



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

SKIDZ is fully committed to the protection and welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults. This statement accompanies and should be read in conjunction with the organisations/projects full policy and procedure.

### SKIDZ works to:

- safeguard the welfare of all those it works with, by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm;
- support the creation of an environment where all its service users are listened to and are encouraged to talk about themselves, their lives, and any concerns they may have.

SKIDZ recognises that children, young people and vulnerable adults suffer abuse when they are:

<b>Physically abused:</b>	<i>Actual or likely bodily injury or failure to prevent injury</i>
<b>Sexually abused:</b>	<i>Actual or likely sexual exploitation</i>
<b>Emotionally abused:</b>	<i>Persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection affecting emotional or behavioural development</i>
<b>Neglected:</b>	<i>Persistent or severe neglect or failure to protect from exposure to danger</i>

*All SKIDZ workers are expected to -*

- treat other workers and service users with respect.
- provide a good role model that others can follow.
- protect themselves and service users by ensuring another adult (ideally the opposite gender) is present at all times and be aware of the possible implications of any physical contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- respect a person's right to privacy.
- encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable to challenge attitudes and behaviour they do not like in a support way.

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- remember someone might misinterpret their actions and comments, no matter how well intentioned and recognise that caution is required particularly when dealing with sensitive issues, such as bullying, bereavement, grief or abuse.
- when needed, ensure that there is separate sleeping accommodation for workers and service users, taking account of gender.

ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to protect service users from potential abusers who are not part of the group or do not work for the organisation/project.

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## CHILD PROTECTION AND THE PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to specify SKIDZ policy and procedures on the protection of children/young people and vulnerable adults. In this document the term “children/young people” or “young people” should also be taken to include vulnerable adults. The document applies to all SKIDZ staff, trustees, volunteers and consultants and the policy and procedures apply to all of (Your organisation’s) activities - providing products and services, managing staff and volunteers and dealing with members, suppliers, customers, supporters and the public.

The Police Act 1997 makes it a criminal offence for an employer not to check an employee working with children/young people or vulnerable adults and/or knowingly to give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with children/young people or vulnerable adults. In law, a child is defined as up to and including the age of 18 (The Children/young people Act, 1989). Extensions of this exist for children/young people who are disabled and for those in local authority care. There is no standard definition of vulnerable adult, but the term is normally used to mean people who are, or may be, in need of community care services because of mental or other disability, or illness, and who are, or who may be, unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against harm or exploitation.

The Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures Service was established in 2002 to enable employers, contractors and community voluntary groups to make thorough recruitment checks, particularly for positions that involve regular contact with children/young people and vulnerable adults.

### Policy

Along with other agencies, SKIDZ has a legal and moral duty to create and maintain the safest possible environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults to enjoy recreational, educational, social and leisure pursuits provided through the work of the organisation or in partnership with other agencies and/or community voluntary sector organisations.

It is the policy of SKIDZ to safeguard the welfare of children/young people and all others involved in our work by protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse. It is therefore SKIDZ’s policy to:

- ensure that all staff and volunteers (legally responsible adults) working with children, young people or vulnerable adults: are carefully selected, are checked

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by the Criminal Records Bureau (“CRB” - see 3.1 below), and understand and accept their responsibility for the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults in their care.

- raise awareness of protection issues amongst community voluntary groups, clubs and organisations within our network.
- ensure that a child’s/young person’s welfare is of paramount importance, regardless of age, gender, ability or race, when planning, organising, advising on and delivering children/young people’s activities.
- respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and to ensure confidential information is restricted to the appropriate external agencies.
- raise the awareness of relevant staff, partner organisations and volunteers of child protection issues through the provision of training.
- monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis.
- ensure that the principles of this policy are adopted by all organisations or individuals with whom SKIDZ works and by members of the SKIDZ network, through the adoption of a policy, which meets the same level of determination with regard to child safety.

### **3. Risk Assessment**

Good Risk assessment is at the heart of the protection of children and young people. The Health and Safety Executive describe risk assessment as: *a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent them.*

### **4. Procedure**

#### **4.1 Recruitment of Employees, Volunteers, Trustees and Consultants**

The aim of the recruitment and selection processes for employees, volunteers Trustees and consultants, is to ensure that the best person for a particular role is appointed. To this end every reasonable step is taken to ensure that when decisions are made, the only personal characteristics taken into account are those that are necessary for the requirements and proper performance of the work involved. However, with regard to criminal convictions, SKIDZ needs to balance the need to protect the interests of young people with its desire not to discriminate unfairly against ex-offenders.

#### **4.2 Work with Young People**

**SKIDZ requires those working with children/young people to follow the procedures below, in order to create a safe environment in which to work:**

- Staff (used here to include volunteers and consultants) working with children/young people should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, coaching and use of equipment.
- Staff working with children/young people should carefully plan activity sessions with the care and safety of children/young people as their primary concern including the use of appropriate activities that are testing and stretching yet not unnecessarily rough or overly demanding.
- Staffing ratio guidelines must be followed. In youth work terms the ratio of legally responsible adults to children/young people tends to be 1.8 regardless of age, other guidance suggests 1.10 for older children/young people. It is recommended however that, even if the ratio only requires one adult, there is a minimum of two staff with legal responsibility present at all times for children/young people under

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eight years old. For activities involving dangerous or adventure type activities it may be appropriate to employ closer ratios and this should be considered as part of any risk assessment.

- Wherever possible, staff should avoid being alone with a child, including offering lifts or taking children/young people to their own home.
- Staff should only work with children/young people in a non-intrusive manner and should encourage children/young people to be responsible for getting themselves ready, such as getting themselves changed before and after activities.
- When entering guest rooms/accommodation, staff and volunteers should make sure there is another adult present.
- Staff planning sessions should comply with the standards set by their appropriate professional body - Sport National Governing Body, BMF, ACU etc.
- Staff planning sessions at third party premises must ensure that they have the 24hour emergency contact number of the nearest Social Services Department with them.
- Staff will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.
- Staff (inc. group leaders/workers), should have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children/young people taking part in the organised sessions and this information should be treated as confidential and is governed by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Children/young people and parents should be given a 'named person' to whom they may report any worries or concerns. The contact names and telephone numbers for 'named people' should be visibly displayed, for instance on posters at events.
- Staff should ensure that their work session starts and ends on time.
- All staff are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fairness, trust and ethics throughout the session and course of their activities.
- Staff must give due regard to issues of safety at all times. This includes carrying out appropriate risk assessments, before all events/activities.
- All accidents/incidents involving staff or participants should be recorded in the organisation's accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible.
- Staff and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment.
- Staff are responsible for reporting suspected cases of abuse against children & young people to the appropriate people (see 3.4 below).

### **4.3 Photography**

Appropriate rules need to be set in line with the service being provided, for example there is no photography allowed at swimming pools. Formal permission should be obtained for the use of any images, whether of a child, young person or adult as these are classed as personal information and, as such, are governed by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **4.4 Suspicions/Reports of Abuse**

It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to deal with suspected abuse, but it is their responsibility to report concerns in line with guidance issued. You may find that these suspicions back up other recorded incidents. Remember, **do not investigate – do report.**

If a child's/young person's behaviour/appearance gives reason for concern or a child/young person has an unusual physical injury or a child confides about abuse, the procedure that **MUST** be followed is:

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1. immediately inform your Manager/Director/Chair (or another Manager or Director if yours is unavailable).
2. use the Incident Record Form (in Appendix 2) to make a record of your actions, include anything the child/young person said, anything you asked the child/young person, and your observations. This may be used as evidence later. Record only the facts as you know them.
3. ensure the child/young person has access to an independent adult (e.g. teacher/group leader/youth worker)
4. if abuse is suspected, you or the Manager/Director/Chair should report concerns directly to the Manager of Safeguarding Children at Bucks County Council 01296 395000, giving them a copy of the Incident Record Form. They will give you advice and guidance. If an incident takes place on a holiday play scheme, OFSTED must be informed too on 0845 6023060. Record details and observe the child/young person in case of future suspicions.

The following are some key Do's and Don'ts if a child/young person reports abuse:

Always:

- Stay calm – ensure the child/young person is safe and feels safe.
- Allow the child/young person to speak without interruption, accepting what you have been told. (This should not be seen as believing or disbelieving what you have been told)
- Reassure the child/young person and stress that they are not to blame, tell them that they are right to tell you and that you will try to offer support – but do **not** promise to keep it a secret and tell the child/young person it is your responsibility to inform others.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, without passing any judgement.
- Tell the child/young person that you will try to offer support but you will have to pass the information on.
- Make a note as soon as possible after the event detailing what you and the child/young person discussed.

Never:

- Rush into details that may be inappropriate.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Take sole responsibility – consult someone else so that you can protect the child/young person and gain support for yourself.

If you receive an allegation from an adult about another adult or yourself, the procedure that **MUST** be followed is:

1. immediately inform your Manager/Director/Chair (or another Manager or Director if yours is unavailable).
2. record the facts as you know them and give a copy of the record to the Manager/Director/Chair.
3. if abuse is suspected, the Manager or Director will then report concerns directly to the Manager of Safeguarding Children at Bucks County Council 01296 395000, giving them a copy of the written record. It is then their responsibility to investigate. If an incident takes place on a holiday play scheme, OFSTED must be informed too on 0845 6023060.

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If you receive a request for advice from an adult about suspected/reported abuse of a child/young person (rather than general advice about child protection, in which case just follow step 3 below), the procedure that MUST be followed is:

1. advise him/her to make a note as soon as possible detailing the facts as s/he knows them and, if s/he spoke with the child/young person, what s/he and the child/young person discussed
2. advise him/her to contact the nearest Social Services with details of the concerns/report, including a copy of the written notes
3. don't give him/her a copy of SKIDZ's procedure but you may give details of the organisations/publications detailed in the introduction
4. immediately inform your Manager/Director/Chair (or another Manager or Director if yours is unavailable).
5. record the facts as you know them and give a copy of the record to the Manager/Director/Chair.
6. if abuse is suspected, the Manager/Director/Chair will then report concerns directly to the Manager of Safeguarding Children, Bucks County Council 01296 395000 giving them a copy of the written record. It is then their responsibility to investigate. If an incident takes place on a holiday play scheme, OFSTED must be informed too on 0845 6023060.

#### **4.5 Good Practice to protect against allegations of abuse**

It does not make sense to:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children/young people away from others.
- Take children/young people alone in a car or on a journey, however short.
- Take children/young people to your home.

Where occasions arise where it is unavoidable that these things do happen, they should be done with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation and/or the children's/young people's parents.

Never:

- Engage in rough physical activities including horseplay – apart from structured activities.
- Engage in sexually proactive activities.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children/young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child/young person even in fun.
- Let an allegation a child/young person makes during a group session go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children/young people that they can do themselves.
- If you do have to do things of a personal nature for children/young people (take to toilet, support, give lifts) particularly if they are very young or disabled children/young people, then you should obtain the full consent of their parents.

In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed as soon as is practicable.

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## **5. Review**

This procedure will be reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation that would require SKIDZ to amend its policy and procedures. As a minimum, it will be reviewed annually.

## Signs and Types of Abuse

### Signs of abuse against children & young people:

Some signs that could alert staff and volunteers to the fact that a child/young person might be being abused include: -

- Unexplained bruising and injuries
- Sexually explicit language and actions
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Something a child/young person has said
- A change observed over a long period of time e.g. losing weight or being increasingly dirty or unkempt.

If a child/young person displays these signs it does not necessarily mean that they are being abused. Similarly there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried, it is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse but it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it by reporting it appropriately.

### Types of Abuse:

- **Neglect:** The actual or likely persistent and significant neglect of a child/young person or the failure to protect a child/young person from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of a child/young person's health or development. Neglect in recreational or social activities might occur if staff and/or volunteers fail to ensure that children/young people, in their care, are safely protected or are exposed to undue risk, cold, sunburn or injury.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child/young person is the involvement of children/young people or adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, that violate social taboos of family roles and as such are illegal. Recreational and social situations may involve physical contact (e.g. supporting and guiding children/young people) and could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations occur if adults misuse their power over children/young people.
- **Physical Abuse:** Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child/young person, or wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child/young person. In recreational activities this might occur where the nature and intensity of activities exceeds the capacity of the child/young person's immature and growing body.
- **Emotional Abuse:** The actual or likely persistent or significantly emotional ill treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child/young person. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment but emotional abuse is where it is the main or only form of abuse. Emotional abuse in recreational or social activities might also include situations where parents, staff or volunteers subject children/young people to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

## SKIDZ

### Child Protection – Incident Record Form IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE WHEN COMPLETED

<b>Your Name:</b>	<b>Your Position:</b>	
<b>Child/young person's Name:</b>	<b>Child/young person's Address:</b>	
<b>Child/young person's date of birth:</b>	<b>Parents'/carers' names</b>	<b>and addresses:</b>
<b>Leader's name and address (if different from above)</b>	<b>Date and time of incident:</b>	
<b>Your Observations:</b>		
<b>Record of exactly what the child/young person said and what you said:</b> (Remember do not lead the child/young person – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet/s if necessary.)		
<b>Action taken so far:</b>		
<b>External agencies contacted:</b>		
<b>Police Yes/No</b> If yes, date and time, name and contact number, details of advice received:		
<b>Social Services Yes/No</b> If yes, date and time, name and contact number, details of advice received:		
<b>Other – agency, date and time, name and contact number, details of advice received:</b>		
<b>SKIDZ Senior Management contacted (name(s), contact number, details of advice received):</b>		
<b>Have the parents been informed that contact is going to be made with social services. Yes/No</b> <b>NB:</b> parents should be informed unless to do so could place the child/young person at risk of further harm, please seek advice of this point from your Manager/Director if you are uncertain.		
<b>Signature:</b>	<b>Print Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE WHEN COMPLETED</b>		

A copy of this report should be sent to the Manager/Chair of SKIDZ.

Please remember to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis – do not discuss this incident with anyone other than your manager or those who need to know. Please take advice on this point from your manager if you are uncertain.

**Data Protection Act 1998.** The personal information recorded above is governed by the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and must only be processed in a manner compatible with that Act.

**DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET**

Document Name: Child/young person Protection  
Issue Number: Issue 2  
Document Owner:  
Date:  
Review Date:  
Document History: Issue 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> formal issue  
Issue 2 – reviewed at training session

Document approved by: Chair of Trustees  
Date approved:  
Document Authorised by: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature)  
Manager \_\_\_\_\_ (position)

**NB See Multi Agency Referral Form issued June 2006.**