

**PROTECTING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, YOUNG ADULTS - POLICY AND  
PROCEDURES INCLUDING GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

**January 2019.**

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### **1. Why have a policy to protect children, young people and young adults?**

- The following policy and procedures have been produced by YP as part of our commitment to provide a duty of care to children, young people and young adults who participate in our programmes.
- Where children, young people and young adults are mentioned in YP policy document all are intended. A child, young person or young adult refers to a person 30 years and under unless deemed to be a 'vulnerable' adult. In this instance this includes persons up to 30 years of age in line with current legislation. Adults deemed vulnerable include the following;
  - People with physical disabilities
  - People with learning disability
  - People with sensory impairment
  - People with mental health needs
  - People who misuse substances or alcohol
  - People who are physically or mentally frail
  - People who are 'vulnerable' due to current circumstances. These may include low self-esteem, social exclusion, involvement in the criminal justice system, homelessness, domestic abuse, ethnicity and immigration.
- This policy aims to provide clear direction for the Senior Management Team, staff and volunteers to ensure good standards of youth work practice throughout the organisation.
- The protection and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a national and international requirement. The U.N. Convention on the Rights of

the Child (ratified by all countries in which we work) upholds the best interests of children and young people. It places legal obligations on all those who have contact with children. It stipulates that “**children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence. They must be kept safe from harm. They must be given proper care by those looking after them, and their best interests must be a primary consideration in all decision making that may affect them.**”

***Who is responsible for helping to keep children, young people and young adults safe?***

- These guidelines are specifically targeted at all those in contact with and working directly with children, young people and young adults. This includes all persons **employed by YP** either in a **full-time or part time** capacity including persons employed on a freelance or consultancy basis. They also apply to the Senior Management Team alongside any other young person or adult who is a **volunteer** or **student in contact with** or working directly with children, young people and young adults within YP.
- As stated, this policy and guidelines should both promote and ensure good standards of youth work practice. We also request that staff and volunteers in carrying out their duties throughout the organisation behave in a manner that demonstrates integrity, maturity and sound judgement.
- This document takes into consideration and has also been reviewed according to the OAK Foundation 6 Principles:
- This is also a ‘working document’ and therefore open to revision at any given time to ensure it remains relevant to current youth work policy and the delivery of good standards of youth work practice.

<b>2. PROTECTING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, YOUNG ADULTS - POLICY STATEMENT</b>
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YP is committed to youth work practice which safeguards the welfare of all children, young people and young adults 30 years and under, and vulnerable adults to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional harm and neglect.

YP will endeavour to carry out by the following;

- having a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers
- providing guidelines for the general safety and management of activities.
- sharing information about our Protecting Children, Young People and Young Adults Policy and Procedures and good practice to staff, volunteers, children and young people, parents or guardians and membership;
- reporting concerns of suspected or disclosed abuse through a designated person to the relevant authority and involving parents, children and young people appropriately;
- having procedures for effective recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

- providing effective management of staff and volunteers through induction, support and supervision and training;
- designating a senior member of staff to take a lead role in ensuring that the procedures adopted are fully implemented, reviewed, recorded and updated when necessary.
- ensuring that views of children, parents/guardians, staff and other concerned persons are sought and taken into consideration in regular reviews
- delivering 'Keeping Safe' Child Protection Training to staff and volunteers.
- ensuring member groups have child protection policies and complete vetting of staff members and volunteers.
- providing 'Keeping Safe' child protection training to partner organisations and completing vetting for their staff and volunteers.
- providing support and guidance to partners organisations in developing child protection policies and practices.

### **3. Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers**

The following Code of Behaviour highlights key issues that need to be considered in creating a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults and especially the behaviours we expect from our staff and volunteers. These include:

- Expectations of how staff and volunteers should act towards children, young people and vulnerable adults
  - Behaviours which should be avoided
  - Unacceptable behaviours
  - Anti-bullying policy
  - Guidelines relating to outreach work and working in the community.
  - Guidelines relating to residential and visits
  - Guidelines relating to physical contact
  - Guidelines relating to special needs
  - Sanctions
- ***Expectations of how staff and volunteers should act towards children and young people.***
  - We expect all staff and volunteers to treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with dignity and respect at all times.
  - We expect all staff and volunteers to take due care to ensure that they provide a safe environment within all our programmes and activities.
  - We expect all staff to act promptly on disclosures by children or on concerns about inappropriate actions of other staff members/volunteers etc

➤ **Behaviours which should be avoided**

- As a general principle staff and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. It may of course be necessary and appropriate to offer comfort and reassurance at any given time.
- Don't spend excessive amounts of time alone with children and young people away from others
- Don't take children, young people or vulnerable adults alone in your car unless it is unavoidable. Also please note that your car **must** be insured for work purposes.

**NOTE: When it is unavoidable that these things need to happen you should be open and transparent by letting someone else know what you are doing especially your Line Manager or parents/guardians.**

➤ **Unacceptable behaviours**

- Engaging in rough physical games including horseplay – apart from structured sports activities, drama/ dance related activities or structured team-building/warm-ups etc. These should always occur with the consent of the young person involved.
- Ridiculing or rejecting a young person.
- Children, young people or vulnerable adults should never be left unattended
- Permitting abusive peer activities e.g. bullying, ridiculing.
- Engaging in sexually provocative games
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person even in fun
- Letting allegations a young person makes go unchallenged or unrecorded
- Doing things of a personal nature for a young person that they can do themselves
- Allowing unknown adults' access to young people, especially if collecting them from group sessions, residential etc
- Supervising young people whilst under the influence of alcohol or other drugs
- Putting young people at risk

➤ **Anti-bullying guidelines**

Bullying can be:

- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, threats etc
- **Verbal:** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, put downs
- **Emotional:** tormenting, threatening ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities
- **Racist, Sexist or Homophobic:** taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual:** unwanted physical contact, abusive comments

Young people have the right to an environment free from any form of harassment, bullying or intimidating behavior. Harassment and bullying can occur anywhere and individual responsibility extends to an awareness of the impact of personal behavior that could cause offence to another person and make them feel uncomfortable or threatened. Harassment and bullying is behavior that is destructive and will not be tolerated.

Youth workers and those working with young people should respond to complaints of harassment or bullying and deal with all complaints in a prompt and supportive manner.

### **Procedure for dealing with allegations of bullying**

When an allegation is made the youth worker in charge of the programme has a duty to investigate.

If an allegation is found to be substantiated a number of options are available. These include;

- Talking to the young person concerned and warning them of future conduct
- Dismissing the young person from the programme.

The youth worker will need to make a judgement on informing parents or guardians depending on the nature of the conduct.

A full record of the allegation and investigation should be recorded, discussed with the Line Manager involved and kept in a secure place.

Parents or guardians should be made aware of the Grievance Procedure through the Parent Information Pack. (see Appendix 1) This should take place at the start of a programme. Any host or partner organisations should also be made aware of this to ensure compatibility.

## **4. Guidelines for the General Safety and Management of Activities**

### **Responsibility**

- Health and safety issues need to be discussed and agreed with the young people both in the planning and delivery of programmes. This will ensure that young people take ownership and responsibility for ensuring their own health and safety.
- Ultimate responsibility for young people's health and safety lies with the youth worker in charge of the programme. The youth worker is acting "*in locus parentis*" i.e. taking on functions and responsibilities of a parent.

- If a programme is delivered in partnership with another organisation this needs to be agreed as part of the initial contract.

## **Supervision**

- There should be adequate supervision at all times. This will vary depending on the needs of the group, age group of participants, vulnerability of young people, gender breakdown and the overall nature of the activities involved.
- With regard to ratios of leaders and young people it is preferable to have 2 leaders for groups of 12 or more. There should be one additional staff member for every ten extra children and/or young people unless young person is aged 15-18 years. Please see ratios detailed below.
- In relation to mixed gender groups it is preferable to have a leader of each gender. This is particularly important for residential. It is also preferable to have a Qualified Youth Worker present at residential especially during sleeping hours.

Also due consideration needs to be given to the following;

- Ensuring the young people, both those in a leadership role and those they are working with are not left in a vulnerable position and at risk
- High level of transparency to ensure relevant workers, and local community and youth organisations know what you are doing.
- Levels of training, experience and support.

The following staff/volunteer to young people ratios are recommended;

7-10 years	=	1 member of staff/volunteer to 8 young people
11-14 years	=	1 member of staff/volunteer to 10 young people
15-18 years	=	1 member of staff/volunteer to 12 young people
18-25 years	=	1 member of staff/volunteer to 15 young people
Vulnerable adults	=	1 member of staff to 6 adults depending on the needs of the group.

Depending on the nature of activities eg. residential, daytrips or outdoor pursuits, it is important to complete a risk assessment and consider if additional staff are needed.

## **Insurance**

- YP Insurance Company need to be made aware of any high risk activities which are organised by the agency including residentials, as additional cover may be required. If in doubt, please check with YP Management.
- All residential details should be given in advance to the Management to forward to the Insurance Companies. Residential centres need to be carefully investigated with regard to insurance, particularly for organised activities.

## **First Aid**

- If at all possible it is useful to have someone with a First Aid qualification. It is recommended that all those working directly with children and young people including staff and volunteers should complete Emergency First Aid Training.
- Leaders should be aware of any medical needs children and young people have and any medication they are currently taking. This should also include information concerning allergies and reaction to foods e.g. peanuts.

## Fire Safety

- All those in a Leadership role should be aware of the location of fire exits and fire extinguishers and ensure the fire exits are unlocked. Leaders are responsible for ensuring young people know the fire drill of the premises. Fire drills should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that all young people know the evacuation procedure to follow in the event of a real fire. A record should be kept of these.

## Safe Games

- During games of icebreakers and energisers, it is necessary to be aware of the risks of physical injury and guard against these. Also consider the physical environment and remove/avoid items that may cause injury during any activity.
- Games should be facilitated in a non threatening environment and account should be taken of physical and emotional abilities. Consideration must also be given to young people who have particular medical needs.

## Emergencies

- Please do not hesitate to seek advice from your Line Manager or other Senior Members of staff in dealing with emergency situations.
- You should record details and the accident report form is attached for this purpose. (Appendix 5)

## Information

- It is necessary to have basic information on the children and young people you are working with. This includes name, address, contact details and medical information which is obtained on a Participant Information Form. (see Appendix 6).

## Transport

- Delivering youth work programmes can involve transporting young people, whether this is during the day or evening or to and from a residential programme. Youth workers should observe the guidelines below to help ensure protection for them and the young people involved.
- Before transporting young people it is good practice to agree a code of behaviour within the contract especially if you are transporting large numbers on a bus or hired transport.
- You should avoid transporting a young person on your own if at all possible. If you are transporting someone on their own make sure someone else knows about it to ensure transparency at all times and they travel in the rear seat. A child or young person under the age of 12 is required by law to be transported in the rear seat. As stated by law seat belts must be worn. Drivers should be aware of the limitations of third party insurance for transporting young people. **Drivers must check with their Insurance Company regarding the adequacy of passenger liability and ensure they are covered for using a car for business purposes.**
- All drivers for **minibuses** must ensure that their licence permits them to drive the vehicle. The D licence is required for vehicles with sixteen seats or more. The law states that it is the driver's responsibility to make sure that the vehicle is in a road-worthy condition before use. Failure to do so may result in the driver being legally liable in the event of any accident. Therefore, each driver must carry out a range of checks to ensure the road-worthiness of the vehicle. **IF IN DOUBT, DO NOT DRIVE THE VEHICLE.**



- When hiring a taxi, minibus or larger bus, it is the responsibility of the user group to verify the legality and insurance cover of the operator prior to the use of the transport. If in doubt, ask to see a copy of the operator's insurance cover and operator's licence.
- All minibuses require seats with seat belts/restraints, and with the seats facing forward. The ratio is one child per seat belt. Seat belts must be worn for any journey and again it is the driver's/leader's responsibility to enforce this.
- Try and make sure that a leader is standing at the door when young people are loading and unloading. Be aware of other vehicles nearby. Leaders must accompany young people in minibuses and should, where possible, sit amongst the young people. Preferably, a leader should sit near the exit points of a vehicle.
- A written report of any accident should be made as soon as possible after the event. An accident report form is attached in Appendix 4. A copy of this should be made and sent to the Management to be kept in the Accident Book.
- Please make sure the minibus is equipped with a First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher and familiarise yourself with them.

### **Contracting**

- Good youth work practice acknowledges that young people need to feel a sense of ownership in the programmes they are involved in. This can begin with a clear contract that encourages young people to take responsibility for their own actions and respect the rights of others. This does not need to be a list but a creative way of agreeing boundaries.
- It also helps to create a safe environment where young people value one another and are treated with respect and dignity. **Contracting applies to things that are negotiable.** (Please see Appendix 3).

### ➤ ***Guidelines relating to outreach work and working in the community.***

Outreach work is a key feature of youth work practice within the organisation. This mainly takes place during the recruitment phase of a programme and its aim is to encourage young people to come to a particular venue to participate in a programme. Outreach work for the purpose of this document is defined as any work undertaken with young people outside of buildings i.e. on streets, around bus shelters, villages, etc.

The following are some key areas of consideration for both outreach work and working in communities:

### **Risk Assessment**

It is good practice to carry out a risk assessment before any work is undertaken. All youth work activities carry a certain element of risk. It is good practice to carry out a Risk Assessment beforehand to judge whether it is a high or low risk activity and as a result ensure proper controls are in place to reduce the risk.

A framework and examples are included in Appendix 2.

Workers should avoid the risk associated with carrying money or valuables when out making contact with young people. With this in mind the team should remember that all equipment is replaceable e.g. telephone, and no effort should be made to save them in any dangerous situation.

There may be heightened tension in local communities at different times of the year or as a result of political tensions. Any changes to a programme due to unrest needs to be discussed and agreed with the relevant Line Manager in advance.

**Working as a Team** – During initial contact stages with young people it is recommended to undertake this work with another member of staff. If a staff member is working alone please ensure another adult i.e. local community contact, line manager knows where you are.

**Identity** – At all times workers should be carrying an identity card. Staff and volunteers should request this from Co-ordinator as soon as possible after recruitment.

**Equipment and Resources** – At all times the workers should carry a mobile telephone. This will ensure that they can make contact in an emergency and can be contacted if needed. Also please make sure you are carrying a torch for safety purposes.

**Community Contact** – Please make yourself known to the local community through contact with a local community or youth organisation to ensure they know who you are and what you are doing. It is advisable to organise a meeting before any project starts so everyone is clear about the overall aims of the project and more specifically roles and responsibilities. Agreeing a contract will ensure these issues are taken into account. Guidelines on contracting are detailed in Appendix 3.

**Transport** – A youth worker should only give lifts when necessary. (see previous note on **Behaviours which should be avoided**)

### ➤ **Guidelines relating to Residentials and Visits**

There are undoubted benefits to be gained from residentials and visits especially through international work. Alongside taking account of the issues detailed above the following should also be considered;

#### **Keeping Contact**

- If you are on residential a phone number should be left with parents or guardians. Also when you are on residential a contact phone number, address and names and contact number should be left with your Line Manager. Make sure that you are contactable at all times and that you can make phone calls in emergencies. YP should always know where you are during working hours.

#### **Travel**

- With regard to international travel appropriate travel insurance should be taken out through the Insurance company, passports should be current and advice from the Foreign Office sought if there is civil unrest.

(Please see Appendix 4 for a more comprehensive guide to Residentials)

➤ **Guidelines relating to physical contact**

- As a general principle staff/ volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with young people. It may of course be necessary and appropriate to offer comfort and reassurance at any given time.

➤ **Guidelines relating to special needs**

It may sometimes be necessary for staff to do things of a personal nature for young people, particularly if they are very young or have a disability. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the young person and the parents/ guardians. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents/ guardians should be informed as soon as reasonably possible. In such situations it is important that staff ensure sensitivity towards the child and undertake personal care tasks with utmost discretion.

➤ **Sanctions**

Failure to adhere to YP's Policies and Procedures may result in sanctions being applied to the following:

- Disciplinary procedure for staff. A disciplinary procedure should in place and included in the Human Resources Manual.
- Persons employed on a free lance or consultancy basis who fail to adhere to YP's policies and procedures will have their contracts terminated
- Volunteers who fail to adhere to YP policies and procedures will have their volunteering opportunities withdrawn.
- Children and young People who fail to comply with the programme contract may be asked to leave the programme especially in relation to putting the other young people at risk. This will only be as a last resort and all efforts will be made to support young people to complete the programme.
- Information relating to sanctions is included in the Parents Information Pack. (Appendix1)

## **5. Sharing Information**

YP is committed to sharing information about our activities, Child Protection Policy and Procedures, with staff, volunteers, children and young people, parents/guardians and membership.

- Suggest it's also desirable that every YP building/office has a clear statement of child protection policy (in summary) and contact persons / way of contacting them clearly identified
- Children, young people and young adults alongside parents and guardians receive information at the start of programmes through an Information Pack regarding an outline of the programme, expectations, the names of those responsible for running the programme and venue, duration and times of contact. These Information Packs (Appendix 1 and 6) also contains a brief overview of our Protecting Children, Young People and Young Adults Policy and Procedures and Grievance Procedures. A record is kept in project files of young people's, young adults and parents/guardians signatures on receipt of receiving YP's Protecting Children, Young people and Young Adults Policy and Procedures.
- Children, young people and young adults are informed of;
  - the legal obligation pertaining to confidentiality at the contracting stage of new programmes.
  - the positive behaviours they should expect from staff and volunteers
- Parents and guardians are given a brief overview of the Child Protection Policy including
  - YP's statement on confidentiality at the start of programmes in the Parent/Gardian Information Pack. (Appendix 1)
  - the positive behaviours they should expect from staff and volunteers
- As stated staff and volunteers receive information through the Intoduction Training.
- A record is also kept in personnel files of staff and volunteers receiving and understanding YP's Protecting Children, Young People and Young Adults Policy and Procedures including the Health and Safety Policy.
- Written consent is sought for all activities involving young people under 18 years of age from those with parental responsibility. Young adults, those 18 and over, also sign consent forms. A record of these is kept in project files.
- Complaints/grievance procedures are shared with staff and volunteers during induction and with children and young people and their parents or guardians at the start of programmes. These grievances are addressed through Senior Management. (see Appendix 7)
- All confidential records are stored in secure YP premises. In keeping with Data Protection principles these are only shared when necessary with relevant funders for monitoring purposes and with Social Services.

## **6. Reporting procedure for suspected or disclosed abuse**

YP accept their moral and legal responsibilities in dealing promptly and effectively to concerns and disclosures regarding children, young people and young adults and allegations against a staff member or volunteer.

A concern relates to;

- the possibility of a child, young person or young adult suffering harm.

A disclosure involves;

- a child, young person or young adult telling a worker or volunteer of abuse or harm taking place.

An allegation against a member of staff or volunteer can involve;

- concerns about their behaviour towards children, young people or young adults.

## **Confidentiality**

The legal principle that “the welfare of the child is paramount” means that consideration of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children, young people and young adults to be protected from harm.

There is also a legal obligation to pass on information concerning suspected or actual abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Any failure to do so may leave the staff person involved legally liable.

## **Responsibility**

At the first point of contact with young people staff members and volunteers should be;

- Giving out information packs to both young people and parents (Appendix 1 and 6) highlighting the following
  - Protecting Children, Young People and Young Adults Policies and Procedures Policy Statement; and
  - Making it absolutely clear that there is a legal obligation to pass on information concerning suspected or actual abuse.
- Discuss and confirm behaviours expected from;
  - Children, young people and young adults towards each other
  - Staff members and volunteers towards children, young people and young adults.

If information does become available concerning suspected or actual abuse the staff member or volunteer should make it absolutely clear to the person involved that the information will be passed on to a Designated Officer within the organisation and in accordance with the reporting procedures as detailed below.

## **Reporting Procedure for concerns regarding suspected or disclosed abuse**

1. Allegation/suspicion/concern noted and documented on Cause for Concern Form – see Appendix 8 (staff are advised of this form during Induction and Child Protection Training). **This needs to be completed as soon as possible after the incident occurs. Please ensure sensitivity to the young person involved especially with regard to reporting their story.**
2. Report immediately to your Line Manager. If they are unavailable report to Designated Person- see below

- The Line Manager reports to the **Designated Person:**  
**Daniel Carlos Almeida Medeiros –Number +49 (0)30 306 494**  
**daniel@yp-de.org**

**OR if they are unavailable please report to the**

- **Franjo Brkan – executive director –Number +49 (0)30 306 494 – franjo@yp-de.org**  
(Please leave message on answering machine if not answered)

3. The designated person consults with the Director and if deemed necessary, reports to Social Services young people up to 18 years of age and vulnerable adults up to 30 years of age in accordance with current legislation.'

In an emergency if you are unable to contact any of the above please call the numbers listed below.

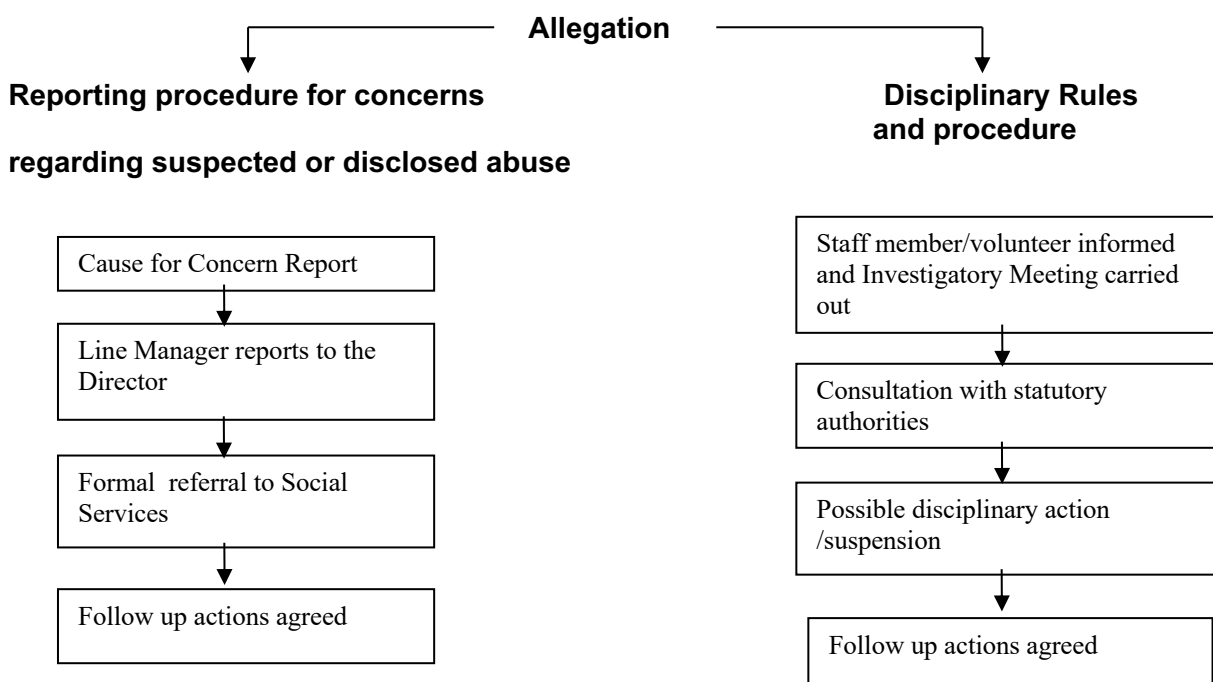
**Germany:** 110 police, 112 ambulance and fire department

**Reporting procedures regarding allegations against a member of staff or volunteer**

➤ **Allegations against a member of staff**

1. Allegation against a staff member is documented on Cause for Concern Form – see Appendix 8. Staff members who receive allegations concerning themselves are required to complete this form and forward to their Line Manager who should forward this to the Director. This needs to be completed as soon as possible after the allegation is received.
2. Staff member informed and investigatory meeting carried out with Line Manager, Director and Senior Management Team.
3. Information forwarded to Social Services confirming conclusions of investigatory meeting and follow up actions, if required.
4. Possible suspension/disciplinary action.
5. Following the above procedure and whether the allegation is substantiated or not the Line Manager should agree follow up actions with the Director.

The dual responsibility in respect of the young person and the staff member concerned is outlined as follows;



➤ **Allegations against a volunteer**

1. Allegation against a volunteer is documented on a Cause for Concern form – see Appendix 8. This needs to be completed as soon as possible after the allegation is received.
2. Volunteer informed and investigatory meeting held with Line Manager, Director and Senior Management Team.
3. Information forwarded to Social Services confirming conclusions of investigatory meeting and follow up actions, if required.
4. Possible withdrawal of volunteering opportunities.
5. Following the above procedure and whether the allegation is substantiated or not the Manager should agree follow up actions with the Director.

<b>7. Management of Staff and Volunteers</b>
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YP are committed to effective management of staff and volunteers. A comprehensive Staff Policy is included in our Human Resources Manual.

This includes the following;

- **Induction**

Staff and volunteers through their induction receive a copy of 'Protecting Children, Young People and Young Adults policy and procedures. They also sign a record of receiving and understanding this policy. This record of induction is kept in their personnel files. It is also compulsory for all staff including peer workers and arts tutors working directly with children and young people to complete 'Keeping Safe' Child Protection training.

- **Probationary periods (staff)/ trial periods (volunteers)**

All appointments are conditional on satisfactory completion of a 6 months probationary period for staff and a 3 month trial period for volunteers.

- **Support and Supervision**

This allows staff and volunteers to identify training needs and access support for dealing with difficult issues.

- **Performance Appraisal**

This provides a means for enhancing support and supervision in order to highlight future support and training needs.

- **Staff Training**

'Keeping Safe' Child Protection includes a half day refresher course for all staff including peer workers working directly with children and young people.

## **8. Partner Organisations**

All partner organisations of YP are requested to sign a declaration when registering for their yearly membership confirming that they have a Child Protection Policy alongside.

Partner organisations are also able to;

- ◆ Receive advice and support regarding the development of their Child Protection Policy.
- ◆ Complete 'Keeping Safe' Child protection training

**Association board**