

Safeguarding Policy

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Introduction

The Unlocking Potential Foundation C.I.C (UP Foundation) is a Community Interest Company formed in 2015. The UP Foundation provides positive sporting and energy expending activities for young people and young adults, which help them to believe in themselves, learn new skills, move away from unhealthy and anti-social behaviours, and help progress their lives.

This policy has been developed to meet the specific requirements of the UP Foundation and to ensure, as far as possible, the safety and well-being of all children and young adults participating in UP Foundation activities, as well as its staff and contracted workforce.

The full policy document will be made available to the public, and all staff will be expected to undergo a basic training and policy awareness session to ensure the contents are clearly understood. These sessions will be arranged as required for new UP Foundation staff and established staff will review this policy every 12 months.

This Safeguarding Policy is designed to minimise risks to children* taking part in activities where the UP Foundation is the organising body and to enhance their enjoyment and well-being.

To enable good safeguarding practice across UP Foundations activities, everyone who receives this policy is required to read it carefully in full, fulfill any responsibilities relative to their role, as stipulated by the policy, and ensure that all outlined procedures are followed in a consistent and coordinated manner. This policy should be read in conjunction with the UP Foundation Activity Welfare Plan Policy and UP Foundation Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy.

*A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years old (The Children Act 1989).

Values and Principles

This policy is underpinned by the following values and principles:

- Ensuring the welfare of all children is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, gender, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual identity or disability, have equal rights to safety and protection against harm.
- All suspicions, concerns or allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- The six core principles within the Childrens Act (1989) underpin the UP Foundations' approach to safeguarding and working with children:
 - Empowerment. People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
 - Prevention. It is better to take action before harm occurs.
 - Proportionality. The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
 - Protection. People need to be provided with the support they need to prevent further abuse.
 - Partnership. Ensuring appropriate information sharing is completed with relevant stakeholders where necessary.
 - Accountability. Safeguarding is every person's responsibility when working with children.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this safeguarding policy and the procedures and training implemented under it is to ensure that the UP Foundation provides a safe environment for its participants, volunteers and staff. The UP Foundation is committed to:

- Training staff to be able to identify any participant that may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Raising awareness for staff and volunteers about:

- Possible types of abuse
- Empowering and enabling all staff and service users to report concerns about abuse, maltreatment, safety and welfare through clear systems and processes
- Dealing with allegations of abuse or neglect against participants or staff.
- The safer recruitment of staff (utilising 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2022' as a reference)

The Up Foundation will refer concerns of participant abuse or neglect or those at risk of abuse or neglect to the relevant agencies. Dependent on the nature of the concern this could include referrals to;

- The Police
- Local Authority MASH / Children's social care
- Adult Social Care

All staff working for The UP Foundation must:

- Give the highest priority to children's safety and welfare
- Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures.
- Respond appropriately to allegations against staff, contracted workforce, other adults and against themselves relating to everyone but specifically UP Foundation.
- Be alert to the risks that abusers or potential abusers may pose and vigorously pursue all concerns (please refer to appendix 1 – flow chart).

Principles

- The UP Foundation is committed to the principles and practice of safeguarding and recognises the role its staff plays in the safeguarding and welfare of all its participants.
- All UP Foundation participants have the right to be listened to, given a sense of belonging, and kept safe from harm.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- UP Foundation is committed to the protection of its participants through working alongside the participants and their parents/carers.
- The UP Foundation recognises that any safeguarding policy and procedure is only as effective as the ability, knowledge, and skill of those who carry it out.

Organisation Commitment

The UP Foundation will:

- Undertake all appropriate statutory checking procedures for all paid staff, contractors and volunteers, in whatever capacity, working or associated with the UP Foundation. This may include; seeking, where appropriate, any references from persons who have experience of the applicant's paid or voluntary work with children and/or vulnerable adults. The appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced [List] clearance will be obtained before an applicant commences paid work. All persons who are likely to volunteer with children and/or vulnerable adults in a total of 3 or more sessions, including parents, [other than with their own child], will be requested to agree to an Enhanced DBS check undertaken by The UP Foundation. Where DBS

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checks are not undertaken as per the guidance, The UP Foundation will conduct a suitable risk assessment to minimise the risk of any potential harm where possible.

- Arrange appropriate safeguarding training for all staff associated with UP Foundation in whatever capacity to:
 - Raise the level of awareness of abuse in its many forms. This will include specific awareness training to enable staff to recognise abuse or neglect in relation to children and young people.
 - Raise awareness of possible hazards from which children and young people are entitled to protection from.
 - Ensure that all staff know what to do in the case of an accident or incident.
 - Have a named coordinator with lead responsibility for safeguarding, who is appropriately trained.
- Develop effective procedures for:
 - Recording and responding to accidents and incidents.
 - Recording and acting on complaints or disclosures of alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.
- Ensure that all those associated with UP Foundation, in whatever capacity, are aware of whom to contact, should they have any concerns regarding the safety and welfare of any of the participants. This may include making a timely referral to the Local Children or Adult safeguarding hubs.

NOTE:

In certain circumstances, where work is being undertaken outside of the 'home base'

e.g. a Community Library, there may be sessions where parents or other participants of the community come along and offer their services as volunteers in projects being undertaken. These are always fully supervised by UP Foundation staff. In such circumstances, a risk assessment will be undertaken, should such individuals be likely to attend for more than 3 sessions to ascertain if a DBS is required.

Activity Management

The UP Foundation manages and delivers a range of activities, mainly across the County of Worcestershire and its surrounding areas. These activities are delivered by UP Foundation Staff

At each UP Foundation session there will be a safeguarding point of contact available.

Behaviour

- All staff are expected to demonstrate positive behaviour at all times
- All adults involved will ensure they:
 - Always work in an open environment
 - Treat all young people equally and with dignity and respect
 - Always put the welfare of each child first

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- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in any decision-making process
- Be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children
- Behave responsibly. Discriminatory, offensive, and violent behaviour towards any individual is not unacceptable.

Practices never to be sanctioned

- All adults involved in the activities will ensure they never:
 - Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
 - Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate language
 - Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even as a joke
 - Use manipulative or controlling behaviours towards children
 - Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
 - Assist or support a child to complete personal tasks in which they can achieve themselves.

Note. It may sometimes be necessary for UP Foundation staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they have additional care and support needs. These tasks will only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents/ carers and the child involved (if this is required). If a child is dependent upon adult support, the UP Foundation staff or volunteer should communicate clearly with the child on what they are doing and give choice where possible. This is important where UP Foundation staff or volunteers are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. If UP Foundation staff or volunteers are required to take on this responsibility, UP Foundation will ensure appropriate training is provided.

Unique Context

Within the unique context of the work undertaken at UP Foundation, it is sometimes a necessary part of the working practices for staff* to undertake one-to-one contact with a child. This is due to the nature of certain participants who are unable to work with others and also because of the nature of work undertaken to try and address the complex issues of the individual children and vulnerable adults for whom the UP FOUNDATION was established for. On occasion, staff are required to follow a person-centered approach to ensure individual needs are addressed. This, more often than not, will require one to one contact as described above.

*It must be stressed in a “unique context”, only experienced, trained staff, and not volunteers, will undertake one-to-one contact with a child.

Safe Practice

Each staff member and volunteer must take responsibility for ensuring that they do not place themselves in situations or circumstances that could create suspicions about motives and behaviour.

- UP Foundation staff should introduce themselves to parents/carers when meeting parents/carers for the first time and explain their role.
- Don't engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Discourage children/vulnerable adults using inappropriate language and challenge where appropriate.
- Never make sexual or derogatory comments to a child/vulnerable adult, even if intended as a joke.
- Never do things of a personal nature that a child/vulnerable adult could do for themselves.
- Maintain professional and appropriate boundaries with children/vulnerable adults and ensure that comments and physical contact cannot be misinterpreted.
- Be aware of health and safety guidelines and never put a child/vulnerable adult at risk unnecessarily.
- Do not take photographs for personal use of any child/vulnerable adult by any means whatsoever, including mobile phones or any other technology existing or subsequently developed. Any image taken for use by the UP Foundation must have the written permission of the parent/ carer. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES must any such image be used other than for the specific purpose stated within the context of the UP Foundation work/projects.
- The UP Foundation participants and their parents/carers will trust you. This puts UP Foundation staff in a particularly powerful position. Individuals are more often than not abused by someone they know and trust.
- UP Foundation staff must always consider their actions and ask yourself – “if I was observing this scene, how would it look to a child, parent/carers, or colleague and what impression would they form?”.

NOTE:

This guide does not attempt to cover all potential situations that can occur in a diverse range of activities within the UP Foundation and the wider community in which it will operate. It is a guide only, but one that should be read carefully and adhered to as far as is reasonably possible. If there are points mentioned or issues that are not clear, please seek advice from the UP Foundation Safeguarding Officer.

What happens if something goes wrong?

If, during an UP Foundation session there is an incident, accident or concern that cannot be immediately addressed, the UP Foundation staff member or volunteer should report the incident, accident or concern to the on call safeguarding contact.

The on-call safeguarding contact will review the information provided and undertake the necessary actions depending on 'what went wrong'. At times, this may require specific contact with the child and their parent/ carer.

NOTE:

Within the context of the UP Foundation, there may be times when a child/vulnerable adult seeks comfort and requires a hug or activities/workshops involve physical contact of some kind. Some children/vulnerable adults are very tactile and also certain disabilities may lead to children/vulnerable adults wanting to kiss or hold onto others within the group.

Guidance on physical comfort where absolutely necessary

A hug should be provided with a single arm, sideways on, and the staff member's hand should remain closed as this limits the likelihood of accidental touching being perceived as sexual, it is less intrusive.

Disclosures

When a child makes a disclosure, it is important that the information is listened to carefully by the UP Foundation staff. A child may be sharing something because they are away from their usual environment and feel that they can trust staff members.

Responding to a disclosure

When listening to a disclosure the following good practice must be followed:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Ensure a sharing statement has been made regarding the information the child wishes to share.
- Show you are listening to the child with positive body language and eye contact
- Offer reassurance to the child and emphasise that they have done the right thing by talking to staff.
- Take what the child has said seriously whilst recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child in distress says, especially if they have communication difficulties such as a speech disability and/or differences in language.
- If clarity is needed, keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Record what the child has said and what you have observed then follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures as outlined in this policy.

When receiving a disclosure, do not:

- Panic
- Show shock, distaste or disbelief
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made
- Introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children
- Approach the individual against whom the allegation has been made
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets
- Give a guarantee of confidentiality

If required please use the Disclosure Form at the back of this document. Once completed the form must be passed to the UP Foundation Welfare Officer. The appropriate action will then be taken.

Confidentiality

It is important that, although the information should be treated in the strictest confidence, the legal principle that 'the welfare of the child is paramount' means that any consideration of confidentiality should not override their right to be protected from harm.

Information of a confidential nature should only be communicated on a "need-to-know" basis and everyone should be aware that they are unable to promise to keep secrets.

Child Protection Concerns

Remember it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not a child has been abused. It is however everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.

Concerns to be reported may include, but are not restricted to;

- General concerns about a child/children's welfare
- Any event or circumstance related to a child protection/welfare incident including bullying, poor practice and prejudicial behaviour
- Suspicions or allegations of:
 - Misconduct made against any member of staff
 - Abuse made against any member of staff, or other party on site
 - Misconduct made against a participant
 - Abuse or neglect within a child's family/ home

Procedures for handling concerns

If any member of staff has concerns about an incident involving a child that seems untoward or unusual they must report their concerns as soon as possible to the Activity Lead or Welfare Officer.

Concerns need to be recorded but this should not delay referral. A Child Protection incident/concern/disclosure Referral Form is at the back of this document.

During the handling of a concern, all staff should observe the following principles:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Recognise | You have a concern, notice a problem or receive a direct disclosure |
| Respond | Reassure the individual, tell them what you will need to do |
| Refer | Make contact with the UP Foundation Welfare Officer |
| Record | Who, what, where, when – use the reporting form in this document |

Definition of Child Abuse

The following definitions are taken from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Dept. of Education March 2015:

Child abuse is the term used to describe a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). An adult or adults, or another child or children may abuse them.

Allegations of Abuse

There are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared, e.g. where a coach, parent, guardian or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately.

In all cases of suspected or alleged abuse, advice and guidance must first be sought from the Activity Lead who will refer the matter to the designated safeguarding contact and/or Welfare Officer.

Recognition of Abuse

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. It is, therefore, very important that anyone who has any concern about the welfare of an UP Foundation participant reports any concerns immediately to the UP Foundation Safeguarding Coordinator.

Indications of abuse may include some of the following signs:

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- Unexplained bruising or injuries, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries, also, repeated bruising.
- Sexually explicit language or actions inappropriate to context of activity/age/level of functioning of the participant.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness for the child's age.
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper, etc.
- A change observed over a long period of time e.g. a child losing weight, becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- A child being prevented from socialising with others.

It is important to note that a child could be displaying some or all of the above signs, or behaving in a way, which is worrying WITHOUT any form of abuse being the cause. Similarly, there may be none of the above signs, but there is something is wrong.

Remember it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not a child has been abused. It is however everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.

The Social Services and Police have a duty to children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and to adults under the Care Act 2014 to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected and to help those who have been abused. Specialists within these organisations are trained to deal with abuse and neglect and should be contacted where there are concerns. They will give advice and take responsibility for any action where necessary.

Important Contacts

Organisation Staff

UP Foundation Safeguarding Officer Luke Freer	07704 902392	upteam@upfoundationcic.co.uk
UP Foundation Safeguarding Coordinator Matthew Wilkinson	07725 970814	matt.j.wilkinson@outlook.com

Emergency Services

Police	101 (or 999 in an emergency)	
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000	help@nspcc.org.uk
Childline	0800 1111	

Local Safeguarding Boards:

Birmingham Safeguarding Children Partnership	0121 303 1888	cass@birminghamchildrentrust.co.uk
Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership	024 7697 5477	coventrycscp@coventry.gov.uk
Solihull	0121 788 4300	
Worcestershire Children First	01905 822666	
Child Protection in Sport Unit	0116 366 5580	https://thecpsu.org.uk

Reporting Flow Chart

If you have a concern about a child/ young person or observe:
Abuse or poor practice



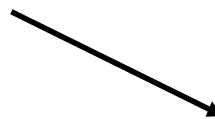
Contact the Activity Lead with minimal delay



Share concerns with the **UP Foundation** Safeguarding Coordinator and consider if it's relevant to refer the matter to the organisation's Welfare Officer and or the Local Authority. (If required, this should be done in conjunction with the procedures below)



Decision made on action required:



No Further Action Required
Record the concern and that no action was required or that the incident was dealt with immediately

Poor Practice
Immediate decision made between Activity Lead and or person witnessing the concern - referral to the organisation's Welfare Officer

Suspected Abuse
Welfare Officer reports to Local Safeguarding Children Board/Police as appropriate and informs organisation's employing/deploying agency

