

## **BATH YOUTH FOR CHRIST GUIDELINES FOR WORK WITH AND THE PASTORAL CARE OF YOUNG PEOPLE (Under 18's)**

(Based on The British Youth for Christ child protection guidelines)

The Home Office has produced a set of recommendations and guidelines to give all voluntary groups a framework for action to promote the welfare of children and young people, in particular to prevent abuse taking place. Called "Safe from Harm", the recommendations and guidelines do not have the force of law but recommend the steps that should be taken to safeguard everyone under the age of 18. These Government recommendations came as a result of the Children Act 1989:

Below is the policy statement for BATH YFC. Attached with this are BATH YFC guidelines for the pastoral care and work with young people

### **I. A policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.**

BATH YFC is committed to good practice through our core values of professionalism and being person centered. We therefore make the following statement in response to Government guidelines:

As a Christian organisation committed to presenting the reality of God to young people, we affirm our belief in the God given value of each young person with whom we work or have contact. In recognition of God's wholehearted commitment to them, we will also treat each individual with value and dignity and aim that none suffers physical, sexual, emotional or spiritual abuse<sup>1</sup> of any kind. It is the responsibility of each one of us to safeguard young people against physical, sexual, spiritual and emotional abuse and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

BATH YFC is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with young people and to providing supervision.

BATH YFC is committed to following the Home Office code of practice "Safe from Harm", and adopts guidelines and procedures based on it. Each staff worker and volunteer shall be given a copy of this statement and BATH YFC's agreed procedures and good practice guidelines.

BATH YFC will encourage organizations with whom they work to have a locally appointed person to whom cases of suspected abuse should be referred. (A copy of this policy should be included within information circulated to locations.)

Nationally British YFC have a Safe from Harm committee to whom National staff should refer individual situations and from whom local ministries can obtain advice.

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<sup>1</sup> "Spiritual abuse happens when a leader with spiritual authority uses that authority to coerce, control or exploit a follower, thus causing spiritual wounds." Ken Blue: Healing Spiritual Abuse. IVP 1993.

BATH YFC has a Safe from Harm steering group and an appointed person to co-ordinate situations and chair the steering group (The Director) to whom BATH YFC staff should refer individual situations and from whom local ministries can obtain advice. This statement will be reviewed on a regular basis and applies at any event or where ministry is undertaken in the name of BATH YFC.

BATH YFC is committed to the guidelines set out by the Children's Workforce and Development Council concerning 'safer recruitment in education' and senior members of staff have been given relevant training as delivered by B&NES local authority safeguarding team.

All staff and volunteers will be expected to sign a declaration stating, that they have read these guidelines and (in the application form) whether or not they have ever accepted an official caution from the police, been convicted or are currently the subject of criminal charges. (Disclosing such information may not bar an individual from being appointed.)

All staff and volunteers will be checked through the criminal records bureau and should not engage in any youth work with BATH YFC until the check is completed.

All staff and volunteers must be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), under the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) (once this system comes into place in July 2010) and should not engage in any youth work with BATH YFC until the check is completed. (ON HOLD AT THE MOMENT DUE TO NEW GOVERNMENT POLICY – JUNE 2010)

## **2. Plan of work for the pastoral care of and work with young people.**

All activities should avoid any situation where abuse could result. All young people should be treated with respect and dignity.

2:1 Any form of ministry is to take place in public. Personal conversations are to include someone of the same sex and with a minimum of three people present if at all possible. Both public ministry and personal conversations are to be within the guidelines laid out in (Appendix 1).

2:2 When giving lifts to young people, if only one is left in a four door car, that young person should normally sit in the rear seats. In the case of a staff member or volunteer, lifts must only be given where the driver is insured for use of the car for business purposes.

2:3 Initiating physical contact with young people is to be avoided. If physical abuse is threatened, then workers should seek assistance in the first instance and if physical violence is used against you then you may defend yourself using the minimum of force.

2:4 In school lessons and assemblies a member of the school staff should be present if at all possible. For after school or lunchtime events, an agreement is to be negotiated with the school as to whether or not they wish a staff member to be present (although a member of staff should always be on call). The recommended minimum is that two BATH YFC/school staff members or volunteers to be present during such events.

2:5 In youth work (bus, club, group etc.) ensure there are always two staff members or volunteers present and if young people need to be escorted off the premises, that this is done wherever possible through verbal encouragement! If more than verbal encouragement is needed, the recognised supervisor should be aware of this.

2:6 When out on the streets, to work in two's. It is the responsibility of the team leader to set up procedures so that in depth conversations are conducted where two people of the same sex are involved.

2:7 Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in "fun", any scapegoating, ridiculing, rejecting or comments about a young persons attributes or attractiveness of a young person should not occur.

2:8 Hugging is to be discouraged among the staff and volunteers when young people are present. Although physical contact should not be initiated by the worker it is important that young people, if they initiate and choose to have any contact, are responded to appropriately, e.g. a side arm hug. Physical contact should be age appropriate.

2:9 Residential work: see attached guidelines (Appendix 2.)

2:10 Parental/guardian consent must be obtained for any activity undertaken where the young person is involved in extended time out of their home. In the case of a 'drop-in' where consent is more difficult because of the less defined nature of the work an information sheet outlining the project should be given to young people who attend to pass on to their parents. Communication of what is happening should always be made available to parents/guardians.

2.11 The responsible member of staff at any given session should always know how many young people are in the care of Bath YFC

2:12 An agreed system of recording activities and conversations with young people should be implemented. These should be completed with as agreed with your supervisor.

2.13 Avoid favouritism and special friendships. Do not develop an exclusive relationship with a group member if you are a leader, however small the age gap. Do not be over eager to befriend particular young person. Crushes with group members are strongly discouraged and an intermediary should be involved if necessary.

### **3. Procedures for protecting children and young people for all staff and volunteers.**

In cases where face-to-face work with children and young people is part of their normal role then BATH YFC will initiate CRB checks on all staff and volunteers.

Everyone shall be given and have explained this policy statement.

All staff and volunteers will receive training according to these guidelines within the first year of joining BATH YFC.

BATH YFC recognise that when its staff are visiting churches or running conferences, events or training events, those attending may reasonably assume that such staff have been subject to checks relating to protection of young people. Therefore all staff visiting groups on behalf of BATH YFC and all those running or assisting at BATH YFC conferences, events or training events where they could have unsupervised access to young people must be subject to checks as set out in these guidelines.

One-off volunteers undertaking tasks for BATH YFC will be subject to the same procedure as staff. This requirement may be waived if the person is known to BATH YFC and will not have unsupervised access to young people in the course of the task. 'Known to BATH YFC' means that at least two people who are staff, Board members, staff members or people who have significant connections with BATH YFC could, if asked provide references for the person. One-off applies to volunteers giving not more than one day of their time for their volunteering in a one month period. One-off volunteers will include those who accompany staff on a speaking engagement, help at a BATH YFC day or evening event (such as One Eighty Skate event or Showcase). Once someone is volunteering with BATH YFC on a regular basis, 'regular' meaning once a month or more, then they will be subject to the BATH YFC guidelines for volunteers in this document.

BATH YFC is not responsible for the selection, approval or appointment of those working with children or young people in any affiliated church or group. These groups and churches are responsible for appointing people to work with children and young people according to their own policies for protecting children and young people.

All staff and volunteers must refer any information about individuals who may pose a risk to children and vulnerable adults in the first instance to the person responsible for the session. In consultation with the Centre Director this must then be reported to the ISA. Information on your duty to refer and the criminal penalties in relation to employment with vulnerable groups can be found in section 47 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and information on how to refer can be found on the ISA website.

### **4. Appointment of staff and volunteers**

The appointment of staff and volunteers will follow the relevant BATH YFC recruitment, selection and probationary procedures. These are available from the Director and include what to do in relation to application process, interviews, references and proof of identity etc. Bath YFC staff have been 'Safer Recruitment' trained and will to the best of their ability run recruitment procedures for staff and volunteers according to these guidelines

All staff and volunteers will have a written job description.

A record of those staff for whom CRB checks have been made is kept on file including the name of the staff member or volunteer, date of check and CRB disclosure number. CRB disclosure details will be kept securely in a password encrypted document.

## **5. Management/Supervision**

There shall be a system of line management within BATH YFC to provide supervision and accountability. This will include monitoring ongoing work with young people and for staff, line management in accordance with BATH YFC policies and guidelines.

Line management practice will normally involve regular meetings with the appropriate line manager in order to review and plan their work. The supervisor should be aware of each staff members working and personal relationships with the young people in their care.

It is expected that each supervisor will take time to observe the member of staff or volunteer whilst he/she is working with young people. Ideally, supervisors should keep a brief written record of each supervision meeting and of any things of note which are observed.

It is expected that records of contact with young people would be kept by the worker in accordance with those requested by the line manager and BATH YFC monitoring and evaluation procedures. The recommended format is that records of work with young people should be kept; these do not need to include personal details of young people but a general account of the work. The record should cover number of young people in attendance; the activities done or the issues covered in conversation; and unusual events such as fire alarms or young people escorted off the premises.

## **6. Training**

BATH YFC will run a training course once a year for new staff and volunteers which will endorse the guidelines and equip staff and volunteers in the guidelines spelt out in this document.

The Safe from Harm steering committee will work in conjunction with the training department in keeping them up to date with any changes made to these guidelines.

## **7. Identifying Abuse - signs, symptoms and how to respond**

Procedures if abuse is suspected, discovered or disclosed:

The most important thing to remember is that when a young person discloses that abuse of any nature is taking (or has taken) place, they are divulging a secret. It is not the place for this document to provide guidance for counseling in this scenario, but please make sure that the young person knows that YOU believe them. Many situations have arisen where the first person to be told of such events failed to demonstrate that they believed the young person in the first instance and this led to the abuse being covered up for years.

If a young person wants to talk to you about some form of abuse follow the following guidelines as much as is possible and appropriate to your situation. General points are

- never promise confidentiality
- accept and believe what the person says
- keep calm
- be honest
- look directly at the young person
- do not appear shocked
- let them know you may need to tell someone else
- assure them that they are not to blame for abuse
- never ask leading questions
- never push for information
- do not fill in words, finish their sentences or make assumptions
- be aware that the child may have been threatened

In the work of BATH YFC it is our duty to work to prevent abuse taking place. There are several forms of abuse.

### **Types of abuse:**

- Physical when an adult kicks, beats, or punches and children's bodies are hurt or injured.
- Emotional where children don't receive love and affection, may be frightened by threats or taunts, or are given responsibilities beyond their years.
- Sexual where adults (and sometimes other children) use children to satisfy sexual desires; touches a young person's private parts in a way that makes the child feel worried or unhappy; showing the young person rude pictures or videos; sexual abuse can be anywhere in the range from visual contact to sexual penetration.
- Neglect where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development; when an adult leaves a young person alone for long periods of time.
- Spiritual when a leader with spiritual authority uses that authority to coerce, control or exploit a follower causing spiritual wounds.

If any young person or child comes to you and talks about past or present abuse situations, keep a hand-written narrative of the conversation immediately after you have spoken with that person. If you suspect that a young person may be the victim of such abuse the following procedure must be followed:

In BATH YFC the disclosure should be reported to the designated person who is the Director

It is important to keep reporting channels as short as possible and this should not prevent or delay any reporting to relevant authorities. If the person to whom the abuse was disclosed believes that the designated person has not taken appropriate action they may speak to the authorities themselves.

After you have made the handwritten notes you should fill in a C2 referral form. The young person must be kept informed at all times of what is being done, what is likely to happen, and should be prepared for such an eventuality before they disclose such information. Where the abuse is current this will need to be reported to the authorities normally by the designated person. However, it is also important that the young person is aware that no action is likely to be taken by the authorities without the young person being listened to and all decisions reached will take account of the wishes and feelings of the young person. (1989 Children Act).

When the situation is reported to the authorities then it is likely that the following may be included:

- A strategy discussion involving Social Services, Police Child protection team, other significant professionals and the person suspecting abuse or to whom the young person has talked.
- A decision will be taken as to whether an investigation is warranted; if so, it will then be planned. If the Social Services decide to pursue this the investigation is likely to include:
  - An informal talk with the child.
  - A formal police (+/- social services) video recorded interview
  - Medical examination
  - Preliminary family assessment.

The authorities are likely to be more proactive in situations where other young people could also be at risk. If there is sufficient concern, a child protection conference will be held to decide the best course of action to protect the child and help the family. There may be criminal prosecution of the abuser. Note: Ensure records of action taken are recorded on Safe from Harm Abuse disclosure form.

## **8. Accusations of abuse against BATH YFC staff or volunteers**

If any member of staff or volunteer is accused of abuse then BATH YFC will co-operate with other agencies in the enquiry.

During the course of the enquiry it is recommended that the staff or volunteer concerned is not involved in face to face youth work and that they take a period of special leave during which salary continues to be paid. If the enquiry is not concluded within a month or two this action may need to be reassessed.

BATH YFC staff and volunteers must report any allegation made about themselves or others to their supervisor or his/her delegated representative.

It is a legal requirement that we report any suspicions or reports we have about staff or volunteers acting in an abusive way towards young people (this includes any type of abuse)

**9. Young people at home**

Any staff member or volunteer seeking to run an activity from a 'home' opposed to a public building should follow the guidelines set out in appendix 4

**10. Administering first aid**

When administering first aid please follow the guidelines set out on appendix 5

## **APPENDIX I**

### **Guidelines for talking and praying with young people**

These are not a set of rules just for the sake of it. There is a good reason why they are there, for your own protection and the person you are dealing with.

1. Always talk and pray with someone in a group of more than two if at all possible. One to one contact may take place only in a public place and your supervisor must agree should this become something that needs to continue with that person.
2. Always same sex - i.e. 2 males - male, 2 females - female, when involved in praying with young people. If for any reason this is impossible then it should happen in a public place and be agreed with your supervisor.
3. Always pray and talk in an open space where others are around, privacy is a factor, but don't go alone.
4. Confidentiality is vital - they will need to know that you will not go to others and talk about their problems. However, do not promise to keep a secret. You may need to tell someone in authority. If that is so, tell them who it will be and what you will say - in order to build trust. In British law the responsibility for any investigation is with the Social Services, Police or the NSPCC and it is not for workers to carry out these preliminary investigations.
5. Keep calm and be honest. Don't feel you have to know all the answers. If you don't know, find someone who does and ask them.
6. Don't be afraid to ask for advice; we are not out to prove anything to anyone, we want the best for them. If you feel out of your depth or unsure, ask someone to help you.
7. Don't keep bringing it round to your own experience, i.e. 'yes, I remember when that happened to me and ...' Testimony is good, but listen.
8. Don't make promises you can't keep.
9. Don't appear shocked or appalled.
10. Be sensitive, don't say things like - 'I can't believe it, why didn't you tell anyone before?' or - 'no, you didn't, did you?'
11. Don't laugh at them.
12. Don't minimise or trivialise the issue, even if it may not seem important to you. If they need to talk about it, it is important.
13. Be aware of your body language, the way you are reacting. Always encourage and affirm, don't judge or condemn.
14. Don't feel you have to wrap it up straight away, some things need talking through more. Talk that through with a leader or prayer co-ordinator. Don't offer to do it on your own, or offer the availability of someone else before checking it out with them.
15. If you are told about anything illegal you must tell your supervisor (or his/her delegated representative) straight away. There is no general legal duty to report an offence to the Police.
16. Don't take on board other people's problems as if they were your own. Remember, empathy is standing in someone else's shoes, with your feet firmly in your own.
17. Do not under any circumstances touch someone inappropriately when praying or talking with them. Do not initiate hugging - whether same sex or opposite sex. Remember we need to be above reproach.

18. Follow up and check how they are doing the following week.
19. Fill in a form straight away if abuse or a dangerous situation is disclosed. Give it to your supervisor. We don't need to know all the intricate details, but the general issue.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Residential Work**

The following are guidelines based on respect for the individual and legal requirements. They are not intended to restrict the diverse opportunities presented by residential work, merely safeguard all concerned from the potential of abuse.

1. In residential work, do not invade the privacy of young people unnecessarily.
2. Allow young people privacy when going to the toilet or changing (removed from point 18 above)
3. Leaders are to knock before entering dormitory accommodation and except for emergencies to enter the accommodation of young people of the same sex only.
4. Separate accommodation for the sexes and for leaders; the latter if possible.
5. Keep age groups together in dormitories/rooms/tents.
6. In residential work there must be same sex leaders as the young people attending.
7. For residential work longer than 90 days, or where a young person under 18 is employed by the organisation and living away from home, the organisation shall register with the local Social Services as an organisation which takes young people away, and shall register both with the SS department and the location's SS department when using a specific venue.
8. Disclosures during the residential : If there is an incident on site it should be reported to the local police. If the disclosure is of current or past disclosure which has not taken place at the residential then it should be reported to the local social services of the young person concerned.
9. Where minibuses are used it is expected that all drivers and leaders will adhere to the legal (and where appropriate, local authority) regulations.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Internet and the web**

New Media is defined in this document as any technology that is used to communicate a message, e.g. websites, instant messaging (e.g. MSN, Facebook), social networking sites (e.g. Myspace, Bebo, Facebook), Micro blogging sites (e.g. Twitter) mobile phones and such things as CD-roms and DVD's.

A conversation in this context can be an exchange of emails, instant messaging, social networking message posts or text messages.

#### **I. What needs to be included in any information we provide**

- a. We need to be transparent in all our information. Every website we create or have influence over needs to have a section clearly labeled as a

reference to our Child Protection Policy. This section will spell out what our policy is and what our working practices are.

- b. All our sites will have the BATH YFC logo clearly visible which links to our main site.
- c. All sms and mms messages must have a reference to BATH YFC.
- d. We will adhere to the STOP command issued when someone no longer wished us to contact them via sms or mms.

## **2. Best Practices of those using new media**

- a. Everyone involved in using new media will have read and understood the BATH YFC child protection policy.
- b. Telephone conversations with young people should be conducted using BATH YFC telephones. A 'conversation' in this is defined as any communication that is more than simply information sharing or receiving. Information sharing/receiving examples include, notifying of time of session start or young person texts to say they are 'not coming' to a previously arranged event. The content of any 'conversation' should be written down and filed in the lockable filing cabinet in the Bath YFC office.
- c. Under no circumstances are personal details to be exchanged in a public forum. If someone posts personal details in a public forum then the post must be deleted or modified to remove the details, a note explaining this will then be posted.
- d. No meetings are to be arranged. This is a rule that can only be broken if the meeting is supervised in a public place. The director of the local BATH YFC centre or the line manager of the worker must be informed of the meeting and approve of it.
- e. If at all possible a record of any sms, mms or email conversations should be kept and archived and Bath YFC email addresses should be used (not personal email addresses).
- f. BATH YFC workers should use their real names for chat purposes
- g. All BATH YFC discussion boards will be monitored by BATH YFC staff or volunteers
- h. No conversation is to be entered into that involves sexual or pornographic websites, if they do come up in conversation either ignore the comment or terminate the conversation immediately.
- i. Any photographs used on our websites or publicity will be such that no young people will be identifiable unless consent has been sought from the young person. Furthermore all consent forms for BATH YFC projects will give parents the option to request that their child is not included in any publicity including the BATH YFC website. Any photographs will be vetted to make sure they are acceptable.
- j. Images of young people participating in any sporting activity have the potential for greater abuse by paedophiles wishing to manipulate the digital image and create pornographic material, with this in mind any images we put on our websites will be such that the possibility of

manipulating it will be minimal. – need to decide on exact policy for these 2 points

- k. Above all the over-riding attitude is a concern for the people we are working with, for their well being and salvation. As long as we are working for their good then what we do and how we approach our work will dictate our working practices for the good.
- l. BATH YFC staff will not invite or accept requests to be friends/followers (or whatever term is used by the website concerned) with young people on personal social networking sites
- m. Any project based social networking sites established (e.g. One Eighty Twitter, Motus Dance Facebook) must be agreed with the Director and used to share information relating only to the project. Conversations via the social networking site are to be avoided if at all possible and if engaged in must adhere to the above best practice.
- n. Communication should not happen between 9pm and 8am
- o. Full wording must be used (abbreviations such as lol can be interpreted as lots of love or laugh out loud)
- p. Any project that offers internet should ensure it has a filter on it to prevent young people discovering inappropriate content or images (this is not just sexual, it could include violence, racist material or much more)

#### **APPENDIX 4**

##### **Young people at home**

There may be occasions when a staff member or volunteers house is the best place to meet. If this is the case the following guidelines should be followed

- 1. You must write an explanation detailing why you believe a house to be the best venue
- 2. Your supervisor must be informed of when and where it will happen
- 3. A male and female leader must always be present
- 4. A risk assessment must be made
- 5. The house owner must look at their insurance (our insurance will not cover damage to their house)
- 6. Parents must be informed and permission sought
- 7. All normal youth work child protection guidelines must be followed
- 8. A written record of the work must be undertaken
- 9. If a regular session is occurring at the house then review must occur
- 10. Young people should not be allowed into private space (such as a bed room)
- 11. There should be a lock on the toilet door or system of ensuring no one using the toilet will be disturbed

#### **APPENDIX 5**

##### **Administering First Aid**

- 1. First aid should only be administered by trained first aiders
- 2. Where possible another adult should be in the room when first aid is administered

3. Parents should be made aware of any action that has taken place
4. If in doubt seek further medical support by either calling 999 or NHS help line

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Information**

BATH YFC Safe from Harm Steering Committee:

James Vaughton (Director)

Luke Brightwell (Senior Youth Worker)

Dan Jones (Trustee)

Kathy Beadle (Trustee)

Useful phone numbers: BATH YFC Head Office – 01225 336055

YFC Head Office - 0121 5029620

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service - 0845 120 4550

Local Social Services – 01225 47700

Police - 999

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Useful websites

[www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk)

[www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

[www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)