



Child Safeguarding Procedures at Elements Outdoor Learning

Statement of Intent

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures and practical guidance for Elements Outdoor Learning (Elements) staff, volunteers, and other professionals and or partners working alongside Elements. It is everyone's duty to report suspected cases of abuse or concern to protect Children. However, it is for the Professionals to decide if abuse or neglect has taken place.

Raising a concern

Staff will raise a concern by reporting directly and without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). Immediately after raising a concern, staff will also make a detailed written account of what they have seen, observed or heard using the Safeguarding Report Form. Please see Appendix 1.

Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained when an allegation has been made and is being investigated. The procedures require that only those that need to know are told.

Reasons for taking appropriate action to report concerns

There may be several reasons that an individual finds it necessary to report a concern. These may include:

- In response to something a child has said
- In response to signs or suspicions of abuse
- In response to allegations made about a parent, carer or someone not working within the sport
- In response to bullying
- In response to a breach of code of conduct/poor practice
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour
- In response to allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer

(This is not a definitive list)

There are three steps involved in taking appropriate action. These are known as the three R's Each is essential:

- Responding to the disclosure/suspicion and/ or allegation

- Recording the relevant information
- Reporting the relevant information.

Step 1 Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and / or Allegations

Anyone responding to a disclosure, suspicions and / or allegations must always:

- Stay calm; do not show disgust or disbelief
- Ensure the child is safe and feels safe
- Listen carefully to what is said
- Ask questions only where they are necessary to clarify what you are being told. (Always avoid asking leading questions)
- Keep an open mind- do not make assumptions or judgements
- Take the concern seriously
- Reassure the child & stress that they are not to blame
- Be honest and (as soon as you can feasibly mention it) explain that you will have to tell someone else to help with the situation. (Do not agree to keep secrets between you and the child)
- Maintain confidentiality –only tell others if it will help to protect the child.

NEVER:

- Approach any alleged abuser to discuss the concern.
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- Make promises that you cannot keep
- Take sole responsibility-consult someone else (the person in charge or the designated officer) so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

Step 2 Recording the Incident

The keeping of accurate and prompt recording is fundamental to effective safeguarding and all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure all concerns are recorded appropriately using the Safeguarding Report Form. Please see Appendix 1.

Records should be factual and clear and, where opinion is expressed, it should be recorded as such and distinguished from fact.

Information recorded needs to include the following:

- Details of the Child i.e. full name, age / date of birth, address and gender
- Details of the Parent or guardian and whether they have been informed or not.

- Details of the facts of the allegation or observations
- Details of the person alleged to have caused the incident / injury including the name, address and date of birth or their approximate age.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The Child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how
- Details of any witnesses
- Any times, dates or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is (known to be) fact, opinion or hearsay
- A signature, date and time on the report.

Step 3 Reporting

The DSO will ensure all appropriate initial action has been completed and an appropriate investigation is undertaken if necessary.

The DSO will advise on and assist liaison with referral to the statutory agencies, i.e. Police, Children's Social Care etc.

When reporting a concern to an outside agency, the DSO will inform them that a written record of the concern is available and will e-mail details of the concerns.

If, at any stage, Elements or the agencies involved decide that no further action is to be taken, then the reason for this and who made the decision will be recorded.

All subsequent actions/ events following the reporting of a concern should be recorded and attached to the original concern in chronological order as should any documentation received from the local authority, police or other agencies.