

# A policy for the protection and procedures regarding children and vulnerable adults.

## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

Summit Independence (SI) accepts that in all matters concerning child protection, the welfare and protection of the young person is the paramount consideration.

It is the policy of SI to safeguard the welfare of all young people and others involved in SI activities by protecting them from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional harm and neglect.

SI will strive to provide an environment where children are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers of the organization.

This will be promoted by:

- Giving parents, children and staff information about what they can expect from SI
- Making sure that staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supported by line management.
- Informing parents and children how to voice their concerns, complaints and comments on the quality of the service which they have received.

## 2 PROCEDURES

This document covers three main areas:

- The checking of staff and volunteers directly involved with young people through SI
- Procedures for staff and volunteers in the event of a child protection issue arising
- Photography and videoing policy

### 3. THE CHECKING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH SI

All staff working for SI have been through an enhanced AccessNI check.

### 4. PROCEDURES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE EVENT OF A CHILD PROTECTION ISSUE ARISING

All allegations / suspicions, whether the allegations are made against a member of SI staff, volunteer or an individual from an associated organization, are to be treated as strictly confidential and will be referred immediately and directly to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

No investigation or questioning is to be undertaken as to do so might jeopardise any future enquiry. All allegations / suspicions are to be referred no matter how insignificant they seem to be or when they occur.

What happens if you suspect a young person is being abused? Ensure no situation arises which could cause any further concern/harm

- Ensure the young person has access to an independent adult
- Immediately inform the PSNI
- Record the facts as you know them including the young person's name, address and, where possible, information about a parent/guardian, and give a copy to the investigating PSNI Officer.

What happens if a young person discloses to you abuse by someone else?

- Allow the young person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgment
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass on the information
- Same steps as above as in suspecting a young person is being abused

What happens if you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself?

- Immediately tell the PSNI.
- Record the facts as you know them and give a copy to the investigating PSNI Officer
- Try to ensure no one is placed in a situation that could cause further compromise

If any information is received about any suspicious behaviour or circumstances, it must be immediately passed to the PSNI.

You must refer — You must not investigate

The NSPCC provides a free 24-hour Child Protection Helpline, staffed by experienced social Workers.

## 5 PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOING POLICY

SI recognises that video footage and images can be an extremely powerful means to record and review the extraordinary experiences that young people have when participating in outdoor activities, but SI also recognises the concerns of parents and guardians regarding the use of these images.

SI endeavours to take a responsible attitude towards the use of video and digital images.

SI will only take video and/or use images if permission has been obtained from parents or guardians of any students under the age of 18 at the Centre.

Permission is sought on our medical/Covid forms.

When using images for publicity purposes (either on our website or for other publications), group shots would be used where possible in preference to shots of individuals

No images of young people partially clothed will be used

No images of young people making inappropriate gestures or gestures that could be interpreted as inappropriate will be used

If you feel that any image used on our website is inappropriate, then we shall remove it as soon as possible.

Dr Sam Lamont, trading as Summit Independence 3 September 2021.