recognises that young people attend YMCA Programmes for enjoyment, social contact and personal development. They should not suffer from abuse wherever

or however it occurs.

Staff and volunteers who are selected, or appointed to work with children and young people in local Associations, should enjoy their involvement, be confident in the knowledge of existing clear guidelines and if required, have access to good support and advice.

The Appropriate Statutory Agencies are as follows:

1. GatewayTeams - [Reporting child abuse and neglect | nidirect](#)
2. Police Service Northern Ireland – [PSNI Child protection](#)
3. NSPCC - [NSPCC Reporting Abuse](#)

According to the Children’s Order (NI) 2005, a child is defined as a child up until they have reached their 18th birthday.

Contact numbers for these agencies can also be found in the YMCA Lurgan Safeguarding Folder kept in the office.

### **Review of Policy and Procedures**

YMCA Lurgan will review this policy on an annual basis with all staff and volunteers. The date of each review and the staff involved will be recorded for Good Practice and Information purposes.

The Board of Management will endorse any amendments to the Child Safeguarding policy on an annual basis at Committee meeting.

Date of Next Policy review with staff – By end of December 2023

Date of Next Policy Review with Board of Management– By end of December 2023

### **YMCA Lurgan’s Designated Safeguarding Team 2022/23**

#### **DCPO’s**

#### **Name/Role/Contact**

Michele Taylor            Chief Executive -    [michele@ymcalurgan.org](mailto:michele@ymcalurgan.org) or 07746587797  
Aoileann Conway       Centre Leader in Charge [aoileann@ymcalurgan.org](mailto:aoileann@ymcalurgan.org) or 07599720787

Ian Thomson - Nominated Management Board safeguarding rep - [imt7@outlook.com](mailto:imt7@outlook.com) or 07513290762

### 3. Principles of Good Practice

The following is a summary of the principles of good practice for the protection of children.

All Associations working with children and youth should...

- Promote the general welfare, health and personal development of children and protect them from harm of all kinds.
- Recognise that children have rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect.
- Raise awareness about what children are entitled to be protected from.
- Adopt and consistently apply a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers.
- Plan an appropriate response procedure in relation to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.
- Establish links with parents and other relevant organisations.

YMCA Lurgan also support the Ethical Conduct for Youth Workers as highlighted in the [NYA Ethical Code in Youth Work](#)

**YMCA Lurgan fully accepts young people's rights to self protection and:**

- *To be safe*
- *To protect their own bodies*
- *To say NO –*

- *To get help against bullies –*
- *To tell*
- *To be believed*

## **4. YMCA Lurgan Child Protection Procedures:**

### **4.1 Recruitment, Selection and Management of Staff and Volunteers**

For the well being and protection of programme participants all potential staff and volunteers must be vetted prior to their appointment or involvement in activities, in accordance with Access NI Vetting requirements.

In order to secure the suitability of staff, and volunteers/trainers the following process will be adhered to.

1. The role required of the person will be clearly defined and what is expected of the person established. Each potential worker (whether paid or unpaid) should be made fully aware of all duties pertaining to the appointment and their responsibilities as outlined in the YMCA Child protection Safeguarding Statement
2. Application/Registration - a form must be completed, and submitted, seeking detailed information on the individual including the names of two non-family referees, one of which should be from a previous employer if the post is a paid post.
3. Declaration - Staff or volunteers who will have substantive access to children or who will act as a line manager /or have a supervisory role to other staff/volunteers who have substantive access to children must be vetted through the ACCESS NI registers or (Please refer to YMCA Lurgan Recruitment and Selection Policy and further notes highlighted below).
4. Staff will also be asked to declare their 'Right to Work' in Northern Ireland.
5. All appointments should be sanctioned by the Chairperson of the Board of Management or the Chief Executive Officer.
6. Notes should be taken and filed appropriately in accordance with the YMCA Recruitment and Staff management procedures with regard to appointments, probation and annual work review.

## **Vetting Procedures**

In Northern Ireland, for the purposes of recruitment within the YMCA, a person deemed to hold a 'Regulated Position' will be vetted under the ACCESS NI registers and online vetting procedures. All staff and volunteers in 'regulated positions' at YMCA Lurgan will be vetted through YMCA Ireland as the registered body as part of YMCA Ireland and as such comply with the Access NI procedures are outlined in the [YMCA Ireland Access NI Policy Statement](#). As a registered body for ACCESS NI, YMCA Ireland and hence YMCA Lurgan follow all best practice policies and guidelines expected by ACCESS NI including the Recruitment of Ex Offenders. See [YMCA Ireland Recruitment of Ex Offenders Policy](#)

Because of the nature of our work, youth work employees and volunteers are vetted under enhanced disclosure procedures. Best practice guidelines for vetting as expected by Access NI and as set out in the following document: [Access Ni Protocols](#)

In the case of an Access NI Certificate being returned with sensitive information with regard to criminal convictions, then a risk assessment using the following template [Vetting Risk Assessment Template](#) will be carried out by the Child Protection vetting and advice panel.

The Board of Management of YMCA Lurgan also require that ACCESS NI certificates are reissued if a current staff person takes on a substantially new position/role or if an unpaid volunteer takes on a paid staff position. Should a staff member or volunteer be absent for more than 6 months, an updated Access NI certificate will again be required before recommencing volunteering or employment with YMCA Lurgan.

## **DISCLOSURE and BARRING SERVICE (NI)**

YMCA Lurgan will follow any future guidelines issued by Access NI and the Disclosure and Barring Service with regards to future registration of any staff and volunteers who have access to young people.

## 4.2 Effective Management of Staff and Volunteers

### **Induction**

Child Safeguarding Policy – Each appointee will receive a copy of Child Safeguarding Policy, confirming their having read and understood the document, with Child Safeguarding training being provided as part of the induction process - [YMCA Lurgan Staff Induction Template](#) which includes the Safeguarding Induction Process

### **Probationary/Trial Period**

Probation period – A probation period of no less than 6 months will apply to all new appointees to ensure their suitability for the post, following which the line manager should review their suitability for the post.

### **Training**

As part of its personnel policies YMCA Lurgan is committed to ensuring that each staff member receives adequate training around Child Safeguarding issues

This shall take place in three ways.

- Firstly, each new member of staff as part of their induction, will receive access to a copy of the Child Safeguarding Policy, and will be informed as to their own responsibility to this. Within YMCA Lurgan, this will be carried out by one of the Designated Child Protection Officer.
- Secondly, YMCA Lurgan will facilitate, recognised Child Safeguarding Training (including CSE Awareness) on an annual basis. Refresher training will be attended by YMCA staff and volunteers every 2 years.
- Thirdly, bespoke training will be provided around specific child protection needs as they arise, either as a result of incidents or identified staff needs.

### **Support, Supervision and Annual Review.**

All staff and volunteers will have appropriate support structures in place. This will include regular supervision either as an individual or as part of a team, as well as an annual review of duties known as a work review or job appraisal (Please refer to the YMCA Lurgan Employee Handbook, and Support and Supervision Policy.). As part of this process staff will be given an opportunity to voice any concerns they may have about child safeguarding issues.



## 4.3 Reporting Concerns, disclosures and allegations

**Definitions of Child Abuse** (Taken From: “Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland” (August 2017)

### **What is Child Abuse?**

The following are considered forms of Child Abuse

Physical -the deliberate physical injury to a child

Neglect - the persistent failure to meet a child’s physical, emotional and/or psychological needs

Emotional - persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

Sexual - involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual behaviours.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation - (CSE)**

Within the youth work setting, staff and volunteers also need to be aware of the potential of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) as a form of Sexual Abuse. CSE is when a person(s) exploits, coerces and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some type of sexual activity in return for something the child needs. This takes into consideration online grooming, peer exploitation and child sex trafficking. Abuse involving CSE should also be reported using the reporting procedures outlined below.

### **What is a concern?**

Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour or communication, favouritism or negligence are all examples of what may constitute a concern.

### **What is a disclosure?**

A disclosure is when a child/young person tells someone that they have been or are being harmed or abused in some way. This may be physical, sexual emotional abuse, neglect or bullying.

### **What is an allegation?**

An allegation occurs when a child, parent or other person reports specific unacceptable behaviour where a child/young person has been harmed or abuse in some way.

Allegations must be reported to one of the organisation’s Designated Child Protection officers.

## **Reporting Procedures**

### **ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS MUST IMPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES TO REPORT A CONCERN, DISCLOSURE OR AN ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE.**

Any disclosure, allegation or suspicion of abuse must be taken seriously, recorded, and reported to the DCPO who will decide the appropriate further action. The following Safeguarding Reporting Form may be used: [YMCA Lurgan Welfare/Child Protection REPORTING FORM](#) Template for internal purposes but when a formal referral to Social Services is being made by the DCPO then the appropriate UNOCINI referral form must be used in NI

If any member of staff, or volunteer is concerned or suspects that a child or young person has been abused it is important that evidence is given to the situation and followed up with immediate action.

In the first instance listen to the young person, collect relevant information, record and immediately inform the Designated member of staff.

Where staff or volunteers employed in YMCA Lurgan have cause for concern regarding possible abuse or neglect, or if a child or young person has made a disclosure to them, the following action should be taken:

#### **The member of staff concerned should -**

- maintain detailed and dated written records of all available information relating to the cause for concern or the disclosure and any subsequent action.
- immediately notify in person the DCPO. This notification is to be followed by written confirmation of the incident and details of all action taken.
- The DCPO should then decide whether or not to report the incident to the Health and Social Services Gateway teams. This reporting may in the first instance be an informal enquiry to the appropriate Gateway Team asking for advice on a situation, before a decision is made with regard to a formal UNOCINI report being submitted.

In the case of a disclosure a UNOCINI Standard Reporting Form report should always be made to the appropriate Gateway Team.

Responding to incidents of alleged abuse is based upon clearly defined procedures within YMCA Lurgan which must be followed.

### **Role of Designated Officers**

Key responsibilities of the Designated Officers are to:

- Be responsible to the YMCA Lurgan Board of Management
- Has responsibility to the Office Bearers to ensure staff and volunteers within the YMCA to comply with the standards and practices outlined in this document.
- Has responsibility for updating information on relevant issues and monitoring the effectiveness of the Child Safeguarding policy.
- Maintains a network of contacts within outside authorities such as local Gateway teams / police / fire authorities / education & library boards / health services, ascertaining contact names and phone numbers and seeking appropriate advice when necessary from the appropriate Gateway team
- Has responsibility for ensuring that all new workers receive a copy of and understand the organisation's Child Safeguarding Policy.
  - Ensure that appropriate training and support is provided.
  - Receive and deal with all concerns of a child protection nature.
  - Make formal reports if necessary
  - Keep appropriate records and store them in a safe and confidential manner.
  - Has responsibility to carry out an Annual Audit of procedures.
  - Will undertake formal DCPO training for the role, which will be updated every 2 years.

If a child/young person is known to be involved with Social Services or is on the Child Protection Register then a communication/reporting/safety plan will be agreed with the assigned social worker.

### **Legal Obligations**

YMCA Lurgan has a legal obligation to report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- Any person who has applied for a regulated position when they are disqualified

- from doing so
- Any person whom they have removed from a regulated position following knowledge of their disqualification

Under their Duty of Care, YMCA Lurgan staff and volunteers also have a legal obligation to report any disclosures or allegations about any individual, child or young person which has been brought to their attention. The organization has a legal obligation to report any individual who leaves the YMCA or is asked to leave the YMCA as a result of concerns based on child protection issues.

### **Making a Protected Notice/Whistleblowing Policy**

Whistleblowing occurs when a staff member or volunteer raises a concern about misconduct or abusive practices by individuals and/or an organisation, where such practices cause harm or risk of harm. This will include situations where a staff member or volunteer's concerns are not acted upon by the Designated Officer/Deputy Designated Officer

## **5. YMCA Ireland Child Protection Guidelines**

### **5.1 Code of Behaviour/Conduct**

A Code of Conduct has been drawn up in order to support YMCA Lurgan **Staff, and Volunteers** to inform their youth work, and protect them especially when working in isolation and vulnerable situations. This can be accessed via the following link [Code of Behaviour](#)

As a summary, the following summary is a general guideline and each programme is required to have its own specific guidelines which are detailed also.

#### **Staff and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to Equal Opportunities and to young people**

- By being honest with, and showing respect for, young people.
- By respecting the confidentiality of the young person and by being clear and open when confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- By offering challenging and exciting experiences undertaken responsibly in a safe environment

- By recognising unacceptable behaviour and taking action, enables change to take place.

**Staff and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to themselves and colleagues**

- By being honest with, and showing respect for colleagues
- By respecting and keeping appropriate levels of confidentiality.
- By working and planning to the best of their ability within the constraints of their association, or allocated responsibilities.
- By only working alone when immediate support is available and /or the Health & Safety of the Young People is at Risk.
- By offering support to colleagues and seeking it when necessary.

**Staff, and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to educate members, volunteers and staff**

- By leading by example and setting good, positive role models:
- Not using language, which is racist, sectarian, sexist or abusive.
- Dressing appropriately to the occasion task, and company present.
- Not smoking, drinking alcohol, or using other illegal substances whilst on duty and working with young people.
- By creating an environment within which young people can feel safe and learn.
- By enthusiastically seizing all learning opportunities either programmed or otherwise.
- By fully implementing the aims and objectives of YMCA Lurgan.

**Recommendations**

All staff and volunteers need to be aware of the impact that their behaviour has on young people. The trust required between adults and young people is fundamental to the work of the YMCA and should never be jeopardised.

In recognising the issues highlighted in the Code of Conduct, it is expected that all staff and volunteers will

- Respect everyone as an individual
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour
- Respect young people's rights to privacy
- Be available to listen and , if necessary, refer to more appropriate help
- Try to ensure that your actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence and

- are acceptable within a relationship of Trust
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues
- Plan not to put yourself in a situation where you are alone with a child or young person
- Adhere to YMCA Lurgan policies which can be found online on the Shared Policy Folder
- Be aware that you are accountable for your actions to the young people, their parents and YMCA Lurgan

Staff, and volunteers should **never**:

- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone on car journeys no matter how short.
- Take children to their home.
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact
- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay – apart from structured sports activities.
- Engage in sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.
- On residential, sleep in a room with children, enter young persons bedrooms, or allow young people to enter staff bedrooms.
- Establish relationships with participants that may have sexual overtones
- Deliberately place yourself or others in a compromising situation.

**Please note the YMCA expects staff and volunteers to act with sensitivity and self control when working with all age groups. Those engaged in YMCA work need to recognise the issues of power and responsibility. It is YMCA practice that staff and volunteers do not misuse their role by taking advantage of participants of any age and establishing ‘personal relationships’. Behaviour of all Staff, and Volunteers whilst on duty must, of course be within the Law (see [Ethical Conduct in youth work](#).)**

### **Sanctions:**

Should a staff member or volunteer be in breach of this Code of Conduct, YMCA Lurgan’s disciplinary procedures, as outlined in the Employee Handbook will be activated and followed.

## 5.2 Communication with young people, parents and others.

### Use of Mobile Phones/email:

It is not appropriate for staff to hold the personal mobile phone numbers of young people, unless for Health and Safety reasons, for example when on residential. After such residential these contact numbers must be removed from any mobile phone used for work purposes.

Parental permission must be given to communicate directly with a young person via mobile phone or email. Texting or emailing young people directly should always take the form of a group text/email to all of the group members however, in circumstances where there may need to be an individual response, the communication must always be copied into another staff member and appropriate language should be used.

### Sharing photos and/or videos

Parental permission must be sought before sharing photos or videos of young people on websites, social media networking sites or PR Materials.

Youth workers are advised to pay particular attention to the use of cameras and picture mobile phones and in some cases their use will not be permitted. Under no circumstances must photographs be taken without the consent of the group or on personal media/mobile devices. **Photographs must only be taken by an agreed designated person using an authorised device.**

### Use of Social Media

With regard to the use of Social Media, YMCA Lurgan has developed Social Media Guidelines which all staff and volunteers must adhere to when using social media as part of programme delivery or as a communication method with young people.

### Physical contact and special needs:

In circumstances where physical contact with a member is unavoidable it must be predetermined and take place with the member's permission. This means that:

- The way it is going to be done must be thought through, explained and understood.

- The member's permission must be obtained allowing the physical contact to be carried out in the agreed way.

**NOTE:** It may be sometimes necessary for staff and volunteers to do things of a personal nature for young people, particularly if they are young people with disabilities. **These tasks should only be carried out if staff or volunteers have undergone Personal Care Training and if this is an agreed role with the full understanding and consent of the young person and the parents.** In an emergency, parents should be fully informed.

In such circumstances it is important that you ensure that all staff are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with utmost discretion.

### **Sharing Information:**

- Where child protection concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child.
- Sharing information re child protection concern is not a breach of confidentiality
- Parents/guardian and children and young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared and or a report is being made unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk.
- Any requests to share information from external sources **must always** be sanctioned by Michele Taylor (CEO/DCPO) before doing so.

### **Written Information sought from parents**

It is essential that YMCA's gain information relating to children in relation to membership and consent for activities, day trips, residentials and emergency situations. Any 'consent' that is provided must be from someone with parental responsibility and the YMCA will inform those giving consent that it must be obtained from those with parental responsibility.

Parents should always be informed of the limits of confidentiality around their contact details and any information they provide to the YMCA.

### **Confidentiality**

On the premise that the welfare of the child is paramount, considerations of confidentiality must not be allowed to override the right of children and young people to be protected from harm.



Staff, volunteers and participants must be aware that there are circumstances in which confidentiality must be broken, specifically if it is suspected that abuse has occurred and an offence committed.

On receipt of both a verbal and a written report on suspected abuse the Designated Child Protection Officer will refer to the appropriate authorities.

All staff and volunteers must be au fait with the referral procedure. An up to date summary statement of YMCA Lurgan's Safeguarding Policy can be found in the staff Handbook.

### **Record Keeping**

All staff and volunteers need to be aware of and follow the written procedures for keeping records such as:

- Attendance register
- Accident and incident register
- Consent forms
- Safeguarding reporting forms for disclosure, concern or allegation

All records will be kept in compliance with the YMCA Lurgan Data Protection policy and procedures.

### **Complaints and grievances**

All staff, volunteers and participants must be aware of the organisations complaints procedures (Ref to [YMCA Lurgan Complaints Policy and Procedures](#) )

Everyone has a right to complain or report a grievance, regardless of whether they are children, parents or staff/volunteers.

## **5.3 General Safety and Management of Activities**

This Safeguarding policy should be read in conjunction with the [YMCA Lurgan Health and Safety Policy](#) which will outline in greater detail the processes and responsibilities with regard to Health and Safety matters in the organisation

## **General Safety**

When an accident occurs, the danger must be removed immediately, the injured person treated, and the accident recorded on the agreed form.

A telephone should be accessible wherever a group meets.

Every leader should know how to access this facility.

Emergency telephone numbers should be displayed prominently.

It is desirable that a trained First Aider be available within the staff team.

Professional help should be sought if and when the trained First Aider cannot help or if further assistance is required when the First Aider can do no more.

A first aid box should be provided at each designated location.

The worker in charge of the group must inform the CEO and/or the D.C.P.O of any accidents at the earliest possible opportunity.

The worker in charge of the group must ensure that the child's parent/guardian is immediately informed of the accident.

The worker in charge of the group must record all details of accidents in the Accident Reporting form and also obtain witness statements within 24 hrs if relevant.

Identify cause of the incident and prevent re-occurrence.

If an accident is serious, the D.C.P.O or the CEO should inform the insurance company as soon as possible and refer to the Health and Safety Executive as required.

## **Insurance**

All children's and youth work activities should have professionally advised and adequate insurance cover to include key areas of: -

- Personal Accident
- Public Liability
- Property and Contents Insurance
- Vehicle Insurance

It is the responsibility of the activity organiser and YMCA CEO to ensure that all relevant insurance policies are currently valid.

In the case of activities or events which are considered 'high risk', the worker should consult with the D.C.P.O and/or the YMCA CEO who will decide on the appropriateness and adequacy of the cover available.

No high-risk activity should be engaged upon without first following above procedure

to ensure that the insurance cover provided is adequate.

Insurance cover for transportation of children/youths should be adhered to at all times

### **Premises**

Staff and Volunteers can help ensure that activities and the environment that is being used for activities and programmes are safe, by identifying potential hazards and concerns

The premises used for all children's and youth work should be suitable and safe. This includes:

- Adequate provision of toileting facilities.
- Appropriate and adequate lighting. (Torches/night lights should be available for emergencies)
- Appropriate and adequate heating systems.
- Adequate provision of security and safety appliances.
- All fire exits and entrance and exit routes should be kept clear and marked for any situation.
- All keys to entrance/exit doorways should be easily accessed for emergency situations.
- All fire alarms and appliances should be installed following professional advice and maintained as advised. Workers should be trained in their use.
- All work/meeting areas should be marked with an 'Assembly Point' in the case of an emergency.
- No heating/cooking items, electrical appliances, or naked flames other than those tested and fitted to the venue by a professional should be used.

It is the responsibility of the YMCA to maintain the upkeep of the premises to a safe and suitable standard. However, the worker in charge has a responsibility to ensure that the procedures outlined in the YMCA Lurgan Health and Safety policy are fulfilled.

### **Competency of staff/Volunteers**

It is vital that all staff involved in activities and programmes have adequate training. All staff, volunteers and external trainers/facilitators will be expected to provide written documentation as proof of their required or necessary qualifications.

### **Safety of Equipment**

All equipment used by a youth or children's group must be safe and suitable for use by the age range of the young people participating. Where a National Standard is applicable, the equipment should conform to it.

In addition

- All equipment should be thoroughly checked for defects before use.
- If there are defects the equipment should not be used.
- All defects must be reported to the activity organiser.
- All workers should be fully conversant with assembly and use of equipment.
- No child is to assist with the assembly of equipment.
- Use of all equipment must be monitored by a worker.
- Care should be taken that all paint, glue, felt tips, etc. are non-toxic.
- Safe storage should be provided for all equipment.

### **Supervision ratios**

The level of supervision must be adequate and decided upon depending on the nature and venue of the activity as well as the age range of the children involved. Therefore when deciding how many staff and volunteers are required to supervise, leaders must take into consideration a range of practical measures.

- The number of participants in the group.
- The nature of the site /venue.
- The activities to be undertaken – if the activity is one of a hazardous nature e.g. mountain climbing
- It is important that each supervisor knows the responsibilities that they are expected to bear.
- It is recommended that no journeys/visits should be undertaken without a minimum of two volunteers in attendance.
- It is for the leader in charge to exercise their professional judgement in deciding the level of supervision, taking into account the guidance as stated above.
- Where a party consist of children of both sexes, male and female supervision should be provided unless otherwise agreed.

### **Off – site Activities**

All trips, camps and residentials must be thoroughly planned and documented well in advance and relevant information made accessible to all parties involved. The following procedures must be followed:

- Parents/guardians must be informed in writing of the arrangements for any trip to be taken outside of the normal venue.
- The worker in charge must obtain from parents their written consent to the

participation of their child and a completed copy of the health form prior to departure.

- A copy of the trip information form should be forwarded to the D.C.P.O and/or the CEO.
- Copies of the consent and health forms must be forwarded to the D.C.P.O or held in the YMCA by an appropriate contact person.
- A detailed itinerary of the trip should be given to all the parents/guardians, workers and the D.C.P.O and/or the CEO at least 1 week in advance of departure (a pre-trip information night for all concerned would be an appropriate opportunity to present this information or as a minimum this information should be provided to parents prior to the trip as part of consent).

### **Residentials**

When on residential the following recommendations should be adhered to alongside the procedures and recommendations outlined throughout this policy

- Each residential should have at least two leaders-in-charge, preferably 1 male and 1 female with appropriate ratios having been considered as outlined previously.
- Leaders must ensure that males and females have different sleeping rooms. In exceptional circumstances workers must be sensitive to the needs of individuals and monitor the situation carefully.
- Young people participating should have their privacy respected by other participants eg rooms, changing rooms, showers, etc.
- Staff members (workers) must always use common sense and sensitivity and not leave themselves open to allegations of sexual misconduct. For example:
  - Do not enter rooms without permission
  - Do not enter changing rooms without permission
  - Do not enter showers without permission.
- Always knock or call out and ask permission to enter areas where people may be changing.
- Never put yourself in a position of being alone with vulnerable individuals eg cars, closed rooms, out of public view.
- Staff members (workers) should, when possible, ask another staff member (worker) to accompany them when entering rooms etc.
- Staff members or volunteers should not sleep alone in dorms with young people.
- When changing or when with a group that is changing - be discreet.
- If behaviour by one of the young people causes offence or is deemed inappropriate, it is the leaders responsibility to discuss and deal with this as soon as possible.

- Parental permission slips for under 18's and medical forms must be completed by all young people attending residential.
- Staff members and volunteers should use common sense and sensitivity around the areas of touching, hugging, etc.
- All staff and volunteers on residential will have undergone routine vetting.
- Prior to each residential, staff should meet as a group to discuss the implementation of these guidelines on the residential.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Management Committee. This will include an Annual review checklist of child protection, as well as an actions for the year ahead

Date of next review : Before the end of December 2023