

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

BlueSky Education is committed to providing a safe environment for persons under the age of 18, in collaboration with adult chaperones sent by agencies to accompany students to attend our camps. To achieve this goal, we have built a comprehensive practice of safeguarding and child protection:

Safeguarding involves:

- Ensuring safe systems are in place for the wellbeing of persons under 18
- Promoting the welfare of children and ensuring the best outcomes of every child

Child protection involves:

- Protecting children from the threat of direct harm
- Preventing abuse, including neglect, sexual, physical, or psychological and emotional abuse
- Dealing with abuse when it arises

The minimum age of students at our camps is 10. To help the chaperone(s) with their duty, BlueSky Education has set up a comprehensive practice to ensure a safe environment in which children can learn.

BlueSky Education's staff accept and recognise responsibilities to develop awareness of issues that cause children harm. We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Following stringent procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, including mandatory DBS checks
- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of conduct for staff
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, chaperones, and staff
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know
- Provide effective management for staff through supervision, support, and training

Important contact information and phone numbers:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Hannah Dunhill: hannah.dunhill@bluesky-education.com, +44 (0)20 3004 9314

School Office and 24-hour Emergency: +44 (0)20 3004 9314

Emergency services: 999 (or 112)

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

Child-line: 0800 1111

2. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSONNEL

- a. All camp counselors must undertake basic online safeguarding and child protection training.
- b. Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

In the U.K., BlueSky Education's DSL is the permanent Operations Manager, Hannah Dunhill, who has overall responsibility to help accompanying chaperones fulfil their duty of ensuring child protection and safeguarding. She must complete all required safeguarding trainings from a qualified provider. Any concerns about the welfare of persons under 18 in the camp should be reported to the accompanying chaperones and the DSL.

3. SAFER RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

- a. Interview, CVs, and references

BlueSky Education endeavours to ensure that all employees are suitable for working with children by putting in place the following procedures regarding interview, CVs, and references:

- All employment candidates must submit a CV as part of their applications. All gaps in CVs must be satisfactorily explained and proof of qualifications will be required. Candidates are to provide two reference contacts. BlueSky Education will contact the reference contacts and ask if they have any reason to believe that the candidate is unsuitable for working with children.
- All applicants called for interview will be encouraged to provide details of any existing criminal record. This information will be handled on a need-to-know basis to respect privacy of applicants.

- b. Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

Applicants for positions involving working with children are required to undergo DBS checks before they can commence employment with BlueSky Education. DBS checks requested by previous employers are accepted as long as the checks took place within the last three years.

It is against the law for BlueSky Education to knowingly employ anyone who is on the DBS children's barred list.

Any staff unable to be checked through DBS will be required to provide a translated and notarised police check from their country of origin or residence.

c. Single central record

A single central record of all employees will be maintained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will contain:

- An identity check
- A DBS check
- A check of professional qualifications
- Confirmation of the person's right to work in the UK
- Information on level of safeguarding and child protection training
- Date of employment commencement

4. STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

a. Statement of intent

BlueSky Education is committed to safeguarding the welfare of young people under 18 by protecting them against all forms of abuse, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Staff should at all times show respect and understanding for young people's rights, safety, welfare and conduct themselves appropriately.

b. Guidelines for staff

- **Attitudes** Staff should be committed to:
 - Treating young people under 18 with respect and dignity
 - Listening to what a young person has to say
 - Valuing each young person
 - Encouraging and supporting each young person
- **Lead by example** Staff should endeavour to:
 - Provide a good example for young people to follow, which includes behaving and presenting oneself appropriately

- Use appropriate language with young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or an adult working with young people
- Respect a young person's right to privacy

5. SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

In order to keep students safe, BlueSky Education follow the following measures:

c. Camp list

The DSL shall compile and keep a list of all students, Group Leaders and staff. The list is circulated to all staff.

d. Absence from lessons/activities

Missing lessons or activities is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect, especially if it happens regularly.

The DSL will follow up with any incidents where students under 18 miss more than 2 lessons/activities.

e. Accommodation

During the camp, all students will stay in university residences or independent student hostels that are partners of BlueSky Education. All accompanying adult chaperones are required to stay in the same premises with their students. The DSL will coordinate with the residence/hostel authority and chaperones to ensure a safe environment for students.

f. Extra-curricular activities

The camp runs an extensive program of activities for students and endeavours to ensure that the program is as safe and accessible for under-18s as possible.

Accompanying adult chaperones are required to escort their students to all activities. BlueSky Education camp counselors will be leading the activities and will coordinate with the chaperones to ensure student safety. Lanyards/wristbands, instructions, maps, and emergency contact numbers will be handed out.

In addition, BlueSky requires that the coach and taxi companies employed regularly conduct background checks on their staff.

g. Recruitment of staff

All applicants must hold a DBS certificate that is less than 3 years old or agree to obtain one. References must cover the past three years of employment and if applicable, one must be from the applicant's current employer.

h. Training for staff

All frontline staff receive basic online safeguarding and child protection training and must read this document during induction. BlueSky Education recommends an online program developed by the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board (<http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/>).

The DSL receives additional training. She must attend safeguarding training to standard of Level 3.

6. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse falls into one or more of four categories: Neglect, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Emotional Abuse. A certain level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment of children though it may occur alone.

Neglect: Involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs leading to the serious damage to the child's health and development. Could involve, but not limited to, the failure to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter, failure to provide protection from other forms of abuse or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Physical Abuse: May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening to them.

Emotional Abuse: Is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that causes severe and enduring effects on the child's emotional development. Can include causing a child to feel scared or in danger or causing a child to feel worthless, inadequate and unloved.

8. PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

If a child discloses information to a staff member that suggests they have been abused the staff member must follow the process stated below :

- Listen: Listen to what is being disclosed and said without displaying emotions. Stay calm. Any suggestion that you are shocked or disgusted may cause the child to withdraw and stop speaking.
 - Reassure: Assure the child that you have listened but do not make promises like 'It will all be ok now' or around confidentiality. Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you and that they have done nothing wrong.
 - Respond: Listen very carefully and patiently. Refrain from making assumptions or jumping to conclusions. Do **not** investigate or interrogate: it is not your role to decide if the child is telling the truth or not. Do not ask leading questions. You can ask open questions like "Is there anything else you want to share with me?" Do NOT ask the child to repeat what they have told you to another colleague but do explain what you have to do next and who you will talk to.
 - Document: Make some brief notes at the time and, as soon as you can, write them down in detail. Keep your original notes in case they are required by Court. Record the place, time, date along with the exact word the child used including any slang or swear words. Keep the notes factual.
9. Safeguarding is the responsibility of ALL members of staff at BlueSky; all staff are in positions of trust. Any member or staff with an issue or concern relating to child safeguarding should discuss it immediately with the DSL.

10. FURTHER ACTIONS

Staff should refer and adhere to the BlueSky Education Code of Conduct and refer to the dress code for guidance on the appropriate attire to wear.

11. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- a. Safeguarding and child protection training: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/>
- b. Up to date advice from UK Government: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-young-people>

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