

Elements & Procedures of Good Practice

Good practice will contribute towards raising the standards of youth work through the creation of a healthy and safe environment within which children and young people may mature and develop. As far as is reasonably practicable, we aim to ensure that the following guidelines be observed: -

- Written consent must be obtained from parents or guardians prior to the participation of children and young people in events, activities and groups. Establish from the parent or guardian whether the child or young person has any specific medical or dietary requirements or special needs. Obtain contact information for parents / guardians and hold an information session for all young people and their parents prior to away trips.
- Keep an appropriate record for each child and young person participating in activities including, but not limited to attendance, programme details, medical information accidents etc.¹ This record should include a copy of a signed parent / guardian consent form. A written record of adults in attendance should also be kept.
- An agreed code of behaviour for children and young people should be drawn up: this should cover the issue of the appropriate response to disruptive behaviour. Corporal punishment of children is not permitted under any circumstances. Discipline problems should be handled in co-ordination with parents.
- A code of behaviour for staff and volunteers will also be drawn up.
- Develop a clear and transparent complaints procedure to be used by young people who are unhappy with any aspect of their care.
- We will adhere to the recommended supervision ratios² of adults to young people while maintaining the practice of ensuring that no young person is left alone with an adult.
- We will also have procedures in place with regard to recruitment, management and training of staff and volunteers.
- Procedures for health & safety, accidents/emergencies, recording & reporting concerns, away trips, complaints procedure for use by young people, and procedures following allegations of abuse against employees and volunteers will also be drawn and contained within our child protection policy document.

¹ The Data Protection Rules as outlined in the data Protection Act 1988 must be adhered to in retaining records. For further information see www.dataprivacy.ie/3bii.htm

² The minimum adult: young person ratio should ideally be **one adult per group of eight plus one other adult, and allowing an additional adult for each group of eight thereafter**. Local circumstances, the ages of the children, the experience of the volunteers and the staff should be taken into consideration. Safety, ability/disability of young people and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower. Department of Education and Science, Code of Good Practice – Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector, 2nd edition, Dublin: Stationery Office, 2003, p. 13.