



# Oban Youth Café Project

## Child and Young Adult Protection Policy and Procedures

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# Oban Youth Café Project

## Child and Young Adult Protection Policy

Everyone who works for or on behalf of the Oban Youth Café Project must agree to abide by this policy and procedures for the duration of their involvement with the project.

### Responsibilities

Oban Youth Café Project will:

- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young adults.
- Promote the health and welfare of children and young adults by providing them with a drug and alcohol free drop-in centre.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and young adults and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its members to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young adults from abuse and to minimise risk to themselves.
- Require members to adopt and abide by this Child and Young Adult Protection Policy and these procedures.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children or young adults in line with this Policy and these Procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Review and evaluate this Policy and these Procedures on a regular basis.

### Principles

The welfare of children and young adults is everyone's responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting them from abuse. This Policy and these Procedures are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children and young adults is the primary concern.
- All children and young adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse and the responsibility of the Social Work Department and the Police to conduct, where appropriate, a joint investigation.
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### Review

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children and young adults or any changes within the Oban Youth Café Project.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children or young adults within Oban Youth Café Project.
- In all other circumstances, at least annually.

# Oban Youth Café Project

## Child and Young Adult Protection Procedures

### 1. Recruitment and Employment

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young adults.

For all positions (paid & voluntary) that require regular contact with children or young adults the following recruitment procedures must be completed.

- i. All potential staff and volunteers are required to complete an application form.
- ii. We will seek two written references for employees and volunteers, with a specific request for a comment on the candidate's suitability for working with children and young people. These references are kept on file. The candidate will be asked to make their referee aware that we will be in contact by phone as confirmation.
- iii. We will interview all suitable potential staff and volunteers
- iv. We will carry out disclosure Scotland checks on all staff and volunteers.
- v. Once a decision has been made to appoint an individual, an offer letter will be sent enclosing a youth café policy document and a confirmation slip. Candidates are required to sign the slip which confirms that they are willing to accept the position and that they have read the policy document and agree to adhere to its contents.
- vi. Induction will include clarification of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of the position and an informal assessment of training, individual aids and any other needs and aspirations.
- vii. Newly appointed members will complete the following child and young adult protection training over an agreed period.
- viii. Newly appointed members will complete an agreed period of probation on commencement of their role.
- ix. All members who have contact with children or vulnerable adults will be monitored and their performance appraised. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate progress, set new goals, identify training needs and address any concerns of poor practice.

### 2. Members with Specific Responsibility for the Protection of Children and Young Adults

#### Child and Young Adult Protection Officer

The Child and Young Adult Protection Officer holds the main responsibility for managing child and young adult protection issues within Oban Youth Café Project. The role and responsibilities of the Child and Young Adult Protection Officer are detailed below:

#### Role and Responsibilities of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Officer

- i. Within Oban Youth Café Project the Child and Vulnerable Adult Officer will:
- ii. Encourage good practice and support of procedures to protect children and young adults.
- iii. Implement and promote Oban Youth Café Project's Child and Young Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.
- iv. Regularly report to the Oban Youth Café Project Board of Directors
- v. Act as the main contact within the project for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- vi. Provide information and advice on the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- vii. Support and raise awareness of the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- viii. Communicate with members on issues of child and vulnerable adult protection.
- ix. Keep abreast of developments and understand the latest information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

- x. Establish and maintain contact with local statutory agencies including the Police and Social Work Department.
- xi. Maintain confidential records of reported cases and action taken and liaise with the statutory agencies and ensure they have access to all necessary information.
- xii. Organise training for members.
- xiii. Regularly monitor and review the Oban Youth Café Project's Child and Young Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.

### **3. First Aid and Treatment of Injuries:**

If, in your capacity as a member of The Oban Youth Café Project, a child or vulnerable adult requires first aid or any form of medical attention whilst in your care, then the following good practice must be followed:

- i. Where practicable those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification should respond to any injuries.
- ii. Where possible, ensure access to medical advice and/or assistance.
- iii. When taking children or young people on trips outwith the youth café premises all parents/guardians of children under 16 must complete and sign an Oban Youth Café Project Medical Consent Form and those 16+ must complete and sign a form themselves.
- iv. Where practicable be aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries.
- v. Where possible any course of action should be discussed with the child/young adult, in language that they understand and their permission sought before any action is taken.
- vi. In more serious cases, assistance must be obtained from a medically qualified professional as soon as possible.
- vii. The child's or young adult's parents/guardians or carers must be informed of any injury and any action taken as soon as possible, unless it is in the child's or young adult's interests and on professional advice not to do so.
- viii. Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given and file in the accident book.
- ix. The Project coordinator should be informed about the incident as soon as possible.

### **4. Taking children and/or young adults on trips away:**

When taking groups away on trips the following good practice must be followed:

- i. For young people under 16 a consent form must be completed and for those 16+ they must complete a consent form themselves.
- ii. All reasonable safety measures must be taken, e.g. seatbelts are worn in vehicles.
- iii. Workers should re-familiarise themselves with Oban Youth Cafes Child and Young Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.
- iv. Always leave a detailed journey plan, contact details, a list of participants including workers and photocopies of all consent forms, with a member of the project who is not on the trip and who will be in the Oban area and contactable for the duration of the trip

### **5. Identifying and Managing Bullying**

The lives of many people are made miserable by bullying. Victims of bullying can feel lonely, isolated and deeply unhappy. It can have a devastating effect on a child or young adult's self-esteem and destroy their self-confidence and concentration. They may become withdrawn and insecure, more cautious and less willing to take any sort of risk. They may feel it is somehow their fault or that there is something wrong with them and at worst cause depression and/or feelings of worthlessness that lead to suicide.

To ensure Oban Youth Café creates an atmosphere where bullying of children and young adults is unacceptable and to help members manage bullying issues the youth café has a code of guide practice for working with young people (see Appendix1).

Any suspicions or allegations of bullying of a child or young adult by another child or young adult should be referred to the Project Coordinator.

Any suspicions or allegations of bullying of a child or young adult by a café worker will be dealt with through the Oban Youth Café's Disciplinary Procedures (under construction).

## **6. Photographing, Videoing and Filming of Children and Vulnerable Adults**

The Youth Café project may use Photography and Filming for promotional and education purposes and in these circumstances the following good practice must be followed:

- i. Where practicable the Youth Café will seek parental permission to use photographs or film for promotional purposes. Parents should be aware that this may include photographs or film in the press or on websites.
- ii. The Oban Youth Café Project reserves the right at all times to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which it is associated.

## **7. Children or Young adults featured in publications and/or on the Internet**

Websites and publications provide excellent opportunities to broadcast achievements of individuals to the world and to provide a showcase for the activities of young people. In some cases, however, displaying certain information about children and young adults could place them at risk. The following procedure must be followed to ensure publications and information on the Internet do not place children and young adults at risk:

- i. Publications or information on an Internet site must never include personal information that could identify a child or young adult e.g. home address, e-mail address, telephone number of a child or young adult. Any contact information must be directed to either the Oban Youth Café Project or another relevant organisation's address.
- ii. Before publishing any information about a child or young adult, written consent must be obtained from the child or young adult's parent/guardian. If the material is changed from the time of consent, the parents/guardians must be informed and consent provided for the changes.
- iii. The content of photographs or videos must not depict a child or young adult in a provocative pose or in a state of partial undress other than when depicting a sporting activity. Children and young adults must never be portrayed in a demeaning or tasteless manner.
- iv. For photographs or videos of groups of children or young adults ensure that only the group is referred to, not individual members. Credit for achievements by a child or young adult are to be restricted to first names.
- v. Particular care must be taken in publishing photographs, film or videos of children or young adults who are considered particularly vulnerable e.g. the subject of a child or vulnerable adult protection issue or a custody dispute.
- vi. Particular care is to be taken in publishing photographs, films or videos of children or young adults with physical, learning and/or communication or language disabilities, as they could be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

## 8. Responding to Disclosures

### 8.1 What to do:

#### **If a young person discloses to you abuse:**

- Keep a **confidential** record which you should sign and date, this should be passed on to the project coordinator or chairperson of management committee, you must not keep a copy of this record to ensure confidentiality.
- Advise the young person that you must pass on this information, but assure them it will be with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity
- Allow him/her to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, but do not question or investigate.
- Pass no judgement on the young person
- Never try and find out more yourself always pass on your concerns.
- Advise Project Coordinator (Child and Young Adult Protection Officer) as soon as possible.

#### **If you suspect a young person is being abused, emotionally, physically or sexually:**

- Keep a **confidential** record which you should sign and date, this should be passed on to the Project coordinator (Child and Young Adult Protection Officer), you must not keep a copy of this record to ensure confidentiality.
- Report and discuss these concerns with the Project Coordinator (Child and Young Adult Protection Officer) as soon as possible, treat these concerns confidentially, don't try to investigate.

#### **If you receive an allegation about any worker or yourself:**

- Keep a **confidential** record which you should sign and date, this should be passed on to the project coordinator (Child and Young Adult Protection Officer), you must not keep a copy of this record to ensure confidentiality.
- Report and discuss these concerns with the Project Coordinator (Child and Young Adult Protection Officer) as soon as possible, treat these concerns confidentially, again don't try to investigate.
- Try to ensure that no one is placed in a position that could cause further compromise.

**Important Note:** If the concern is about the Child and Young Adult Protection Officer it must be reported to the Chairperson of the management committee

### 8.2 Child and Young Adult Protection Officer Responsibilities

#### **What to do if a member of staff reports a young person's disclosure of abuse:**

- Establish the basic facts by reading through workers confidential records with worker who is making the report.
- Explain to the worker that you will now have to seek advice from the Social Work Department and/or the Police regarding this matter and that they must not investigate further.
- Assure the worker that the young person's best interests are central to this process and that they have done the right thing by bringing this to your attention.

#### **What to do if you receive an allegation about a project worker or volunteer:**

Any information that raises concern about the behaviour of a staff member or volunteer towards a child or young adult needs to be dealt with promptly and in accordance with the following procedures:

- With the worker who has brought this allegation to you, go through their **confidential records** making sure it is signed and dated. Check that they have not kept a copy of this record to ensure confidentiality.
- Before taking any action seek advice from Social Work or Police Thereafter:

- **Establish Basic Facts** - the Child and Young Adult Protection Officer must initially clarify the basic facts to establish whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a worker or volunteer may have abused a child and/or young adult.

**Important Note:**

- This may necessitate the child(ren) or young adult(s) involved being asked some basic, open-ended, non-leading questions solely with a view to clarifying the basic facts. It may also be necessary to ask similar basic questions of other children, or other appropriate individuals e.g. other workers/volunteers. After seeking advice from the Police and/or Social Work Department, the parents/guardians may be approached to provide consent to speak to a child/young adult.
- Advice must be sought from the Police and/or Social Work Department as to whether the worker/volunteer about whom the allegation has been made may be approached as part of the initial enquiry.
- This process will not form part of the disciplinary investigation.

**Making a Referral in Cases of Suspected and/or Alleged Abuse** – If the basic facts support a suspicion or allegation of abuse:

- The Child and Young Adult Protection Officer will refer the suspicion and/or allegation to the Social Work Department and the Police, as soon as possible that day.
- Appropriate steps may be required to ensure the safety of the child(ren) or young adult(s) who may be at risk.
- A record should be made of the name and designation of the Social Work Department member of staff or the Police Officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is required.
- Following advice from the Social Work Department and/or Police, the parent/guardian of the child or young adult should be contacted as soon as possible.

**Important Note:**

- Reporting of the matter to the Police or Social Work Department must not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. A Referral for Reporting Suspicions and/or Allegations of Abuse Against a worker/volunteer of the Oban Youth Café Project Form must be completed as soon as possible that day. Where possible, a copy of this form must be sent to the Police and Social Work Department within 24 hours.

## **9. Possible Outcomes following advice from Police**

Where the initial enquiry reveals that there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a worker/volunteer has abused a child and/or young adult there will be an investigation. There are three types of investigation that can result:

- A disciplinary investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A criminal investigation

Following advice from the Police, disciplinary action may be taken in cases where a criminal investigation is ongoing provided sufficient information is available to enable a decision to be made and doing so does not jeopardise the criminal investigation.

### **Managing the Member Against Whom the Allegation has Been Made**

Following advice from the Police, if the decision is made that the member against whom the allegation has been made is to be informed, the member should be told an allegation has been made which suggests abuse. It is essential to preserve evidence for any criminal proceedings while at the same time safeguarding the rights of the worker/volunteer.

**Suspension**

- Suspension is not a form of disciplinary action. The member may be suspended whilst an investigation is carried out.

- Suspension will be carried out by Management committee in accordance with The Oban Youth Café Project's Disciplinary Procedures.
- At the suspension interview the member will be informed of the reason suspension is taking place and given the opportunity to give a statement should he/she wish. Notification of the suspension and the reasons will be conveyed in writing to the member in accordance with the Oban Youth Café Project's Disciplinary Procedures (under construction).

#### **Managing False or Malicious Allegations**

- Where after investigation, the allegation is found to be false or malicious the worker/volunteer will receive an account of the circumstances and/or investigation and a letter confirming the conclusion of the matter. The worker/volunteer involved may wish to seek legal advice.
- All records pertaining to the circumstances and investigation will be destroyed.
- The worker/volunteer will be advised of the appropriate counselling services available.

### **10. Sharing concerns with Parents, Guardians or Carers**

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents/guardians/carers where there are concerns about a child/young adult. However, there are circumstances in which a child or young adult might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared e.g. where a parent/guardian/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 local Social Work Department or the Police as to who contacts the parents.**

## Appendix 1

## **Child Protection Code of Good Practice for Paid Staff & Volunteers**

### **Guidance on working with young people**

Young People in our care have the right to expect the highest standard of care and conduct from all staff and volunteers.

The points in this leaflet are designed to assist you to identify good and bad practice when working with young people.

**It is vitally important that all members of our team (volunteers & paid staff) adhere to these guidelines in order to provide the safest possible environment for young people.**

#### **Good Practice**

##### **Workers should always:-**

- Acknowledge and respect the individuality and dignity of each young person.
- Provide a positive example to young people.
- Ensure that, wherever possible, there is more than one adult present during all activities with young people, or at least within in sight or hearing of others.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- Encourage young people to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviours they do not like
- Be aware that physical contact with a young person might be misinterpreted
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with young people
- Always refer any concerns observed by or communicated to you, to the Project coordinator or Chair person of the management committee.

#### **Bad Practice:**

##### **Workers should never:-**

- Permit bullying or other abusive activities
- Have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with young people
- Make suggestive or derogatory remarks to or about a young person or others
- Agree to any secrets between you and a young person
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual

#### **What to do:**

##### **If a young person discloses to you abuse by someone else:**

- Advise the young person that you must pass on this information, but assure them it will be with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity
- Allow him/her to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, but do not question or investigate.
- Pass no judgement on the young person
- Never try and find out more yourself always pass on your concerns.
- Advise project coordinator or chairperson of management committee as soon as possible.

##### **If you suspect a young person is being abused, emotionally, physically or sexually:**

- Report and discuss these concerns with the Project Coordinator or Chairperson as soon as possible, treat these concerns confidentially, don't try to investigate.

**If you receive an allegation about any adult or yourself**

- Report and discuss these concerns with the Project Coordinator or Chairperson as soon as possible, treat these concerns confidentially, again don't try to investigate.
- Try to ensure that no one is placed in a position that could cause further compromise.

**In all cases:**

- Keep a **confidential** record, this should be passed on to the project coordinator or chairperson of management committee, you must not keep a copy of this record to ensure confidentiality.

Please Remember, the project has a responsibility to pass on information to the Social Work department or police as it may prevent a child/children being harmed further.