

Londonderry YMCA

Child Protection Policy

Procedures and Guidelines



Policy reviewed on:	13 March 2023
Approved by:	Board of Management
Effective from	6 April 2023
For the attention of and action by:	All staff and volunteers, management committees, children, young people and their parents/guardians
Review due on	March 2024

Policy amendments	Page	Year
Designated Officers: Updated	P4	2023
Two new Legislations added Protection from Stalking Act (NI) 2022 Domestic abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (NI) 2021	P5	2023
Use of Mobile Phones/email: word Written added to parental permission	P13	2023

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Londonderry YMCA Child Protection Policy Statement

The Londonderry YMCA is committed to taking every appropriate step to ensure the safety and well-being of the young people with whom it works, regardless of class, gender, race, or creed. This policy applies to all children and young people with whom the Londonderry YMCA is involved regardless of age.

While the association recognises that the primary responsibility for the care of children and young people rests with parents and guardians, the community as a whole has responsibility for their well being and protecting them.

The supplementary Good Practice Guidelines also outline Londonderry YMCA guidelines for working with young adults (aged 18+). [Guidelines for Working with Young Adults](#)

All YMCA staff or volunteers must be aware of this policy and it is their duty to guarantee its implementation.

The policy states:

“All children and young people should enjoy Londonderry YMCA facilities and activities without fear of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. The welfare of children using YMCA services is of paramount importance”

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues which cause harm to children and young people and to establish and maintain a safe environment for them. We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures, and practice regularly.

We will endeavour to safeguard children by

- Following carefully the procedures laid down for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Reporting concerns to statutory agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately;
- Adopting safeguarding children guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers;
- Sharing information about safeguarding children and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers;
- Ensuring safety procedures are adhered to

YMCA Ireland is truly committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members, staff, and volunteers, who should at all times show, and be shown, respect and understanding regarding well-being, safety, and welfare.

Below is the link to Londonderry YMCA Child/Adult Safeguarding and Welfare Reporting Form - this form must be used to record and report child/adult protection or welfare concerns or allegations to the Designated Officer/Designated Liaison Person.

[**Londonderry YMCA Child/Adult safeguarding and welfare reporting form**](#)

Review of Policy and Procedures

Londonderry YMCA will review this policy on an annual basis with all staff and volunteers. The date of each review and the staff involved will be recorded for Good Practice and Information purposes.

The Board of Management will endorse any amendments to the Child Safeguarding policy on an annual basis at board of management meetings.

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Review due on	March 2024
Designated Officers: DCPO (Londonderry YMCA) Deputy DCPO (Drumahoe YMCA) Deputy DCPO (Tullyally and Currynierin YMCA) Deputy DCPO (Rural project) Deputy DCPO (YGirls project) Londonderry YMCA Management DCPO YMCA Ireland DCPO	Catriona Coyle Melissa Wright Patrick Maquire Mia Hetherington Catherine Coyle Gillian Simpson Geraldine Stinton

Legal and Policy Context

This policy seeks to lay out the value base, procedures, and guidelines required for Londonderry YMCA staff & volunteers to ensure effective child protection. It can and should be added to where circumstances and programmes require it e.g. residential centres.

For the purposes of this document: -

'General Secretary' refers to the person who heads the National Department or Association

'Worker'- refers to a person (18 years or over) who is involved in leadership of any organisations or groups.

'D.C.P.O' Designated Child Protection Officer

'D.D.C.P.O' Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer

Legislation

The key legislation upon which this policy is based is as follows:

- Children (N.I.) Order 1995
 - Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (N.I.) Order 2003
 - Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults 2007
 - The Family Homes and Domestic Violence (NI) Order 1998
 - Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
 - The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)
 - The Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
 - The Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015
 - Domestic abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (NI) 2021
 - Protection from Stalking Act (NI) 2022
- <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/app/uploads/2022/12/Stalking-is-a-Crime-Factsheet.pdf>

Policy Context

- “Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland” (Department of Health, August 2017)
www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young

Definition of a child and young person

A child is a child until they have reached their 18th birthday (Children NI Order 1995)

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy statement outlines YMCA Ireland’s Child Safeguarding Policy, pursuant to the Children (NI) Order 1995 dealing with the care and protection of children and young people and is drafted with particular reference to the unique nature and structure of the organisation.

Londonderry YMCA recognizes that young people attend YMCA Programmes for enjoyment, social contact, and personal development.

They should not suffer from abuse wherever or however it occurs.

Staff and volunteers who are selected, or appointed to work with children and young people within the Londonderry YMCA, should enjoy their involvement, be confident in the knowledge of existing clear guidelines and if required, have access to good support and advice.

The Appropriate Statutory Agencies are as follows:

1. GatewayTeams - [Reporting child abuse and neglect | nidirect](#)
2. [Search Results in Child Protection Category](#)
3. NSPCC - [NSPCC Reporting Abuse](#)

Contact numbers for these agencies can also be found in [NI Statutory Agencies Contact Details](#)

Designated Person Contact Details can be found via the link [Designated Safeguarding Team \(NI\) contact details](#)

Principles of Good Practice

Londonderry YMCA is committed to best practices in child safeguarding and to keeping children and young people safe from harm. In adhering to best practice, Londonderry YMCA will comply with national policy, current legislation and guidance.

The following is a summary of the principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people.

All YMCAs working with children and young people should...

- Promote the general welfare, health, and personal development of children and protect them from harm of all kinds.
- Recognise that children have rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect.
- Raise awareness about what children are entitled to be protected from.
- Adopt and consistently apply a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers.
- Plan an appropriate response procedure in relation to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.
- Establish links with parents and other relevant organisations.

Londonderry YMCA supports the Ethical Conduct of Youth Workers as highlighted in the [Ethical Code in Youth work Document](#)

Londonderry YMCA Ireland fully accepts young people's rights to self-protection and:

- *To be safe*
- *To protect their own bodies*
- *To say NO –*
- *To get help against bullies –*
- *To tell*
- *To be believed*
- *Not to keep secrets*

YMCA Ireland Safeguarding Procedures

Recruitment, Selection and Management of Staff and Volunteers

Londonderry YMCA consistently applies a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers in line with legislative requirements and best practice.

1. There is a clear job description for staff and role description for volunteers, and personnel/volunteer specification outlining key skills and abilities required
2. There is an open recruitment process
3. There is an application form that covers past work/volunteering.
4. There is a declaration form requesting information on previous convictions which are not protected, and investigations if any.
5. A consent form for an AccessNI check is completed, if required
6. There is an interview process suitable for the post/role and task.
7. Written references are sought (and followed up orally when necessary).
8. Where required, an appropriate AccessNI disclosure check is carried out.
9. The post is approved by management.

Vetting Procedures

In Northern Ireland, for the purposes of recruitment within the YMCA, a person deemed to hold a 'Regulated Position' will be vetted under the ACCESS NI registers and online vetting procedures. YMCA Ireland's Access NI procedures are outlined in the [Londonderry YMCA Access NI Policy Statement](#)

As a registered body for ACCESS NI, Londonderry YMCA Ireland follows all best practice policies and guidelines expected by ACCESS NI including the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders. See [Londonderry YMCA Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy](#)

Because of the nature of our work, youth work employees and volunteers and anyone employed or volunteering in a regulated position are vetted under enhanced disclosure procedures. Best practice guidelines for vetting as expected by Access NI and as set out in the following document are adhered to: [Access Ni Protocols](#)

In the case of an Access NI Certificate being returned with sensitive information with regard to criminal convictions, a risk assessment using the following template [Vetting Risk Assessment Template](#) will be carried out by the Child Protection vetting and Advisory Panel.

The Londonderry YMCA requires that ACCESS NI certificates are reissued if a current staff member takes on a substantive new position/role or if an unpaid volunteer takes on a paid staff position.

Should a staff member or volunteer be absent for more than 6 months, an updated access NI certificate will again be required before recommencing volunteering or employment with Londonderry YMCA.

Disclosure and Barring Service (NI)

Londonderry YMCA will follow any future guidelines issued by Access NI and the Disclosure and Barring Service with regard to the future registration of any staff and volunteers who have access to young people.

Effective Management of Staff and Volunteers

Londonderry YMCA recognises that the effective management of staff and volunteers will contribute to an organisation providing activities for children and young people in a safe way. Good management will also require making sure that everyone in the organisation is clear about roles, responsibilities, and work plans, and ensuring they are adequately supported in carrying out their role.

There are procedures in place for the effective management, support, and supervision of YMCA staff and volunteers:

1. There is an induction process for staff and volunteers
2. There is a probationary period for staff and a trial period for volunteers
3. Relevant training is provided, appropriate to the post/role
4. There is a robust structure and process for support and supervision for all staff and volunteers, appropriate to the post/role
5. There is an annual appraisal for staff and a review for volunteers
6. Comprehensive written records are kept of: training completed, support and supervision, annual appraisals/reviews and training of staff and volunteers

Induction

Child Safeguarding Policy – Each appointee will receive a copy of the Child Safeguarding Policy, confirming having read and understood the document, with Child Safeguarding training being provided as part of the induction process. [Londonderry YMCA Staff Induction Template](#)

Probationary/Trial Period

A probation period of no less than 6 months will apply to all new appointees to ensure their suitability for the post, following which the line manager should review their suitability for the post.

Training

As part of its personnel policies Londonderry YMCA is committed to ensuring that each staff member receives adequate training around Child Safeguarding issues.

This shall take place in three ways.

- Firstly, each new member of staff as part of their induction will receive access to a copy of the Child Safeguarding Policy and will be informed as to their own responsibility to this. Within Londonderry YMCA, this will be carried out by the Line Manager.
- Secondly, Londonderry YMCA will facilitate on an annual basis, recognised Child Safeguarding Training (including CSE Awareness). Refresher training will be offered to both Londonderry YMCA staff every 3 years.
- Thirdly, bespoke training will be provided around specific child protection needs as they arise, either as a result of incidents or identified staff needs.

Support, Supervision, and Annual Review

All staff and volunteers will have appropriate support structures in place. This will include regular supervision either as an individual or as part of a team, as well as an annual review of duties known as a work review or job appraisal (Please refer to the Londonderry YMCA Employee Handbook, and Supervision Policy.). As part of this process staff will be given an opportunity to voice any concerns they may have about child safeguarding issues.

Comprehensive, written records are kept of training completed; support and supervision; and annual appraisals/reviews.

Written records will be kept of all training completed by staff and volunteers, support and supervision meetings held, and all annual appraisals/reviews. Both parties should agree on the content of the records and each should have a copy. These records should be stored confidentially and in line with the organisation's data protection policy.

Reporting Concerns, disclosures, and allegations

The YMCA has clearly defined procedures for raising awareness of, responding to, recording and reporting concerns about actual or suspected incidents of abuse. It is imperative that all staff and volunteers implement the following procedures to report a concern, disclosure, or an allegation of child abuse.

What is Child Abuse?

The following are considered forms of Child Abuse

Physical -the deliberate physical injury to a child

Neglect - the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional, and/or psychological needs

Emotional - persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Sexual - involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual behaviours.

Within the youth work setting, staff and volunteers also need to be aware of the potential of **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** as a form of Sexual Abuse. CSE is when a person(s) exploits, coerces, and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some type of sexual activity in return for something the child needs. This takes into consideration online grooming, peer exploitation, and child sex trafficking. Abuse involving CSE should also be reported using the following guidelines.

[Definitions of abuse](#)

What is a concern?

Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour or communication, favouritism or negligence are all examples of what may constitute a concern.

What is a disclosure?

A disclosure is when a child/young person tells someone that they have been or are being harmed or abused in some way. This may be physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, or bullying.

What is an allegation?

An allegation occurs when a child, parent, or other person reports specific unacceptable behaviour where a child/young person has been harmed or abused in some way. Allegations must be reported to one of the organisation's Designated Child Protection officers.

Reporting Procedures

Any disclosure, allegation, or suspicion of abuse must be taken seriously, recorded, and reported to the DCPO who will decide the appropriate further action. The following Safeguarding Reporting Form may be used:

[Londonderry YMCA safeguarding and welfare report form](#)

This is a template for internal purposes but when a formal referral is being made by the DCPO then the appropriate UNOCINI referral form must be used.

If any member of staff or volunteer is concerned or suspects that a child or young person has been abused it is important that evidence is given to the situation and followed up with immediate action.

In the first instance listen to the young person, collect relevant information, record and immediately inform the Designated member of staff.

Where staff or volunteers employed in Londonderry YMCA have cause for concern regarding possible abuse or neglect, or if a child or young person has made a disclosure to them, the following action should be taken:

The member of staff concerned should

- Maintain detailed and dated written records of all available information relating to the cause for concern or the disclosure and any subsequent action.
- Immediately notify in person the DCPO. This notification is to be followed by written confirmation of the incident and details of all actions taken.
- The DCPO should then decide whether or not to report the incident to the Health and Social Services Gateway teams. This reporting may in the first instance be an informal inquiry to the appropriate Gateway Team asking for advice on a situation before a decision is made with regard to a formal UNOCINI report being submitted.
- In the case of a disclosure a UNOCINI Standard Reporting Form report should always be made to the appropriate Gateway Team.

Responding to incidents of alleged abuse is based upon clearly defined procedures within Londonderry YMCA which must be followed.

- Talking to parents/guardians about child protection or welfare concerns
- Workers/volunteers may feel uncomfortable approaching a parent about a concern. You may have to discuss a concern about the welfare or protection of a child/young person or an issue that relates to the child/young person's developmental needs.

The following best practice tips may be useful

[Talking to parents/guardians about child protection or welfare concerns](#)

Role of Designated Officers

Key responsibilities of the Designated Officers is to:

- Be responsible to the Londonderry YMCA Board of Management.
- Has a responsibility to the Office Bearers to encourage staff/Volunteers to comply with the standards and practices outlined in this document.
- Has responsibility for updating information on relevant issues and monitoring the effectiveness of the Child Safeguarding policy.
- Maintains a network of contacts within outside authorities such as local Gateway teams/police/fire authorities/EA/health services, ascertaining contact names and phone numbers and seeking appropriate advice when necessary from the appropriate Gateway team
- Has responsibility for ensuring that all new workers receive a copy of and understand the organisation's Child Safeguarding Policy.
- Ensure that appropriate training and support are provided.
- Receive and deal with all concerns of a child protection nature.
- Make formal reports if necessary
- Keep appropriate records and store them in a safe and confidential manner.
- Has a responsibility to carry out an Annual Audit of procedures.

Legal Obligations

Londonderry YMCA has a legal obligation to report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- Any person who has applied for a regulated position when they are disqualified from doing so
- Any person whom they have removed from a regulated position following knowledge of their disqualification

Under their Duty of Care, Londonderry YMCA also has an obligation to report any concerns, disclosures or allegations about any individual, child or young person which has been brought to their attention.

The organisation has a legal obligation to report any individual who leaves the Londonderry YMCA or is asked to leave the Londonderry YMCA as a result of concerns based on child protection issues.

Making a Protected Notice/Whistleblowing Policy

Whistleblowing occurs when a staff member or volunteer raises a concern about misconduct or abusive practices by individuals and/or an organisation, where such practices cause harm or risk of harm. This will include situations where a staff member or volunteer's concerns are not acted upon by the Designated Officer/Deputy Designated Officer

YMCA Ireland Child Protection Guidelines

Code of Behaviour/Conduct

This Code of Conduct has been drawn up in order to support Londonderry YMCA **Staff and Volunteers** to inform their youth work and protect them, especially when working in isolation and vulnerable situations. The code of behaviour outlines the behaviour expected of all involved in the organisation.

Staff and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to Equal Opportunities and to young people

- By being honest with, and showing respect for young people.
- By respecting the confidentiality of the young person and by being clear and open when confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- By offering challenging and exciting experiences undertaken responsibly in a safe environment
- By recognising unacceptable behaviour and taking action, enables change to take place.

Staff and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to themselves and colleagues

- By being honest with, and showing respect for colleagues
- By respecting and keeping appropriate levels of confidentiality.
- By working and planning to the best of their ability within the constraints of their association, or allocated responsibilities.
- By only working alone when immediate support is available and /or the Health & Safety of the Young People is at Risk.
- By offering support to colleagues and seeking it when necessary.

Staff and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to educating members, volunteers and staff

- By leading by example and setting good, positive role models:
- Not using language, which is racist, sectarian, sexist or abusive.
- Dressing appropriately to the occasion task, and company present.
- Not smoking, drinking alcohol, or using other illegal substances whilst on duty and working with young people.
- By creating an environment within which young people can feel safe and learn.
- By enthusiastically seizing all learning opportunities either programmed or otherwise.
- By fully implementing the aims and objectives of Londonderry YMCA.

Recommendations

All staff and volunteers need to be aware of the impact that their behaviour has on young people. The trust required between adults and young people is fundamental to the work of the Londonderry YMCA and should never be jeopardised.

In recognising the issues highlighted in the Code of Conduct, it is expected that all staff and volunteers will

- Respect everyone as an individual
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour
- Respect young people's rights to privacy
- Be available to listen and, if necessary, refer to more appropriate help
- Try to ensure that your actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence and are acceptable within a relationship of Trust
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues
- Plan not to put yourself in a situation where you are alone with a child or young person
- Adhere to Londonderry YMCA policies which can be found online on the Shared Policy Folder
- Be aware that you are accountable for your actions to the young people, their parents and Londonderry YMCA.

Staff and volunteers should never:

- Spend excessive time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone on car journeys no matter how short.
- Take children to their home.
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact
- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay – apart from structured sports activities.
- Engage in sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.
- On residential, sleep in a room with children, enter young person's bedrooms, or allow young people to enter staff bedrooms.
- Establish relationships with participants that may have sexual overtones
- Deliberately place yourself or others in a compromising situation.

Please note the YMCA expects staff and volunteers to act with sensitivity and self-control when working with all age groups. Those engaged in YMCA work need to recognise the issues of power and responsibility.

It is YMCA practice that staff and volunteers do not misuse their role by taking advantage of participants of any age and establishing 'personal relationships'. The behaviour of all Staff, and Volunteers whilst on duty must, of course, be within the Law. (see [Ethical Conduct in youth work](#) AND [Guidelines for Self Protection](#))

Sanctions

Should a staff member or volunteer be in breach of this Code of Conduct, Londonderry YMCA's disciplinary procedures, as outlined in the Staff Handbook will be activated and followed.

Communication with young people, parents and other

Use of Mobile Phones/email:

It is not appropriate for staff to hold the personal mobile phone numbers of young people, unless for Health and Safety reasons, for example, when on residential. After such residential, these contact numbers must be removed from any mobile phone used for work purposes.

Written Parental permission must be given to communicate directly with a young person via mobile phone or email. Texting or emailing young people directly should always take the form of a group text/email to all of the group members; however, in circumstances where there may need to be an individual response, the communication must always be copied into another staff member and appropriate language should be used.

Sharing photos and/or videos

Written Parental permission must be sought before sharing photos or videos of young people on websites, social media networking sites, or PR Materials.

Youth workers are advised to pay particular attention to the use of cameras and picture mobile phones and in some cases, their use will not be permitted. Under no circumstances must photographs be taken without the consent of the group or on personal media/mobile devices.

Use of Social Media

With regard to the use of Social Media, Londonderry YMCA has developed Social Media Guidelines that all staff and volunteers must adhere to when using social media as part of programme delivery or as a communication method with young people. These guidelines can be found on the following link:

[YMCA Ireland Policy Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers use of social media 2023](#)

Physical contact and additional needs:

In circumstances where physical contact with a member is unavoidable, it must be predetermined and take place with the member's permission. This means that:

- The way it is going to be done must be thought through, explained, and understood.
- The member's permission must be obtained to allow the physical contact to be carried out in the agreed way.

NOTE: It may be sometimes necessary for staff and volunteers to do things of a personal nature for young people, particularly if they are young people with disabilities. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the young person and the parents. In an emergency, parents should be fully informed.

In such circumstances, it is important that you ensure that all staff are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

Sharing Information

- Where child protection concerns arise, information must be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the child.
- Sharing information regarding child protection concerns with the appropriate person is not a breach of confidentiality
- Parents/guardians and children and young people have a right to know if personal information is being shared and or a report is being made unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk.

Written Information sought from parents

It is essential that YMCA gain information relating to children in relation to membership and consent for activities, day trips, residentials, and emergency situations. Any consent that is provided must be from someone with parental responsibility and all YMCAs must inform those giving consent that it must be obtained from those with parental responsibility.

Parents should always be informed of the limits of confidentiality around their contact details and any information they provide to the YMCA.

Confidentiality

On the premise that the welfare of the child is paramount, considerations of confidentiality must not be allowed to override the right of children and young people to be protected from harm.

Staff, volunteers, and participants must be aware that there are circumstances in which confidentiality must be broken, specifically if it is suspected that abuse has occurred and an offence committed.

On receipt of both a verbal and a written report on suspected abuse, the Designated Child Protection Officer will refer to the appropriate authorities.

All staff and volunteers must be clear about the referral procedure.

Record Keeping

All staff and volunteers need to be aware of and follow the written procedures for keeping records such as:

- Attendance register
- Accident and incident books
- Consent forms
- Cause of concern forms

All records will be kept in compliance with the Londonderry YMCA Data Protection policy and procedures.


Complaints and grievances

All staff, volunteers, and participants must be aware of the organisation's complaints Procedures. [Londonderry YMCA Complaints policy](#)

Everyone has a right to complain or report a grievance, regardless of whether they are children, parents, or staff/volunteers.

General Safety and Management of Activities

This Safeguarding policy should be read in conjunction with the

 YMCA Ireland Health and Safety Policy 2022-2023

This will outline in greater detail the processes and responsibilities with regard to Health and Safety matters in the organisation

General Safety

When an accident occurs, the danger must be removed immediately, the injured person treated, and the accident recorded on the agreed form.

- A phone should be accessible wherever a group meets. .
- Emergency telephone numbers should be displayed prominently.
- It is desirable that a trained First Aider be available within the staff team.
- Professional help should be sought if and when the trained First Aider cannot help or if further assistance is required when the First Aider can do no more.
- A first aid box should be provided at each location.
- The worker in charge of the group must inform the General Secretary and/or the D.C.P.O of any accidents at the earliest possible opportunity.
- The worker in charge of the group must ensure that the child's parent/guardian is immediately informed of the accident.
- The worker in charge of the group must record all details of accidents in the Accident Book/Form and also obtain witness statements within 24 hrs.
- Identify the cause of the incident and prevent reoccurrence.
- If an accident is serious, the D.C.P.O or the manager should inform the insurance company named in the Accident Book as soon as possible.

Insurance

All children's and youth work activities should have professionally advised and adequate insurance cover to include key areas of

- Personal Accident
- Public Liability
- Property and Contents Insurance
- Vehicle Insurance

It is the responsibility of the activity organiser and YMCA General Secretary to ensure that all relevant insurance policies are currently valid.

In the case of activities or events which are considered 'high risk', the worker should consult with the D.C.P.O and/or the YMCA General Secretary who will decide on the appropriateness and adequacy of the cover available.

No high-risk activity should be engaged in without first following the above procedure to ensure that the insurance cover provided is adequate.

Insurance cover for transportation of children/youths should be adhered to at all times

Premises

Staff and Volunteers can help ensure that activities and the environment that is being used for activities and programmes are safe, by identifying potential hazards and concerns

The premises used for all children's and youth work should be suitable and safe.

- Adequate provision of toileting facilities.
- Appropriate and adequate lighting. (Torches/night lights should be available for emergencies)
- Appropriate and adequate heating systems.
- Adequate provision of security and safety appliances.
- All fire exits and entrance and exit routes should be kept clear and marked for any situation.
- All keys to entrance/exit doors should be easily accessed for emergency situations.
- All fire alarms and appliances should be installed following professional advice and maintained as advised. Workers should be trained in their use.
- All work/meeting areas should be marked with an 'Assembly Point' in the case of an emergency.
- No heating/cooking items, electrical appliances, or naked flames other than those tested and fitted to the venue by a professional should be used.

It is the responsibility of the YMCA to maintain the upkeep of the premises to a safe and suitable standard. However, the worker in charge has a responsibility to ensure that the procedures outlined in the YMCA Ireland Health and Safety policy are fulfilled.

Competency of Leaders

It is vital that all staff involved in activities and programmes have adequate training. All staff, volunteers, and external trainers/facilitators will be expected to provide written documentation as proof of their required or necessary qualifications.

Safety of Equipment

All equipment used by a youth or children's group must be safe and suitable for use by the age range of the young people participating. Where a National Standard is applicable, the equipment should conform to it.

In addition

- All equipment should be thoroughly checked for defects before use.
- If there are defects the equipment should not be used.
- All defects must be reported to the activity organiser.
- All workers should be fully conversant with assembly and use of equipment.
- No child is to assist with the assembly of equipment.
- Use of all equipment must be monitored by a worker.
- Care should be taken that all paint, glue, felt tips, etc. are non-toxic.
- Safe storage should be provided for all equipment.

Supervision ratios

The level of supervision must be adequate and decided upon depending on the nature and venue of the activity as well as the age range of the children involved. Therefore when deciding how many staff and volunteers are required to supervise, leaders must take into consideration a range of practical measures.

- The number of participants in the group.
- The nature of the site /venue.
- The activities to be undertaken – if the activity is one of a hazardous nature e.g. mountain climbing

- It is important that each supervisor knows the responsibilities that they are expected to bear.
- It is recommended that no journeys/visits should be undertaken without a minimum of two staff/volunteers in attendance.
- It is for the leader in charge to exercise their professional judgement in deciding the level of supervision, taking into account the guidance as stated above.
- Where a party consists of children of both sexes, males and females supervision should be provided unless otherwise agreed.

Off-site Activities

All trips, camps, and residentials must be thoroughly planned in accordance with the [Londonderry YMCA's educational Visits policy](#).

The following procedures must be followed:

- Parents/guardians must be informed in writing of the arrangements for any trip to be taken outside of the normal venue.
- The worker in charge must obtain from parents their written consent to the participation of their child and a completed copy of the health form prior to departure.
- A copy of the trip information form should be forwarded to the D.C.P.O and/or the General Secretary.
- Copies of the consent and health forms must be forwarded to the D.C.P.O or held in the Local Association by an appropriate contact person.
- A detailed itinerary of the trip should be given to all the parents/guardians, workers, and the D.C.P.O and/or the General Secretary at least 2 weeks in advance of departure (a pre-trip information night for all concerned would be an appropriate opportunity to present this information).

Residentials

When on residential the following recommendations should be adhered to alongside the procedures and recommendations outlined throughout this policy


- Each residential should have at least two leaders-in-charge, preferably 1 male and 1 female with appropriate ratios having been considered as outlined previously.
- Leaders must ensure that males and females have different sleeping rooms. In exceptional circumstances, workers must be sensitive to the needs of individuals and monitor the situation carefully.
- Young people participating should have their privacy respected by other participants e.g. rooms, changing rooms, showers, etc.
- Staff members (workers) must always use common sense and sensitivity and not leave themselves open to allegations of sexual misconduct. For example:
 - Do not enter rooms without permission
 - Do not enter changing rooms without permission
 - Do not enter showers without permission.
- Always knock or call out and ask permission to enter areas where people may be changing.
- Never put yourself in a position of being alone with vulnerable individuals e.g. cars, closed rooms, or out of public view.
- Staff members (workers) should, when possible, ask another staff member (worker) to accompany them when entering rooms, etc.
- Staff members or volunteers should not sleep alone in dorms with young people.
- When changing or when with a group that is changing - be discreet.
- If behaviour by one of the young people causes offense or is deemed inappropriate, it is the leaders' responsibility to discuss and deal with this as soon as possible.
- Parental permission slips for those under 18's and medical forms must be completed by all

young people attending residential.

- Staff members and volunteers should use common sense and sensitivity around the areas of touching, hugging, etc.
- All staff and volunteers on residential will have undergone routine vetting.
- Prior to each residential, staff should meet as a group to discuss the implementation of these guidelines on the residential.

Review

This will include an Annual review and checklist of Safeguarding, as well as an action plan for the year ahead

 Safeguarding Action and Training Plans 2023

Links are provided to the policies, procedures and Guidelines listed and are available upon request.

Implementation: We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the policies, procedures and guidelines that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed at the Board Of Management meeting on an annual basis, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 Londonderry YMCA Guidelines for Working with Young Adults

PRINCIPLES:

1. The following guidelines relate to our work with young adults, namely those who have reached the age of, at least, 18 years.
2. All young adults should be treated with dignity and respect.
3. Confidentiality should be observed except where there is a statutory or legal obligation otherwise.
4. The response procedures for dealing with incidents and complaints will be the same as those outlined in the Londonderry YMCA Child Safeguarding Policy.
5. A 'Charter of Rights' (or similar) for programme participants should ideally supplement these guidelines.
6. It should be noted that the following do not constitute hard and fast rules but are recommended guidelines that can be applied in a variety of circumstances.

Definition of terms –

'Worker', when used below, indicates the Londonderry YMCA staff person (e.g. youth worker) or the Londonderry YMCA adult volunteer.

The term 'Member' is used to indicate the young adult who is participating in Londonderry YMCA programme.

Guidelines:

1. Worker to member relationships and contact outside 'working hours'

- Workers should not establish relationships, which have sexual overtones, with members.
- Workers should not maintain regular contact with members outside working hours, unless they happen to be involved in the same group/organisation (e.g. a church) or unless the reasons for the contact are documented and agreed with the worker's line manager

2. Responding to disclosure of abuse

- Disclosures re abuse should be responded to as per the procedures outlined in the Child Protection policy.
- Disclosures should never be ignored or minimised.
- If possible, before a disclosure is made, the worker should inform the member that they might not be able to guarantee confidentiality.
- Workers should be aware of the 'Guidelines for Self Protection' (ref: Londonderry YMCA Child SafeguardingPolicy) when engaged in a 'one to one' situation with a member.
- All disclosures should be documented.

3. Loan of money

- Workers should avoid making financial loans to members.

4. Appropriate boundaries in relation to language, physical contact etc.

- Workers should never engage in sexually provocative games, contact behaviour or discussions.
- Physical Restraint should only be used; a) for the member's own safety, or b) for the immediate safety of another member.
- Workers should, ideally, only use physical restraint when another worker is present.
- Any such incidents should be documented, as soon after they have taken place as possible.

- Workers should never make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a member, even in fun.
- Workers should avoid using 'swear words' in the presence of members.

5. E-mail/ Social Media communication between workers and members

- Workers should use a work e-mail address for electronic communication with members.
- Workers should not send, or forward to members, any e-mail content which could be deemed to be contrary to the Christian ethos of the YMCA.
- Workers should be familiar with and follow the guidelines as outlined in the social media guidelines.

6. Use of Images (print/display/on-line) Staff who work with children and young people, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity have

- a duty of care to ensure that children or young people are not exposed to harm, including exploitation, embarrassment or distress. It is also considered good practice in terms of child protection to ensure that measures are taken to safeguard children and young people from misuse of images and that personal information such as identity and location are not made publicly available without their knowledge and informed consent.
- Images can be made in a variety of contexts and settings - public, private and semi-private and for a range of purposes which might include:
 - Documenting and recording or illustrating work processes and events.
 - Artistic work – created by children, young people or adults individually or collectively.
 - Reporting to specific interest group such as evaluators, funding agencies, sponsors and/or the general public.
 - Promotional work.
- Recorded images should only be made, kept and used where there is a valid reason associated with the activity involved.
- Recording of images should be supervised as would any other activity.
- Children, young people and their parents/carers should be informed in advance if and when images will be taken and their consent sought for image retention and use. This process is known as informed consent.
- Children, young people and parents should be informed as to how and where images will be used.
- Images should only be used for the purpose(s) agreed.
- Images should only be used in the intended context and should not be used out of context.
- In general, individual children should not be identified, with the exception
- being where they are being publicly acknowledged (e.g., an award, performance, achievement) for which consent has been given.
- For publicity purposes, group photographs are preferable to individual ones.
- Ensure that images do not contribute to or expose children to embarrassment, distress or upset.
- Use images that represent the diversity of children and young people participating in any given activity or setting.
- Do not use images of children or young people who are considered vulnerable or whose identity may require protection
- Permission to take and use images of children and young people can be requested as part of their registration process for an activity, programme or event.
- Refusal of consent should not in any way limit children or young people's participation in activities.
- Where images are kept for future use, relevant names, dates and other

- contextual information should be stored with them as well as signed consent for their usage.
- Images should be carefully stored, with consent attached or cross referenced.
- Images should only be passed to third parties for their use where this has been agreed as part of the consent process.

7. Rights of access to stored information

- Members should be made aware of the personal data that is being stored on computer in relation to their participation on a programme.
- Members should be informed about their rights of access to the above information (i.e. they should have access to membership forms or trainee records but should not have access to other forms of data entry where information about other members, staff or the organisation is recorded).

8. Worker to worker relationships

- Members will inevitably be observant of worker relationships and they should therefore reflect the following;
 - a) appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life,
 - b) accountability to the YMCA as an employer,
 - c) the YMCA ethos/standards,
 - d) the ethics of good youth work.

9. Making reports to the Social Services

- Reports should be made in accordance with the procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy of YMCA Ireland .
- Workers should make members aware of the fact that they may not be able to guarantee confidentiality if the safety of an individual is at risk, or where a serious crime has been, or may be committed.
- All reports should be documented along with any subsequent contact with the relevant authority.

10. Self protection for workers

- All workers should be familiar with the Guidelines for Self Protection as set out in the Child Protection Policy of Londonderry YMCA.
- Workers should inform another worker or their line manager if they anticipate that they are likely to be in a 'one to one' situation with a member.
- Ref: 'Appropriate boundaries in relation to language, physical contact etc.' which are outlined above.

11. Responding to suicide

- Staff and volunteers should be familiar with the guidelines as set out in the [YMCA Suicide and Self Harm Policy](#)

12. Residential and travel

- Workers should conduct a risk assessment, which includes strategies for minimising identified risks, before embarking on a residential or day trip. [Ref Educational Visits Policy.](#)
- A group agreement should be drawn up in advance of a residential/daytrip, and should include agreement about contentious issues such as alcohol consumption, catering arrangements etc.
- A ratio of 1:8, a worker to members (with never less than 2 workers, ideally one man and one woman for mixed gender groups) is recommended for residential/daytrips.
- Separate sleeping accommodation should be provided for male and female members.
- Workers should ensure that the residential/daytrip activities are covered by adequate insurance and, if necessary, the insurance brokers have been notified.
- Workers should avoid transporting members in their own cars but, if unavoidable, should notify another worker of their intent and should ensure that they have satisfied

all the criteria of their insurance company in relation to using their vehicle for work purposes.

Summary consideration about the trips should answer questions on:

- Insurance
- Suitability of accommodation
- Pre visit to centre
- Staffing issues
- Programme of events
- Transport
- Expectations and roles of leaders, children and parents
- Consent Forms including appropriate medical information and allergies
- Health and safety issues

11.2 Appendix 2 Safeguarding and Welfare Report Form

Details of person making this report	
Date:	Time:
Name:	Position:
YMCA Address:	email:
Tele No:	Mobile No.
Details of Child/Adult:	
Name:	DOB:
Address:	
Parents /Guardians/ Carers/ Next of Kin names:	
Address:	
Telephone:	

Details of concerns

Please complete the following section with as much detail about the specific child/adult protection or welfare concern or allegation as possible. Include dates, times, incident details and names of anyone who observed any incident. Please include the parents/guardian/carers and child's view, if known.

Action taken:

Reported to Designated Safeguarding Officer		Yes		No	
Name of Designated Officer:	Date & Time:				
Details of advice received:					

Reported to Police/Social Services		Yes		No	
Name of Officer:		Date & Time:			
Position					
Details of advice received:					

Reported to Parent/Guardian/Carer/Next of Kin:		Yes		No	
Name of parent/guardian/carer/next of kin:		Date & Time:			
What is the relationship of this person to the child/adult:					
Details of comments received:					

Reported to Safeguarding Protection Advisor Board Member :		Yes		No	
Name:		Date & Time:			
Details of advice received:					

Additional advice received from:
Organisation:
Person advice received from:
Date & Time:
Details of advice received:

Signature of person completing this form:
Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

This form should be completed without delay and forwarded to the Designated officer at the following address:

Designated Safeguarding Officers

Staff Name:	Mobile tele No:	Email address

Board of Management Safeguarding Officers

Name:
Email address:

11:3 Appendix 3 Useful Contacts

NSPCC

Helpline numbers and webpage - [Dedicated contact numbers](#)

Gateway Teams

Gateway teams deal with child protection referrals throughout NI. They replace the previous arrangements for making referrals to Social Services in relation to Family and Child Care matters.

Western Trust - [Western Trust Gateway webpage](#)

The Gateway Team can be contacted for help in the Derry, Limavady, Strabane, Omagh and Enniskillen areas by calling the following centralised number: 028 7131 4090

The Gateway team have three bases:

- Derry Office - Whitehill, 106 Irish Street, Derry - Londonderry BT47 2ND
- Omagh Office - Tyrone & Fermanagh Hospital, Omagh, Co Tyrone BT79 0NS
- Enniskillen Office - 2 Coleshill Road, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh BT74 7HG

Northern Trust - [Northern Trust Gateway](#)

Gateway Service (0300 1234 333) gives options to contact appropriate Team.

Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Service: 028 9446 8833

Northern Sector: (Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Portrush & Coleraine)
Coleraine Child Care Team, 7a Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3HP
Email: northern.gateway@northerntrust.hscni.net
Tel: 028 7032 5462

Central Sector: (Ballymena, Magherafelt & Cookstown)
Unit 5A Toome Business Park, Hillhead Road, Toomebridge BT41 3SF
email: central.gateway@northerntrust.hscni.net
Tel: 028 7965 1020

South Eastern Sector: (Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey & Larne)
The Beeches, 76 Avondale Drive Ballyclare BT39 9DB
Email: southeastern.gateway@northerntrust.hscni.net
Tel: 028 9334 0165

Southern Trust - [Southern Trust Gateway webpage](#)

Central Phone number- 028 3741 5285 or 0800 783 7745

Craigavon and Banbridge Gateway Team
Brownlow Health and Social Services Centre, 1 Legahory, Craigavon BT65 5BE
028 38343011

Armagh and Dungannon Gateway Team

E Floor, South Tyrone Hospital, Carland Road, Dungannon Co. Tyrone BT71 4AU
028 87723101

Newry and Mourne Gateway Team
Dromalane House, Dromalane Road, Newry, BT35 8AP
028 30825000 Option 1

South-Eastern Trust - [SE Trust Gateway webpage](#)

One number: 0300 1000 300 or Out of hours number: 028 90565444

Or in person by calling into any of the three Gateway Teams based at:

Greater Lisburn Gateway Team

Stewartstown Road Health Centre (Dunmurry & Greater Lisburn)
212 Stewartstown Road, Dunmurry
Belfast BT17 0FB

Down Gateway Team

Children's services
81 Market Street, Downpatrick BT30 6LZ

North Down Gateway Team

Family Resource Centre, James Street, Newtownards, BT23 4EP

Belfast Trust - [Belfast trust gateway webpage](#)

One number: 028 90507000 or Out of hours number: 028 95049999

In person to Duty Social Worker at
Gateway Services
110 Saintfield Road
BELFAST
BT8 6HD

11.4 Appendix 4 Designated Persons Contact Details:

In the event of disclosure or suspecting child abuse Londonderry YMCA staff and volunteers.

Must

- Make a clear Confidential note (without showing it to others) of the incident or suspicions noting the date and time on the following form - [Londonderry YMCA Safeguarding and Welfare Report Form](#)
- The above incident reporting form must then be forwarded immediately to the appropriate Designated person.
- Make a clear Confidential note (without showing it to others) of the incident or suspicions noting the date and time.
- Immediately Contact the Londonderry YMCA Designated C.P.O. – Mrs Catriona Coyle 028 7130 1662 mobile: 07548834646 or the Londonderry YMCA
- Deputy-Designated Child Protection Officer - Melissa Wright who will accept responsibility for dealing with any matters on the youth programme.
- Deputy-Designated Child Protection Officer - Patrick Maguire who will accept responsibility for dealing with any matters on the YMCA Youth Programme Tullyally and Currynierin.
- All Deputy-Designated Child Protection Officers should seek advice and inform the Designated Child Protection Officer imminently.
- Take no further action or discuss the situation with anyone else.

Contact Details

Project	Role	Name	Email	Tel	Mobile
YMCA Youth Programme	DCPO	Catriona Coyle	catriona.coyle@ymca-ireland.net	028 7130 1662	07548 834646
YMCA Youth Programme	DDCPO	Melissa Wright	Melissa.Wright@ymca-ireland.net	0287130 1662	07395 8331603
YMCA Youth Programme Tullyally and Currynierin	DDCPO	Patrick Maguire	Patrick@ymca-ireland.net	0287130 1662	07548 830292
YMCA Youth Programme Rural project	DDCPO	Mia Hetherington	mia@ymca-ireland.net	0287130 1662	077439254642
YMCA YGirls project	DDCPO	Catherine Coyle	catherine.coyle@ymca-ireland.net	0287130 1662	077439254641
Londonderry YMCA Management Committee	DDCPO	Gillian Simpson	lisa@ymca-ireland.net	0287130 1662	

11.5 Appendix 5 Ethical Conduct in Youth Work

Ethical Conduct in Youth Work – Taken from the National Youth Agency Statement of Principles

1. The nature and purpose of youth work

1.1. The purpose of youth work is to facilitate and support young people's growth through dependence to interdependence, by encouraging their personal and social development and enabling them to have a voice, influence and place in their communities and society.

1.2. Youth work is informed by a set of beliefs which include a commitment to equal opportunity, to young people as partners in learning and decision-making and to helping young people to develop their own sets of values. We recognise youth work by these qualities (based on Davies 1963):

- It offers its services in places where young people can choose to participate;
- It encourages young people to be critical in their responses to their own experience and to the world around them;
- It works with young people to help them make informed choices about their personal responsibilities within their communities;
- It works alongside school and college-based education to encourage young people to achieve and fulfil their potential; and
- It works with other agencies to encourage society to be responsive to young people's needs.

2. The importance of ethics in youth work

2.1. Ethics is generally regarded as being about the norms of behaviour people follow regarding what is good or bad, right or wrong. Usually ethical issues are about matters of human (and animal) wellbeing or welfare.

2.2. Ethics in the context of professional practice is about:

- Developing the ability of practitioners to see the ethical dimensions of problems, to reflect on issues, to take difficult decisions and to be able to justify these decisions;
- Acting with integrity according to one's responsibilities and duties (this may entail behaving in accordance with professional principles, guidelines or agency rules).

2.3. The behaviour of everyone involved in youth work and youth services —political and managerial leaders, managers, trustees, employees, volunteers and participants — must be of a standard that makes it the basis of:

- The effective delivery of services;
- Modelling appropriate behaviour to young people;
- Trust between workers and young people;
- Trust between organisations and services and parents and young people;
- A willingness of various parties to commit resources; and
- A belief in the capacity of youth work to help young people themselves learn to make moral decisions and take effective action.

2.4. This requires all involved to be capable of appropriate thinking about ethics in practical situations.

3. Purpose of the statement of principles

3.1. The statement in section 5 outlines the basic principles underpinning the work with the aim of guiding the conduct of youth workers and managers and to serve as a focus for debate and discussion about ethical issues in practice. It is not a rulebook prescribing exactly what youth workers should do in every situation. This would be impossible to achieve, due to the variety of practice settings, age groups and types of work. Rather the statement is intended to be used as a starting point for outlining the broad principles of ethical conduct; raising awareness of the multiple responsibilities of youth workers (paid and voluntary) and their managers and the potential for conflict or at least tension between these responsibilities; and for encouraging and stimulating ethical reflection and debate.

3.2. The first part of the statement covers 'ethical principles' which include the way that youth workers should treat the young people they work with (for example, with respect for their rights to make choices, without discrimination) and the kinds of values that youth workers are working towards (such as a just society). The second part of the statement covers 'professional principles' which relate more particularly to how the youth worker should act in the role of a practitioner with certain types of responsibility and accountability. The practice principles listed under each general principle are more specific, suggesting how youth workers would apply the broader ethical and professional principles. They are not exhaustive.

1. Note: the term 'youth worker' in this statement is intended to include those who work in youth work directly with young people and people who manage those working directly with young people. The phrase 'professional' is to denote acceptance of a particular role within the 'profession' of youth work, not necessarily the employment status of the individual who may well, for example, be a volunteer.

4. Summary of the statement of principles of ethical conduct for youth work

Ethical principles - Youth workers have a commitment to:

1. **Treat young people with respect**, valuing each individual and avoiding **negative discrimination**.
2. **Respect and promote young people's rights to make their own decisions and choices, unless** the welfare or legitimate interests of themselves or others are seriously threatened.
3. **Promote and ensure the welfare and safety of young people, while** permitting them to learn through undertaking challenging educational activities.
4. Contribute towards **the promotion of social justice for young people** and in society generally through encouraging respect for difference and diversity and challenging discrimination.

Professional principles - Youth workers have a commitment to:

5. **Recognise the boundaries between personal and professional life** and be aware of the need to balance a caring and supportive relationship with young people with appropriate professional distance.
6. **Recognise the need to be accountable** to young people, their parents or guardians, colleagues, funders, wider society and others with a relevant interest in the work, and that these accountabilities may be in conflict.
7. **Develop and maintain the required skills and competence** to do the job.

8. Work for conditions in employing agencies where these principles are discussed, evaluated and upheld.

5 Statement of principles of ethical conduct for youth work

5.1. **Ethical principles.** *Youth workers have a commitment to:*

5.1.1. **Treat young people with respect**

Practice principles would include:

- Valuing each young person and acting in a way that does not exploit or negatively discriminate against certain young people on irrelevant grounds such as 'race', religion, gender, ability or sexual orientation; and
- Explaining the nature and limits of confidentiality and recognising that confidential information clearly entrusted for one purpose should not be used for another purpose without the agreement of the young person – except where there is clear evidence of danger to the young person, worker, other persons or the community.

5.1.2. **Respect and promote young people's rights to make their own decisions and choices**

Practice principles would include:

- Raising young people's awareness of the range of decisions and choices open to them and offering opportunities for discussion and debate on the implications of particular choices; offering learning opportunities for young people to develop their capacities and confidence in making decisions and choices through participation in decision-making bodies and working in partnership with youth workers in planning activities; and
- Respecting young people's own choices and views, unless the welfare or legitimate interests of themselves or other people are seriously threatened.

5.1.3. **Promote and ensure the welfare and safety of young people**

Practice principles would include:

- Taking responsibility for assessing risk and managing the safety of work and activities involving young people;
- Ensuring their own competence, and that of employees and volunteers for whom they are responsible, to undertake areas of work and activities;
- Warning the appropriate authority, and taking action, if there are thought to be risks or dangers attached to the work;
- Drawing to the attention of their employer and, if this proves ineffective, bringing to the attention of those in power or, finally, the general public, ways in which activities or policies of employers may be seriously harmful to the interests and safety of young people; and
- Being aware of the need to strike a balance between avoiding unnecessary risk and permitting and encouraging young people to partake in challenging educational activities.

5.1.4. **Contribute towards the promotion of social justice for young people and in society**

generally

Practice principles would include:

- Promoting just and fair behaviour, and challenging discriminatory actions and attitudes on the part of young people, colleagues and others;
- Encouraging young people to respect and value difference and diversity; particularly in the context of a multi-cultural society;
- Drawing attention to unjust policies and practices and actively seeking to change them;
- Promoting the participation of all young people, and particularly those who have traditionally been discriminated against, in youth work, in public structures and in society generally; and
- Encouraging young people and others to work together collectively on issues of common concern.

5.2. Professional principles. *Youth workers have a commitment to:*

5.2.1. Recognise the boundaries between personal and professional life

Practice principles would include:

- Recognising the tensions between developing supportive and caring relationships with young people and the need to maintain an appropriate professional distance;
- Taking care not to develop close personal, particularly sexual, relationships with the young people they are working with as this may be against the law, exploitative or result in preferential treatment. If such a relationship does develop, the youth worker concerned should report this to the line manager to decide on appropriate action;
- Not engaging in work-related activities for personal gain, or accepting gifts or favours from young people or local people that may compromise the professional integrity of the work; and
- Taking care that behaviour outside work does not undermine the confidence of young people and the public in youth work

5.2.2. Recognise the need to be accountable to young people, their parents or guardians, employers, funders, wider society and other people with a relevant interest in the work

Practice principles would include:

- Recognising that accountabilities to different groups may conflict and taking responsibility for seeking appropriate advice and making decisions in cases of conflict
- Being open and honest in all dealings with young people, enabling them to access information to make choices and decisions in their lives generally and in relation to participation in youth work activities;
- Ensuring that actions as a youth worker are in accordance with the law
- Ensuring that resources under youth workers' control are distributed fairly, according to criteria for which youth workers are accountable, and that work undertaken is as effective as possible;
- Reporting to the appropriate authority any suspicions relating to a young person being at risk of serious harm or danger, particularly of sexual or physical abuse; and
- Actively seeking opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and professionals from

other agencies.

5.2.3. Develop and maintain the skills and competence required to do the job

Practice principles would include:

- Only undertaking work or taking on responsibilities for which workers have the necessary skills, knowledge and support;
- Seeking feedback from service users and colleagues on the quality of their work and constantly updating skills and knowledge; and
- Recognising when new skills and knowledge are required and seeking relevant education and training.

5.2.4. Foster and engage in ethical debate In youth work

Practice principles would include:

- Developing awareness of youth workers' own personal values and how these relate to the ethical principles of youth work as stated in section 5.1;
- Re-examining these principles, engaging in reflection and discussion with colleagues and contributing to the learning of the organisation where they work;
- Developing awareness of the potential for conflict between personal and professional values, as well as between the interests and rights of different individuals and between the ethical principles in this Statement; and
- Recognising the importance of continuing reflection and debate and seeing this statement of ethical principles as a working document which should be constantly under discussion.

5.2.5. Work for conditions in employing agencies where these principles are discussed, evaluated and upheld

Practice principles would include:

- Ensuring that colleagues, employers and young people are aware of the statement of principles;
- Being prepared to discuss difficult ethical issues in the light of these principles and contributing towards interpreting and elaborating on the practice principles; and
- Being prepared to challenge colleagues or employing agencies whose actions or policies are contrary to the principles in this statement.

1.6 Appendix 6 Londonderry YMCA Access NI Policy Statement

General Principles

As an organization using AccessNI to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Londonderry YMCA complies fully with AccessNI's Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage retention and disposal of Disclosure Applications and Disclosure information.

We also comply fully with obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislative requirements with regards to the safe handling, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure Information and ID documentation

Consent

As we no longer receive a copy certificate from AccessNI, written consent will be obtained from the applicant if there is a need to request a copy of a Disclosure certificate.

Storage and Access

There are 2 methods of storage for disclosure and ID information.

- a) Disclosure information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.
- b) Disclosure information may also be held in secure online folders using YMCA Ireland's Google storage system with access strictly controlled to the lead and counter signatories who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorized to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed. We recognise it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant appointment, regulatory or licensing) decision has been taken, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. We comply with AccessNI's Code of Practice requirement to ensure that it is not retained longer than is required for the specific purpose of taking a decision on the applicant's suitability. Where applicable any Disclosure certificates which may have been required, will be returned to the applicant once a decision, recruitment or otherwise has been made and will be retained no longer than the agreed period.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed (90 days following certificate issue), we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means ie by shredding, pulping or burning if held as hard copy, or deletion of online folder. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any unsecured receptacle (eg waste-bin or confidential sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure or any other relevant non-conviction information supplied by police. However, despite the above, we will keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the AccessNI unique reference number of the Disclosure Certificate and the details of the recruitment decision.

Review of Policy Statement

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of Londonderry YMCA's Annual Safeguarding Review.

11.7 Appendix 7 Recruitment Of Ex-Offenders Policy And Procedures.

1. Recruitment of Ex Offenders Statement

Londonderry YMCA complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by the Department of Justice, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons, their nominees and other recipients of information by AccessNI under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for the purposes of assessing Applicant's suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes. We undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

This policy is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

2. Equality of Opportunity

Londonderry YMCA are committed to equality of opportunity (see Londonderry YMCA Equal Opportunities Policy) to following practices and to providing a service which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination*. We ensure that no applicant or member of staff is subject to less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, race colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, age, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, physical or mental disability political opinion or offending background, or is disadvantaged by any condition which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

Londonderry YMCA actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on those who meet the required standard of skills, qualifications and experience as outlined in the essential and desirable criteria.

*We are only able to discuss what is contained on a Disclosure Certificate and not what may have been sent under separate cover

3. Declaration of Offences, Access NI certificates and vetting procedures

- A.** Londonderry YMCA will request an AccessNI Disclosure only where this is considered proportionate and relevant to the particular position. This will be based on a thorough risk assessment of that position and having considered the relevant legislation which determines whether or not a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure is available to the position in question. Where an AccessNI Disclosure is deemed necessary for a post or position, all applicants will be made aware at the initial recruitment stage that the position will be subject to a Disclosure and that Londonderry YMCA will request the individual being offered the position to undergo an appropriate AccessNI Disclosure check.
- B.** In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions)(Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (as amended in 2014), YMCA Ireland will only ask about convictions which are defined as "not protected" for the purposes of obtaining a Standard or Enhanced disclosure.
- C.** We undertake to ensure an open and measured and recorded discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned eg the individual is applying for a driving job but has a criminal history of driving offences. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment.
- D.** Londonderry YMCA may consider discussing any matter revealed in a Disclosure Certificate. We are only able to discuss what is contained on a Disclosure Certificate, and not what may have been sent under separate cover by the Police, with the subject of that Disclosure before considering withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

- E.** Any discussions with regard to information contained within a Disclosure certificate will be held by the Child Protection Vetting and Advice Panel
- F.** We ensure that all those in Londonderry YMCA who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of Disclosure information. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders (e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978).
- G.** We undertake to make every subject of an AccessNI Disclosure aware of the
- H.** existence of the Code of Practice, and to make a copy available on request.

4. In Conclusion

Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar you from working with Londonderry YMCA. This will depend on the nature of the position, together with the circumstances and background of your offences or other information contained in a Disclosure Certificate or provided directly to us by the PSNI.

This policy will be reviewed on an Annual basis as part of the Annual Child Safeguarding Policy Review.

11.8 Appendix 8 Londonderry YMCA Child Protection Vetting Risk Assessment Procedure and Form

This risk assessment form should be used following a returned vetting form which a decision about whether or not to employ or involve as a volunteer, a potential applicant.

In the event that a vetting form is returned with sensitive information, the following risk assessment will be considered by the Child Protection panel, before a decision is reached.

An interview with the applicant which considers each of these questions may be required, but in all cases a returned 'unsuitable' vetting form should be discussed with the applicant, and the decision reached by the panel be made known to them.

Child Protection Risk Assessment Panel Members are

Catriona Coyle- Designated Child Protection Officer

Gillian Simpson - Londonderry YMCA Management Member Representative

Londonderry YMCA Returned Vetting form Risk Assessment

Name of Applicant:

Date and reason for returned vetting form:

Panel Members:

Question	Yes/No	Comment	Notes
Did the applicant declare any convictions at the time of application or at Interview stage?			If the applicant did not declare conviction even though opportunities were provided then they should not be considered for the post.
Is the conviction relevant to the role that the applicant has applied for?			If the conviction is not relevant to the role of that the applicant has applied for then this in itself would not rule them out of employment/involvement.
When did the conviction occur? Is there a pattern or frequency of offences?			If the conviction was more than 5 years ago then again, a decision needs to be made as to whether or not the applicant has

Has there been more than 1 conviction?			
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Decision reached:

Signed:

Dated:

11.9 Appendix 9 Definitions of child abuse

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. See also [Definitions and signs of child abuse NSPCC brief.pdf](#)

Signs & Symptoms of Neglect

Neglect can be defined in terms of an omission, where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, and/or medical care.

Harm can be defined as the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant is determined by the child's health and development as compared to that which could reasonably be expected of a child of similar age.

Neglect generally becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. For example, a child who suffers a series of minor injuries may not be having his or her needs met in terms of necessary supervision and safety. A child whose height or weight is significantly below average may be being deprived of adequate nutrition. A child who consistently misses school may be being deprived of intellectual stimulation.

The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

Signs & Symptoms of Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is normally to be found in the relationship between a parent/carer and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when a child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Examples may include:

1. The imposition of negative attributes on a child, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
2. Conditional parenting in which the level of care shown to a child is made contingent on his or her behaviours or actions;
3. Emotional unavailability of the child's parent/carer;
4. Unresponsiveness of the parent/carer and/or inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
5. Premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
6. Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control himself or herself in a certain way;
7. Under- or over-protection of the child;
8. Failure to show interest in, or provide age-appropriate opportunities for, the child's cognitive and emotional development;
9. Use of unreasonable or over-harsh disciplinary measures;
10. Exposure to domestic violence;
11. Exposure to inappropriate or abusive material through new technology.

Emotional abuse can be manifested in terms of the child's behavioural, cognitive, affective or physical functioning. Examples of these include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, and oppositional behaviour. The threshold of significant harm is reached when abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/carer.

Signs & Symptoms of Physical Abuse

Physical abuse of a child is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction, or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be single or repeated incidents.

Physical abuse can involve:

1. Severe physical punishment;
2. Beating, slapping, hitting or kicking;
3. Pushing, shaking or throwing;
4. Pinching, biting, choking or hair-pulling;
5. Terrorising with threats;
6. Observing violence;
7. Use of excessive force in handling;
8. Deliberate poisoning;
9. Suffocation;
10. Fabricated/induced illness
11. Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant harm to a child

Signs & Symptoms of Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others. Examples of child sexual abuse include:

1. Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of the child;
2. Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
3. Masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
4. Sexual intercourse with the child, whether oral, vaginal or anal;
5. Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in, prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in the exhibition, modeling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse;
6. Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that, for the purposes of the criminal law, the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. PSNI will deal with the criminal aspects of the case under the relevant legislation.

It should be noted that the definition of child sexual abuse presented in this section is not a legal definition and is not intended to be a description of the criminal offence of sexual assault.

11.10 Appendix 10. Talking to parents/guardians about child protection or welfare concerns NI

Workers/volunteers may feel uncomfortable approaching a parent about a concern. You may have to discuss a concern about the welfare or protection of a child/young person or an issue that relates to the child/young person's developmental needs. The following best practice tips may be useful:

- Make sure parents/guardians have prior awareness of your guiding principles, procedures, and duties to safeguard children.
- Be straightforward and clearly explain the nature of the concern or issue, e.g. by using facts and records of observations made.
- Think about the time and place to have the conversation. Find a time when parents/guardians are not in a hurry.
- Find a place that is quiet and allows privacy.
- Consider arranging to meet parents/guardians.
- Consider with the Child protection Officer who is best placed to have the conversation with the parents/guardians.
- Use a calm and gentle tone, and consider the language used.
- Start with positive comments and observations about the child/young person. Ensure that the parents/guardians know that you care about the welfare of their child and recognise their strengths.
- Refer to how the situation may be affecting the child/young person.
- Start with positive comments and observations about the parents/guardians. Most parents/guardians are trying to do their best for their children and will appreciate your acknowledgment of how challenging parenting can be at times.
- Give the parents/ guardians an opportunity to talk; ask them for an explanation and acknowledge their feelings.
- Take the approach that you are working together to address any issues in the best interests of the child/young person.
- Don't blame, don't get defensive, and don't take things personally
- Ensure that you are supportive but also address the issue.
- Refer to your guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures for support.
- Offer possible solutions, where appropriate.
- Advise parents/guardians how you plan to follow up and keep them informed and involved, where appropriate. Where it is not possible to contact the parents/guardians to discuss a concern you may need to discuss the concern with the Child protection Officer or Deputy Child protection Officer.

Remember if a report needs to be made to Gateway team, do not delay.

It is best practice that parents/guardians are informed if a report is to be made to The Gateway Teams unless doing so might further endanger the child, impair Social Services' ability to carry out an assessment or put the reporter at risk of harm.

11.11 Appendix 11. General Guidelines for Self Protection

1. In the event of any injury to a child, accidental or otherwise ensure that the incident is recorded and witnessed by another adult
2. Keep records of any false allegations a child makes against you. This should include everything from 'you're always picking on me' to 'you hit me'; and comments such as 'don't touch me'. Use the incident form to keep dates and times
3. Get another adult to witness the allegation, if possible. If you are in a school or residential setting, take the child to the leader in charge and explain what happened. A record of that meeting should also be kept
4. If a child touches you in an inappropriate way, record what happened and ensure that another adult is also informed. It could be a totally innocent touch, so do not make the child feel like a criminal. However, remember that ignoring this or allowing it to go on may place you in an untenable situation. Neither is it a good idea for the child to be allowed to continue this behaviour as another person might use such a situation to their advantage and then say the child instigated it.
5. On journeys, always have two members of staff along. If it is on overnight trip or residential, always check the rooms in pairs.
6. Do not place yourself in a situation where you are spending excessive amounts of time alone with one young person away from other people. If you are speaking one to one, ensure that the door to the room is kept open at all times.
7. If you are in a residential setting never, under any circumstances, take a child or children into your bedroom.
8. It is inappropriate to take children in your car alone.
9. Children should never be taken into your home, as they then could describe rooms, furnishings, etc.
10. If you are in a care situation with children with special needs, always have another person present when changing nappies or clothing or bathing a child.
11. Never do something of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves. This includes cleaning bottoms, unbuttoning trouser buttons, or any activity that could be misconstrued.
12. Do not go into the toilet alone with children. Where individual tailored intimate care procedures for children requiring assistance with tasks of a personal nature, these will be developed in consultation with the parents and child (where appropriate). A risk assessment will need to be carried out, along with consultation with all relevant people to ensure boundaries and limits are set and training is provided as necessary.
13. Be mindful of how and where you touch children. Never pat a child on the bottom, or touch any part of the 'swim suit' area
14. Do not extend hugs and kisses on the mouth from children. This might be particularly relevant to those working with special needs children. Though we want to give love and attention to children, this guideline is important not only for a worker's protection, but also for the children as well.
15. When taking children on an outing, think of how you appear to the public when dealing with the children. It may mean that disruptive children cannot go on outings.
16. If you are suspicious of abuse by a colleague, peer or any other person, you must disclose this to the DCPO or the General Secretary. If there is an attempted cover-up, you could be implicated by your silence. "Why didn't s/he tell? - Something to hide?"
17. Always inform people (ie. Line manager or other team members) of any uneasiness or fears you may experience during your work with young people.
18. Long-term 'helping' or 'support' relationships that arise in one's work should be reviewed on a regular basis with your line manager.



Helping young people build a better future.

Londonderry YMCA's vision is a world where
children, young people, their families and
communities flourish in body, mind and spirit.

CCNI No: NIC 108249, Company No: NI643709

