

Adventure Expeditions – Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy



Published January 2012

Reviewed February 2013, April 2014, March 2015 (roles, staff contacts & Dec training date update)

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1. Introduction

This policy is one of a series in Adventure Expeditions' integrated safeguarding portfolio. Our core safeguarding principles are:

- It is Adventure Expeditions' responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children on their programmes, expeditions and courses;
- Children who are and feel safe make more successful learners;
- Representatives of the whole Adventure Expeditions community of participants, parents, school/group staff, AE administration staff and AE instructors will be involved in policy development and review as required;
- Policies will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier date of review.

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

Principles

- Adventure Expeditions will ensure that the welfare of participants is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all programmes, expeditions and courses;
- All participants, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection;
- All AE staff and instructors have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a participant is at risk of harm in accordance with this guidance;
- All participants and staff/instructors involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the senior management of Adventure Expeditions who will follow this policy guidance in doing so.

Aims

- To provide all AE staff and instructors with the necessary information to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of participants;
- To ensure consistent good practice across all Adventure Expeditions' operations;
- To demonstrate Adventure Expeditions' commitment with regard to safeguarding children.

3. Terminology

Safeguarding children and promoting their well-being is more than just child protection. In order to safeguard children and ensure their personal development, we will have **safeguarding at the heart of our purpose.**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from **abuse or neglect, preventing the impairment of their health or development**, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the

provision of safe and effective and nurturing care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have **optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully**.

Child protection refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the [Children Act 1989](#) and associated guidance (see **DfE** [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015](#)) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering harm.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the Adventure Expeditions, full time or part time, freelance or otherwise contractually, in either a paid or voluntary capacity. This includes instructors, administration staff and all those involved with AE.

Child refers to all young people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers, guardians and adoptive parents.

AE should be read as Adventure Expeditions.

4. Context

[Section 175 of the Education Act 2002](#) requires local education authorities and the governors of maintained schools and further education (FE) colleges to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

[Section 157](#) of the same act and the [Education \(Independent Adventure Expeditions Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) require proprietors of independent schools (including academies and city technology colleges) to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

Adventure Expeditions complies with this policy as a provider of activities to a wide range of local education authorities, state schools, independent schools, further education colleges and academies.

Research suggests that more than 10 per cent of children will suffer some form of abuse. Due to their day-to-day contact with children, AE staff and instructors are uniquely placed to observe changes in children's behaviour and to recognise the outward signs of abuse. Children may also turn to a trusted adult within AE when they are in distress or at risk. It is vital that AE staff and instructors are alert to the signs of neglect and abuse and understand the local procedures for reporting and acting upon their concerns (see section 6 for further guidance on this).

5. Named staff with designated responsibility for Child Protection:

NB: Serious concerns about a child or young person should *immediately* be reported to the AE Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or their Deputy (DSD) ONLY

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT NUMBER
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and AE Joint Head of Operations	Catherine (Cat) Freeman	07866 137012 / 01433 651449 / 01305 813107
Designated Safeguarding Deputy (DSD) and AE Joint Head of Operations	Andy Charlton	07966 212658 / 01433 651449 / 01305 813107
AE Programmes Manager (for all complaints regarding the Heads of Operations)	Tony Freeman (change of Programme Manager due in July 2015 – please check in advance if you need to contact this person)	01433 651449 / 01305 813107
Derbyshire Designated Officer (LADO) – AE office base in Hathersage is covered by Derbyshire	Miles Dent	01629 531940

6. Roles and responsibilities

All those providing activities to children must nominate a senior member of staff to coordinate child protection arrangements and this person is named in this policy guidance.

Adventure Expeditions has ensured that the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead):

- is appropriately trained and/or takes immediate advice from the appropriate LADO and advising bodies e.g. Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC);
- acts as a source of support and expertise to the Adventure Expeditions community;
- has an understanding of Adventure Expeditions procedures;
- keeps written records of all concerns when noted and reported by staff/instructors or when disclosed by a child or schools/groups, ensuring that such records are stored securely and reported onward in accordance with this policy guidance;
- refers cases of suspected neglect and/or abuse to children's social care or police in accordance with this guidance and local procedure for the area that the child lives in or comes from;
- coordinates Adventure Expeditions' contribution to child protection plans;
- ensures that the child protection policy is updated annually;
- keeps a record of staff attendance at child protection training where freelance instructors volunteer this information;
- makes this policy available to parents, schools and any others requesting a copy for inspection, including on the AE website for download.

The **DSD** is appropriately qualified and in the absence of the DSL, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children on Adventure Expeditions' courses and programmes. In the event of the long-term absence of the DSL, the deputy will assume all of the functions above.

The DSL:

- ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff/instructors;
- ensures that all staff/instructors feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with Adventure Expeditions' whistle blowing procedures.

7. Good practice guidelines

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the AE community agrees to the following standards of good practice;

- treating all children with respect;
- setting a good example by conducting ourselves appropriately;
- involving children in decision-making which affects them;
- encouraging positive and safe behaviour among children;
- being a good listener;
- being alert to changes in child's behaviour;
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse;
- reading and understanding all of Adventure Expeditions' safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example physical contact with young people and information-sharing;
- asking the child's permission before doing anything for them which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing, physical support during expeditions or courses or administering first aid;
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language;
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.

8. Abuse of trust

All Adventure Expeditions staff are aware that inappropriate behaviour towards children is unacceptable and that their conduct towards all children must be beyond reproach.

In addition, staff should understand that, under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#), it is an offence for a person over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with a person under the age of 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any sexual activity between a member of the Adventure Expeditions staff and a child under 18 may be a criminal offence, even if that child is over the age of consent.

The Adventure Expeditions' Code of Ethical Practice sets out our expectations of staff and instructors (see: [appendix 1](#)).

9. Children who may be particularly vulnerable

Some children may be at increased risk of neglect and or abuse. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse happens, or who have a high level of tolerance in respect of neglect.

To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are reported to us as:

- disabled or have special educational needs;
- living in a known domestic abuse situation;
- affected by known parental substance misuse;
- asylum seekers;
- living away from home;
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying;
- living in temporary accommodation;
- living transient lifestyles;
- living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations;
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality;
- involved directly or indirectly in prostitution or child trafficking;
- do not have English as a first language.

Special consideration includes the provision of safeguarding information, resources and support services in community languages and accessible formats. We will take these factors into account where supplied to us by schools or groups that we work with in advance and as far as the nature of the outdoor activities that we provide allow this to be the case. We can happily modify activities to suit the needs of the individual or group but cannot do this if any such factors above pose a risk to the physical or psychological wellbeing of other group members, our staff/instructors or visiting school/group staff.

10. Support for those involved in a child protection issue

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for AE staff who become involved. We will support the children and their families and AE staff by:

- taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously;
- keeping all matters confidential between AE and the school/group that the child has joined us through. Only the AE DSL or DSD will liaise with the DSL or DSD of the school/group to ensure confidentiality for all concerned;
- responding sympathetically to any request from a child or member of staff for time out to deal with distress or anxiety;
- maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies;
- storing records securely;
- referring back to the school/group that the child has attended us through in order to ensure that the child is provided with all relevant information pertaining to ways to access help and guidance for their situation;
- cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies.

11. Complaints procedure in respect of poor practice behaviour

Our complaints procedure will be followed where a child, parent or member of school/group staff raises a concern about poor practice towards a child that initially does not reach the threshold for child protection action. Poor practice examples include unfairly singling out a child, using sarcasm or humiliation as a form of control, bullying or belittling a child or discriminating against them in some way. Complaints are managed by senior staff – specifically the Heads of Operations (**Cat Freeman and Andy Charlton – contact details as above**).

Complaints from AE staff/instructors are dealt with under the Adventure Expeditions' Complaints and Disciplinary procedures as appropriate.

12. If you have concerns about a colleague

AE staff/instructors who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. They may worry that they have misunderstood the situation and will wonder whether a report could jeopardise their colleague's career, income or reputation. **All staff and instructors must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.** Adventure Expeditions' Whistle Blowing Code (**appendix 2**) enables staff to raise concerns or allegations in confidence and for a sensitive enquiry to take place. All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported to the Heads of Operations. **Complaints about the Heads of Operations should be reported to the Programmes Manager.**

13. Staff who are the subject of an allegation

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, set procedures must be followed. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events can and do happen. A child may also make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. Even so, we must accept that some adults do pose a serious risk to children's welfare and safety and we must act on every allegation made. Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in some cases, staff may be suspended from working on expeditions/programmes/courses where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children are protected.

In general, if suspension is deemed necessary, AE will suspend that instructor/staff member from all programmes, expeditions, courses and AE work while the investigation is ongoing, not just matters relating to that particular school or group.

Allegations against staff should be reported to the Heads of Operations (DSL or DSD). Allegations against the Heads of Operations should be reported to the Programmes Manager.

14. Staff training

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. New staff and instructors will be asked to provide evidence of any safeguarding training undertaken and advised on courses to further training and knowledge alongside the AE induction process if they have not already done completed any. It is advised that all staff and instructors, including the

Heads of Operations and Programmes Manager receive training that is updated at least every three years. **Next AE Child Protection Training Session: Tues 16th December 2015.**

15. Safer recruitment

Adventure Expeditions endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to employ 'safe' staff and instructors by following the guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (pp20-54). Safer recruitment means that all applicants will:

- complete an application form;
- be asked for two referees, including at least one who can comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children;
- provide evidence of identity and qualifications;
- be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau / Disclosure & Barring Service at 'enhanced' clearance level;
- be interviewed by either the Heads of Operations or Programmes Manager.

All new members of staff will undergo an induction that includes familiarisation Adventure Expeditions' safeguarding and child protection policy. All staff sign Terms and Conditions to confirm they have read through a copy of all AE Operating Policies and Procedures and this forms the basis of their working arrangement with AE

16. Extended and off-site arrangements

Where extended programmes, activities and activities are provided by and managed by AE, our own safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures apply. If other organisations provide services or activities as part of what we do, we will check that they have appropriate CRB/DBS checks and procedures in place.

17. Photography and images

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. To protect children we will:

- seek their consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website or in printed or internet publications e.g. the DofE Magazine);
- seek parental consent;
- use only the child's first name with an image;
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed;
- encourage children to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them.

For an example of the image consent form included within our main Consent Form for activities, please see: **appendix 3.**

19. Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

Recognising abuse

To ensure that children are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, for example by hitting them, or by failing to act to prevent harm, for example by leaving a small child home alone, or leaving knives or matches within reach of an unattended toddler.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age – or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

[\(Definitions taken from DfE Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015\)](#)

Bullying

While bullying between children is not a separate category of abuse and neglect, it is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying is thought to result in up to 12 child suicides each year. All incidences of bullying should be reported and will be managed through the school/group's anti-bullying procedures.

Indicators of abuse and what you might see

Physical signs define some types of abuse, for example, bruising, bleeding or broken bones resulting from physical or sexual abuse, or injuries sustained while a child has been inadequately supervised. The identification of physical signs is complicated, as children may go to great lengths to hide injuries, often because they are ashamed or embarrassed, or their abuser has threatened further violence or trauma if they 'tell'. It is also quite difficult for anyone without medical training to categorise injuries into accidental or deliberate with any degree of certainty. For these reasons it is vital that staff and instructors are also aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

Remember: it is your responsibility to report your concerns. It is **NOT** your responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused. A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries;
- show signs of pain or discomfort;
- keep arms and legs covered, even in warm weather;
- be concerned about changing for different outdoor activities;
- look unkempt and uncared for;
- change their eating habits;
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships;
- appear fearful;
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety;
- self-harm;
- frequently miss Adventure Expeditions sessions or arrive late;
- show signs of not wanting to go home;
- display a change in behaviour – from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn;
- challenge authority;
- become disinterested in their Adventure Expeditions programme, course or expedition;
- be constantly tired or preoccupied;
- be wary of physical contact;
- be involved in, or particularly knowledgeable about drugs or alcohol;
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age.

Individual indicators will rarely, in isolation, provide conclusive evidence of abuse. They should be viewed as part of a jigsaw, and each small piece of information will help the DSL or DSD decide how to proceed. **It is very important that you report your concerns** – you do not need 'absolute proof' that the child is at risk.

The impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Taking action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency, take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999;
- report your concern to the DSL/DSD as soon as possible or by the end of the day;
- if the DSL and DSD are not around, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person from AE that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care by the AE Heads of Operations;
- do NOT start your own investigation;
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family;
- make a record of concern in written format and keep this confidential;
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you suspect a child is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at serious risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

Use the Welfare Concern Form (see: [appendix 4](#)) to record these early concerns. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section '**If a child discloses to you**'.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned, you should discuss your concerns with the DSL or DSD.

If a child discloses information to you

It takes a lot of courage for a child to disclose that they are being neglected and or abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that **you must** pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the child may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the child:

- Allow them to speak freely;
- Remain calm and do not over react – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you;

- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’;
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child;
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child’s mother think about all this;
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on;
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused;
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong;
- Tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day;
- Report verbally to the designated person;
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person;
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

A template Record of Concern Form is provided in [appendix 5](#).

Notifying parents

Adventure Expeditions will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their school/group DSL/DSD or parents if they have joined an open expedition, course or programme. This must be handled sensitively and the DSL will make contact with the school/group DSL/DSD or parent in the event of a concern, suspicion or disclosure directly to AE on a programme, expedition or course.

However, if Adventure Expeditions believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child or exacerbate the problem, then advice will first be sought from children’s social care or the Police if the risk of harm is severe and immediate.

Referral to children’s social care

The DSL or DSD will make a referral to children’s social care if it is believed that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm. The child (subject to their age and understanding), their school/group (if appropriate – if the child has joined Adventure Expeditions through a school/group) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff/instructors will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use the anti-bullying guidelines where necessary – these should be taken from the school/group of the child in question if relevant. However, there will be occasions when a child’s behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures. In particular, research suggests that up to 30 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and AE will work with the school/group and other relevant agencies to maintain the safety of the whole AE community. Young people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator.

Confidentiality and sharing information

All staff and instructors will understand that child protection issues warrant a **high level of confidentiality**, not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. Staff/instructors should only discuss concerns with the DSL/DSD or Programmes Manager (depending on who is the subject of the concern). That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a **'need-to-know' basis**.

The AE DSL/DSD will only communicate with the school/group DSL/DSD to ensure confidentiality once a safeguarding allegation has been raised.

Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with [Data Protection Act 1998](#) principles. Information is:

- processed for limited purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate;
- kept no longer than necessary;
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights;
- secure.

Adventure Expeditions is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and appears on the Register of Data Controllers under registration reference: A1023803.

Record of concern forms and other written information will be stored in a locked facility and any electronic information will be password protected and only made available to relevant individuals.

Every effort should be made to prevent unauthorised access and sensitive information should not be stored on laptop computers, which, by the nature of their portability, could be lost or stolen. If it is necessary to store child protection information on portable media, such as a CD or flash drive, these items should also be kept in locked storage. Child protection information will be stored separately from the child or school's Adventure Expeditions file and the Adventure Expeditions file will be 'tagged' to indicate that separate information is held. **All information sent via email will be sent as password protected documents to enhance email security.**

Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children, schools/groups and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of AE staff or instructor receives a request from a child or parent to see child protection records, they should refer the request to the **Heads of Operations**.

The Data Protection Act does not prevent Adventure Expeditions staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

Reporting directly to child protection agencies

AE staff/instructors should follow the reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

However, they may also share information directly with children's social care, police or the NSPCC if:

- the situation is an emergency and the DSL, DSD and Programmes Manager are all unavailable;
- they are convinced that a direct report is the only way to ensure the child's safety.

Appendix 1

Code of Ethical Practice for Adventure Expeditions staff

All Adventure Expeditions staff and instructors are valued members of the Adventure Expeditions community. Everyone is expected to set and maintain the highest standards for their own performance, to work as part of a team and to be an excellent role model for our participants.

All Adventure Expeditions staff should:

- place the safety and welfare of children above all other considerations;
- treat all members of the Adventure Expeditions community, including children, parents, colleagues and staff from visiting schools/groups with consideration and respect;
- adhere to the principles and procedures contained in the policies in our safeguarding portfolio and in teaching and learning policies;
- treat each child as an individual and make adjustments to meet individual needs;
- demonstrate a clear understanding of and commitment to non-discriminatory practice, in line with Adventure Expeditions' Equal Opportunities Policy;
- recognise the power imbalances between children and staff/instructors (particularly in an outdoor setting involving adventurous activities) and ensure that power and authority are never misused;
- understand that Adventure Expeditions staff are in a position of trust and that sexual relationships with a child, even over the age of 16, may be an offence;
- be alert to, and report appropriately, any behaviour that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm;
- encourage all children to reach their full potential;
- never condone inappropriate behaviour by children or staff;
- take responsibility for their own continuing professional development;
- refrain from any action that would bring Adventure Expeditions into disrepute;
- value themselves and seek appropriate support for any issue that may have an adverse effect on their professional practice.

By signing your annual Instructor Terms & Conditions, you are confirming that you have read and will abide by this Code.

Appendix 2

Whistle Blowing Code for issues relating to children and young people

Purpose of the code

Adventure Expeditions adheres to a whistleblowing policy and procedures that enable staff/instructors to raise concerns relating to:

- crime;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- illegality;
- health and safety;
- environmental or property damage;
- unauthorised use of public funds;
- concealing or attempting to cover up any of the above.

This code provides additional information to help AE staff/instructors to understand the role of whistle blowing in the context of poor practice and unacceptable conduct and attitudes towards children.

When to use the code

The whistle blowing procedures and this code may be used by anyone employed by AE in a paid or voluntary capacity who believes they have reason to suspect that the conduct of an employee towards a child is inappropriate. Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not confined to:

- bullying or humiliation;
- contravening health and safety guidelines;
- serious breaches of Adventure Expeditions' Operating Procedures, Safeguarding Procedures, Equal Opportunities Policy and other Operational Policies and Codes of Practice;
- professional practice that falls short of normally accepted standards (referring to the syllabus of Mountain Training awards held for instructors operating on outdoor programmes);
- compromising participants' welfare but in a way that does not meet the threshold for child protection intervention.

Reasons for blowing the whistle

AE staff/instructors will naturally be reticent to report a concern about the conduct of a colleague. However, each individual must take responsibility for ensuring that children are fairly treated. If poor practice is allowed to continue unchecked, it could escalate with serious consequences.

Your action not only protects children, but also deters any suggestion that you have colluded with poor practice that you knew was occurring but chose to ignore.

Whistle blowing can also support the member of staff who is the subject of the concern. Their conduct may result from inexperience or lack of training that can be addressed by AE, or they may be under stress and be relieved when their conduct is questioned.

Staff who deliberately fail children and show no remorse or desire to improve are unlikely to welcome being exposed, but their conduct has to be confronted for the sake of the child and the reputation of the whole Adventure Expeditions.

Barriers to whistle blowing

You may worry that you have insufficient evidence to raise a concern that you will set in train an unstoppable chain of events, that there will be adverse repercussions for your career, that you may suffer harassment or victimisation, or that your suspicion or concern might be totally misplaced.

These concerns are entirely understandable but you can be reassured that whistle blowing procedures addresses these issues.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees from reprisals for public interest whistle blowing. Your Mountain Training Association / Association of Mountaineering Instructors / British Association of International Mountain Leaders representatives or a solicitor can provide you with support and information about your legal position.

Confidentiality and anonymity

All concerns are treated in confidence and, as far as possible, your identity will not be revealed if that is your wish. However, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if, as a result of an investigation, you are required to provide a witness statement or attend a court hearing.

You can, if you prefer, raise your concern anonymously. AE would need to decide whether the levity and credibility of the concern warrants investigation if the source of the concern, and the key evidence, is not readily available.

Adventure Expeditions will fully support you and do all it can to protect you from any harassment or adverse repercussions that may arise from whistleblowing. Allegations that prove to be deliberately fabricated and malicious will be dealt with through staff disciplinary procedures. However, no action will be taken against any member of staff who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded.

Reporting procedure

It may help if you write down, for your own benefit, what you have observed or heard that is causing alarm. One useful way to decide whether your concern should be reported is to consider whether you would want the conduct of this member of staff to continue unchecked if your own child or another young family member was involved.

- You may raise your concern verbally or in writing. You should report your concern directly to the Head/s of Operations;
- If the Head/s of Operations is the subject of your concern, speak to the Programmes Manager;
- A friend, colleague or association representative may accompany you to the meeting if you wish;
- Ensure the Head/s of Operations or Programmes Manager informs you of their proposed action and sets a date for a second meeting;
- Timescales will depend on the complexity of the initial inquiry but the case should not be allowed to stall and you should receive initial feedback within 10 working days. The timescale for subsequent feedback should then be agreed;

- Ask for clarification about confidentiality and ensure you have your wishes regarding the protection of your identity recorded;
- Process and outcome.

The Head/s of Operations or Programmes Manager will make enquiries to establish the facts of the matter and whether poor practice or inappropriate conduct has occurred. Members of the Adventure Expeditions community may be asked to provide information or advice.

- External advice, for example, from legal resources, professional associations or children's services may be sought;
- A written record of the conduct, established facts and outcome of the inquiry will be kept;
- The whistle blower will be kept informed of the progress of the inquiry;
- The outcome of the inquiry will be one of the following:
 - **No poor practice or wrongdoing is established** and the case is closed;
 - **The concern has some substance** and the subject of the concern will receive advice and support from the Head of Operations to improve practice;
 - Poor practice or wrongdoing is established and **disciplinary proceedings are initiated**;
 - **The concern is more serious and an investigation is initiated**. This investigation may involve the local authority's legal team, children's social care or the Police.

If, at any stage in the process, there is reason to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm, children's social care will be immediately involved.

Further action

If you raise a concern and you are dissatisfied with the way it is managed, or the outcome, you may contact the governing body or school/group's local authority for advice.

Alternatively you can seek advice from your professional association, a solicitor, the police, children's social care or Public Concern at Work (PCaW), a registered charity that offers free and confidential legal advice on workplace malpractice.

Public Concern at Work

3rd Floor, Bank Chambers, 6-10 Borough High Street, London SE1 9QQ

020 7404 6609

whistle@pcaw.co.uk

www.pcaw.co.uk

Appendix 3

Photographic Consent Paragraph included on AE Consent Forms

Photographs and Video

Adventure Expeditions may take photographs and/or video footage of you during your expedition. We aim to make a copy of the photographs and videos taken available to you as a memento of your expedition and for use in your DofE Keeping Track portfolio on eDofE. We may also discreetly use footage and images to promote our activities (printed and internet publications) or for use by the DofE in their publications. By signing a consent form you agree to your image being used for the above purposes. If you wish to opt out then please feel free to email us, clearly stating this:

info@adventure-expeditions.net

Protection of your data

Adventure Expeditions handles all participant data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. We only use your data for the purposes of administering and delivering training and expeditions. Therefore, your data is only used by those acting on behalf of Adventure Expeditions and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. By signing a consent form you are confirming that you are happy for us to use your personal data in this way. If you have any questions, please email us on: info@adventure-expeditions.net

Queries regarding this paragraph and consent obtained should be addressed to the Heads of Operations at Adventure Expeditions:

- Cat Freeman: cat@adventure-expeditions.net
- Andy Charlton: andy@adventure-expeditions.net

Appendix 4

AE Welfare Concern Form

Use this form to record any concern about a child's welfare and give it to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) – Cat Freeman or designated safeguarding deputy (DSD) – Andy Charlton. Please keep this form private and confidential to all other AE staff, instructors, colleagues.

If you suspect the child may be suffering abuse or neglect, or you have received a disclosure of abuse from a child, or you have heard about an allegation of abuse, you must complete the child protection record of concern form instead, and hand it to the DSL / DSD today.

Child's full name

Date of this record

Why are you concerned about this child?

What have you observed and when?

What have you heard and when?

What have you been told and when?

Date and time you handed this form to the designated person

School/Group

School/Group leader name

Your name and designation

Signature _____

Have you spoken to the child? Yes No

What did they say? Use the child's own words

Have you spoken to anyone else about your concern? Yes No

Who?

Is this the first time you have been concerned about this child? Yes No

Further details

Appendix 5

AE Record of Concern Form

Child's details

Full name

Address

Telephone

Date of birth

Gender: Male Female

Is the child looked-after by the local authority or are there any other legal family arrangements?
(for example, a residence order)

When was the child first admitted to Adventure Expeditions programmes?

Ethnicity and culture

Religion

Does the child have any disability or special educational need? Yes No
Please specify

Preferred language of child

Is any type of language support required to converse with the child? Yes No
Please specify

Does the child know this form has been completed? Yes No

If not, why not?

If yes, what did the child say?

Details of those with parental responsibility

Name(s)

Address

Telephone

Relationship to child

Ethnicity, culture and religion of those with parental responsibility if known

Preferred language of those with parental responsibility

Is any type of language support required?

Do those with parental responsibility have any disability or special need?

How does this disability or special need affect the child?

Details of any siblings

Does the child regularly spend time with other carers, for example, after-Adventure Expeditions or holiday carers, or at a short break service?

Has a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) been completed for this child?

Yes No

Please give date and reason for the CAF

Why are you concerned about this child?

Please provide a description of any incidents/conversations and the dates they occurred. You must make clear what is fact and what is opinion or hearsay. You must not ask the child leading questions or try to investigate the concern yourself

What have you observed and when?

(This relates to anything you have personally witnessed)

What have you been told and when?

(Write here anything you have been told by the child or any other person. Be clear about who has said what)

What have you heard and when?

(This may be third-party information that is relevant but as yet unsubstantiated)

If an allegation has been made, give any details you have about the alleged abuser

Date and time of this record

Your details

Full name

Position

Do those with parental responsibility know this form has been completed?

Yes No

If not, why not?

If yes, what did they say?

NOTE: Those with parental responsibility should not be contacted by anyone in the Adventure Expeditions if this could place the child at risk. Speak to the designated person first

Does the child have any visible injury, or have they told you they have been injured?

Yes No

If yes, has medical advice been sought?

Has any action already been taken in relation to this concern? (for example, child taken out of class, first aid)

Name and position of the person this record was handed to:

Date and time the above person received this record

If this record has been handed to anyone other than the designated person please explain why

If you have used additional sheets to complete this record of concern please staple them to this form and write the number of additional sheets here _____

Hand this form to the designated person before you go home. If the designated person is unavailable, hand it to their deputy, the head teacher or your line manager.

NB: If you do not have certain information, such as the child or family's ethnicity, do not delay handing in the form.