

UNITED for Intercultural Action

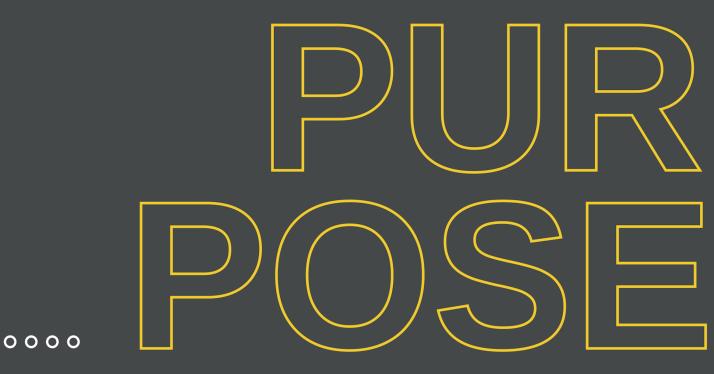
values young people and children as being a vital part of the organisation and desires to see them grow, mature and be challenged in a healthy and safe environment.







The purpose of this policy is to offer the children a safe and welcoming environment with fun activities where the children can grow and learn. Whether this be through educational or sport activities or through other independent groups working in partnership with UNITED.



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- To provide activities for children and young people to help them develop from childhood into adulthood and to provide support for them.
- To enable the children to express themselves.
- To assist the children in integrating into the community.
- To help children/young people appreciate the diversity of their cultures.





OUR VALUES, PRINCIPLES & BELIEFS

- All child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights.
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- The situation of all children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation.

- Child abuse is never acceptable.
- We have a commitment to protecting children with/ for whom we work.
- When we work through partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for children in their programmes.

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We will meet our *commitment* to protect children from abuse through the following means:

AWARENESS: We will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children.

PREVENTION: We will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimise the risks to children.

REPORTING: We will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children.

RESPONDING: We will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.

ADMINISTRATION: Each child and young person should be formally registered within the project administration, securely and target oriented. The information includes an information/consent form which their parent/guardian must complete. These forms have vital information about health and emergency contacts and should be kept securely and brought to each session.



For all our activities involving children, UNITED appoints a *child* protection representative. If any worker has any child safety concerns, they should discuss them with him/her. He/she will take on the following responsibilities:

Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice;

Being the first point of contact for child protection issues;

Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;

Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the Management Committee and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate;

Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;

Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representative.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims.



When organising a trip/outing, make sure a trip/outing slip is completed. This includes details about the trip and a section for parents to give their consent. These slips must be returned before the event takes place and must be brought on the trip with the completed group information/consent forms. (If a group information/consent form has not already been completed for a child or young person, then it will need to be completed).

Ensure that there is adequate insurance for the work and activities.



PERSONAL / PERSONNEL SAFETY

- A group of children or young people under sixteen should not be left unattended at any time.
- Avoid being alone with an individual child or a young person for a long time.
 If there is a need to be alone with a child or young person (e.g. first aid or he/she is distressed) make sure that another worker knows where you are and why.
- At no time should a volunteer or worker from any external organisation arrange to meet a young person away from the activity without someone else being there.
- As such, meetings should be planned and have the approval of a member of the Committee (this must be someone other than the organiser themselves).
- Teenage assistants should always be supervised.



Make sure that the area you are using for activities is fit for the purpose, e.g. remove furniture, which could cause injury in energetic games.

Make sure that all workers and assistants know:

- Where the emergency phone is and how to operate it;
- Where the first aid kit is;
- Who is responsible for First Aid and how to record accidents or injuries in the incident book;
- What to do in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Once a year there should be a fire drill practice.

Do not let children go home without an adult unless the parent has specifically said thy may do so. Never let a child go with another adult unless the parent has informed you that this will happen.

If private cars are used for an outing, the drivers must be approved by the committee, be properly insured, have rested before driving, and should have clean licenses. There should always be at least one other responsible person (16 or over) in each vehicle. All vehicles should be fitted with full seatbelts, not just lap belts. Full seatbelts should always be used.

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Under normal

circumstances, workers should only give a lift home to a young person from group activities if the parents of the young person have specifically asked for them to do so. (If workers are asked to give a young person or child a lift home, they are not obliged to do so, it is left to their discretion).

In the case of trips or outings, it should be made clear if workers' cars will be used and where the children or young people will be returned to.



NEW WORKERS

Workers and assistants are by far the most valuable resource the group has for working with young people. When recruiting and selecting paid workers and volunteers the following steps will be taken:

- COMPLETION OF AN APPLICATION FORM;
- AN INTERVIEW BY THREE PEOPLE FROM THE COMMITTEE, WHO WILL TAKE THE FINAL DECISION:
- IDENTIFYING REASONS FOR GAPS IN EMPLOYMENT, AND OTHER INCONSISTENCIES IN THE APPLICATION;
- CHECKING OF THE APPLICANTS' IDENTITY (PASSPORT, DRIVING LICENSE, ETC);
- TAKING UP REFERENCES PRIOR TO THE PERSON STARTING WORK;
- ENSURING CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT THROUGH RELEVANT LOCAL AGENCIES APPROVED BY THE CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU;
- TAKING APPROPRIATE ADVICE BEFORE EMPLOYING SOMEONE WITH A CRIMINAL RECORD;
- ALLOWING NO UNACCOMPANIED ACCESS TO CHILDREN UNTIL ALL OF THE ABOVE HAVE BEEN COMPLETED;
- A PROBATIONARY PERIOD OF 3 MONTHS FOR NEW PAID WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS;
- ON-GOING SUPERVISION OF PAID WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS;
- ENSURING GOOD PRACTICE IS FOLLOWED IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BY PROVIDING APPROPRIATE TRAINING AND GUIDANCE;



It is a great benefit if workers undertake regular training for this type of work. The committee should keep workers informed of relevant courses.

What is Child

unitotection the response to the different ways in which a young person's or child's physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual health are damaged by the actions of another person.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

LISTEN to the child/young person.

LOOK AT THEM DIRECTLY and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the child/young person know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone.

TAKE WHATEVER IS SAID to you seriously and help the child/young person to trust his/her own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture.

NOTE THE ROLE of the worker to investigate any allegations (this would contaminate evidence if a situation went to court). Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the named child protection officer.

SPEAK IMMEDIATELY to the Local Authority or NSPCC for further advice and guidance.

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PROJECT WORKERS/VOLUNTEERS

should not begin investigating the matter themselves.

DO NOT DISCUSS the matter with anyone except the correct people in authority.

DO NOT FORM your own opinions and decide to do nothing.

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WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

WHAT TO SAY/DO:

'What you are telling me is very important...'

'This is not your fault...'

'I am sorry that this has happened/is happening...'

'You were right to tell someone...'

'What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you...'

Make notes soon after the event. Try to write down exactly what the young person or child said. Avoid assumptions or conjecture.

WHAT NOT TO SAY/DO:

Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What?

Do not say, 'Are you sure?'

Do not stary take pwantsegtions e.g. shock/disbelief.

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CODE OF CONDUCT

All UNITED for Intercultural Action staff, who works with children must sign up to and abide by this Code of Conduct.

STAFF & OTHERS MUST NEVER:

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children;
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children;
- Develop relationships with children which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive;
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse;
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative;
- Have a child/children with whom they are working to stay overnight at their home unsupervised;
- Sleep in the same room or bed as a child with whom they are working;
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves:
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive;
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse;
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others.

This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour.



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It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to:

- BE AWARE OF SITUATIONS WHICH MAY PRESENT RISKS AND MANAGE THESE;
- PLAN AND ORGANISE THE WORK AND THE WORKPLACE SO AS TO MINIMISE RISKS:
- AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, BE VISIBLE IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN;
- ENSURE THAT A CULTURE OF OPENNESS EXISTS TO ENABLE ANY ISSUES OR CONCERNS TO BE RAISED AND DISCUSSED;
- ENSURE THAT A SENSE OF ACCOUNTABILITY EXISTS BETWEEN STAFF SO THAT POOR PRACTICE OR POTENTIALLY ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR DOES NOT GO UNCHALLENGED;
- TALK TO CHILDREN ABOUT THEIR CONTACT WITH STAFF OR OTHERS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO RAISE ANY CONCERNS;
- EMPOWER CHILDREN DISCUSS WITH THEM THEIR RIGHTS, WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE, AND WHAT THEY CAN DO IF THERE IS A PROBLEM.

In general, it is inappropriate to:

- SPEND EXCESSIVE TIME ALONE WITH CHILDREN AWAY FROM OTHERS;
- TAKE CHILDREN TO YOUR HOME, ESPECIALLY WHERE THEY WILL BE ALONE WITH YOU.

In any case of suspected abuse, the authorities will be informed and after a thorough investigation in the case, all legal actions and a termination of any relationship with the perpetrator is due. The voice of the children will be taken seriously and professional assistance will be provided by the cost of the organisation.

