PROJECT 4 YOUTH EMPOWERMENT CIC SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Mission Statement

Project 4 Youth Empowerment (P4YE) is a Community Interest Company (CIC) dedicated to supporting and empowering young people aged 11-18 years through one-to-one and group mentoring, youth and holiday clubs, engaging workshops, and detached youth work. Our mission is to provide young people with opportunities, skills, and the resources needed to thrive and make informed choices. Integral to our core values is placing the safety and well-being of the young people at the centre of our work. We are dedicated to providing an environment where young people can engage in educational, creative, and social activities in a safe space, free from harm, neglect, and abuse.

This policy statement sets out our commitment to safeguarding and protecting young people, ensuring that every child and young person is respected, heard, and safe.

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1. Purpose of the policy

This policy is intended to safeguard young people and other vulnerable people who receive any service from P4YE, including children of adults who may receive services from us.

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- Preventing harm to children's health or development
- Ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

The six safeguarding principles

1. **Empowerment.** Empowerment means ensuring that people are supported in making their own decisions as much as possible. To ensure this, every possible step should be taken to enable a person to make informed decisions and give their consent. This principle also dictates a presumption of capacity when caring for someone.
2. **Protection**. The protection principle means ensuring that support and representation are provided to those in the greatest need. In practice, this means that organisations should have measures in place to prevent abuse and to support people at risk of abuse. As per the law, schools must have specific safeguarding measures in place, but these measures don't stop at the school gates. It's also the responsibility of school staff to proactively identify cases of abuse and report them. This means the school will have policies in place for following up on school absences and investigating any suspicious behaviour exhibited by children, e.g. violence and assault in the playground, inappropriate language or knowledge for their age, hiding injuries, etc
3. **Prevention**. This principle is about ensuring that preventive measures are taken to prevent abuse, harm, or neglect from occurring in the first place. The belief at the heart of this principle is that it is better to take action before harm occurs. In practice, this means making staff aware of how to spot when abuse is happening, how to ask for help, and how abuse can be reported and dealt with. In England and Wales, it is now mandatory for teachers to undergo training on the government's prevention duty guidance.

4. **Proportionality**. This principle states that we must always take the proportionate and least intrusive response to a safeguarding issue. This principle is especially relevant to cases of children being abused by their parents or caregivers at home because it informs the reactions of the various services involved. If the police or social services are called upon to intervene, they must take each person in the household into account when dealing with abuse. In cases of child abuse, the police have a legal responsibility to safeguard under-18-year-olds
5. **Partnerships**. Forming partnerships within local communities can help create a preventative and solution-based approach to child abuse by allowing different services to effectively communicate. means that the various organisations that might be involved in cases of abuse can work cooperatively. As previously mentioned, in cases of child abuse in the home、police and social workers will usually work very closely. The principle of partnership guides robust communication and information-sharing practices between services.
6. **Accountability**. The accountability principle states that everyone needs to be held accountable for implementing safeguarding practices. This also means there needs to be complete transparency about safeguarding processes and an understanding that everyone plays their part when it comes to protecting vulnerable children." By holding everyone accountable, it means that nobody can dismiss safeguarding concerns as "someone else's problem" and issues get dealt with quickly and effectively. In the UK, all professions that have a care element to them, such as social carers, doctors, police, etc., are legally obligated to report child abuse if they find out about it: if they do not escalate this information, they could face legal consequences or disciplinary action at work.

Project 4 Youth Empowerment is committed to:

- Valuing, respecting and listening to young people as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, regular supervision and training for all Project 4 Youth Empowerment team members. ***Refer to the P4YE Safer Recruitment Policy.*** X
- Following procedures for dealing with concerns about possible abuse. ***Refer to the P4YE safeguarding procedure.*** X
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those affected by abuse in the youth group.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities and other organisations.

As an organisation, we believe that no young person or vulnerable adult should ever experience abuse or harm. We are committed to their protection. This policy provides guidance

and outlines the overarching principles for all who represent us—whether as volunteers or staff—in our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

While most young people grow up in safe and supportive environments, it is important not to exaggerate or overstate the risks. However, there are situations where young people and vulnerable adults do need protection, including:

- **Abuse -** Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include non-physical ill-treatment, as well as the impact of witnessing others' ill-treatment. This can be particularly relevant, for example, to the effect on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or an institutional or a community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. An adult or adults, or another child or children, may abuse children.
- **Physical abuse -** when someone hurts or harms a child or young person on purpose. It includes hitting with hands or objects, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding or drowning. It's important to remember that physical abuse is any way of intentionally causing physical harm to a child or young person. It also includes inventing symptoms of an illness or causing a child to become unwell.
- **Emotional abuse -** 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 a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions beyond a child's developmental capabilities, overprotection, limitations on exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in everyday social interactions. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve severe bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children to frequently 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, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual abuse -** When a child or young person is sexually abused, they're forced or tricked into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong. And they might be afraid to tell someone. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere – and it can occur in person or online. It's never a child's fault they were sexually abused – it's essential to make sure children know this.
- **Grooming -** Grooming is a process that "involves the offender building a relationship

with a child, and sometimes with their wider family, gaining their trust and a position of power over the child, in preparation for abuse. (CEOP, 2022) Grooming can happen anywhere, including: online, in organisations, and in public spaces (also known as street grooming (McAlinden, 2012). Children and young people can be groomed by a stranger or by someone they know – such as a family member, friend or professional. The age gap between a child and their groomer can be relatively small (NSPCC and O2, 2016).

- **Domestic violence -** "Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse".
- **Peer-on-peer exploitation.** Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, financial, and/or coercive control exercised between children and young people, including intimate and non-intimate relationships. As with many forms of abuse, it rarely takes place in isolation.
- **Inappropriate behaviour by staff or volunteers** - We expect people who take part in our services to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our organisation and behaviour that takes place online. Staff and volunteers should protect children and young people from abuse, and manage any allegations or incidents of inappropriate behaviour to ensure everyone - staff, volunteers and children and young people - feels safe, respected and valued.

  Staff and volunteers are responsible for prioritising the welfare of children and young people, providing a safe environment for children and young people to ensure equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose, and having a good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate, following our principles, policies and procedures, including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, whistleblowing and online safety • staying within the law at all times • modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow • challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to the DSL, reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and child protection procedures - this includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age. Respecting children and young people.

  Staff should: • listen to and respect children at all times • value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible • respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible o if you need to break confidentiality to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

- **Diversity and inclusion** You should: • treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination • understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs • respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race,

ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation • challenge discrimination and prejudice • encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

- **Extremism** goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities based on race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.
- **Financial abuse** is an aspect of 'coercive control' – a pattern of controlling, threatening and degrading behaviour that restricts a victim's freedom. It's important to understand that financial abuse seldom happens in isolation: in most cases, perpetrators use other abusive behaviours to threaten and reinforce the financial abuse.
- **Bullying -** acts of violence and aggression within our settings - Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). It can involve people of any age and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using online platforms and technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time.
- **Cyberbullying/online bullying:** excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games, voting for or against someone in an abusive poll, setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child, creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name. Bullying can be a form of discrimination, particularly if it is based on a child's disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity or sexuality.
- **Self-harm -** self-harm can feel like a way to cope with complicated feelings or to release tension. The physical pain of hurting themselves can feel like a distraction from the emotional pain they're struggling with. Some difficult experiences or emotions can make self-harm more likely in children: experiencing depression, anxiety or eating problems, having low self-esteem or feeling like they're not good enough, being bullied or feeling alone, experiencing emotional, physical or sexual abuse, or neglect, grieving or having problems with family relationships, feeling angry, numb or like they don't have control over their lives. Signs to look out for can include: covering up, for example by wearing long sleeves a lot of the time, especially in summer, unexplained bruises, cuts, burns or bite-marks on their body, blood stains on clothing, or finding tissues with blood in their room, becoming withdrawn, avoiding friends and family, feeling down, low

self-esteem or blaming themselves for things, outbursts of anger, or risky behaviour like drinking or taking drugs.

- **Exploitation -** Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused. Children and young people can be trafficked into or within the UK to be sexually exploited. They're moved around the country and abused by being forced to take part in sexual activities, often with more than one person. Young people in gangs can also be sexually exploited. Sometimes abusers use violence and intimidation to frighten or force a child or young person, making them feel as if they've no choice. They may lend them large sums of money they know can't be repaid or use financial abuse to control them. Anybody can be a perpetrator of CSE, no matter their age, gender or race. The relationship could be framed as friendship, someone to look up to or romantic. Children and young people who are exploited may also be used to 'find' or coerce others to join groups.
- **Neglect -** the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and the most common form of child abuse. A child might be left hungry or dirty or without proper clothing, shelter, supervision or health care. This can put children and young people in danger. And it can also have long-term effects on their physical and mental wellbeing.
- **FGM -** "Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM"[1].

All safeguarding concerns will be shared with the relevant authorities.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AT EVENTS:

[1] NSPCC (2019). Female genital mutilation (FGM). What is FGM.

1. There are three kinds of events/activities:

    1.1 Those open to adults and children of all ages,

    1.2 Those for children accompanied by a ‘parent’

    1.3 Those for unaccompanied children, which are sometimes run alongside other events/activities.

2. At events and activities open to all ages, children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult over the age of 18 who not only brings the child but also takes the child home again afterwards. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring the written consent and mobile telephone number of one of their parents.

3. At events and activities for children accompanied by a ‘parent’, children under 16 must be supervised throughout the event by an adult over the age of 18 who not only brings the child to the event but also takes the child home again afterwards. If a lone adult brings more than one child, the children must stay together so the adult can supervise them. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring the written consent and mobile telephone number of one of their parents.

4. At events and activities for unaccompanied children, children under the age of 16 must be enrolled by a responsible adult before being left with the event leader. The enrolment must record the child's name, age and address and the names and addresses of the child's parents, plus the parents' mobile telephone numbers. Young people aged 16 or 17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring the written consent and mobile telephone number of one of their parents.

5. Both events and activities are to be defined broadly to include any occasions where P4YE will be providing a service.

Disclosure and barring:

1. P4YE offers the following activities for young people:

- One-to-one mentoring sessions

- Group mentoring sessions
- Youth voice activities, including podcasting, youth forums, and reviews
- Education support
- Trips and excursions
- CSCS training
- Detached Youth Work

2. Some of our activities will therefore require adult participants or adult leaders to undergo enhanced DBS and/or police checks under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. They will reflect the degree and frequency of unsupervised access given to other people's children.

3. The board will take any allegation of impropriety on the part of any member of P4YE seriously. A member of P4YE who discovers anything amiss should get in touch immediately with the following:

Stephanie White, Designated Safeguarding Officer

Email: Stephanie@p4ye.co.uk

Tel: 07958 040262

4. The board will review the allegation and the likely risk to children and, if appropriate, will consider banning the member from future events or revoking his or her membership or both, but only in full accordance with the rules and procedures of P4YE.

4. Health and safety aspects of safeguarding children

1. Before starting an event for unaccompanied children, the management will carry out a risk assessment and then take steps to minimise all risks to health and safety. Parents and children will be made aware of any particular risks and the steps to be taken to minimise them. The management will keep a record of all risk assessments.

2. Sufficient adults must be present at any event for unaccompanied children to enable one adult to deal with any emergency while another adult supervises the children not directly affected by the emergency.

3. **IF YOU BELIEVE A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM, CALL 999 STRAIGHT**

AWAY
Professionals can contact the Single Point of Contact's consultation line for advice, provided that the case is not allocated to another social worker and the child lives in the Croydon area.

Policy on the prevention of bullying

We will not tolerate bullying of children, whether by adults or other children. If any incident of child-on-child bullying should arise at a P4YE event, those involved will be separated immediately, and the parents of the children involved will be asked to deal with the matter. The Board will review all incidents of child-on-child bullying and assess the likely future risk to children. If appropriate, the Board will consider banning a child from future events, but only in accordance with P4YE's rules and procedures. Allegations of adults bullying children will be dealt with under paragraph 5.3 above.

6. Photography and videography

People must expect to have their photograph taken at many of our events, and we reserve the right to publish suitable photographs of those attending, along with the names of members involved, unless specifically advised otherwise.

7. Managing behaviour, discipline and acceptable restraint

1. Adults supervising children at P4YE events must never use any form of corporal punishment. If physical restraint is necessary to prevent injury to any person or to prevent serious property damage, then the minimum required restraint may be used, but for that purpose only.

2. Unacceptable behaviour at P4YE events for unaccompanied children will generally be stopped by separating the children from each other and the group. The young person(s) will be suitably supervised and returned to the care of their parents as soon as possible.

3. P4YE may apply a further disciplinary sanction, namely the banning of the child from one or more future events for an agreed time frame..

4. A person aggrieved by this ban may appeal to a senior member of P4YE staff who will hear the views of all relevant persons. The decision of the senior member of staff is then final.

Covid-19

P4YE will work in line with the Government's COVID-19 guidelines. PPE will be used as needed by all, unless they are exempt. P4YE will continue to work in one-on-one and small-group sessions with vulnerable young people, as outlined in the guidelines from the National Youth Agency. All sessions will be conducted in line with social distancing guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Any young person who tests positive or is self-isolating will not be allowed to attend until they have completed the positive test or self-isolation instructions.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the following:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Special education needs and disability (SEND) code of practice - Guidance on the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system for children and young people aged 0-25 from 1 September 2014.
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services
- Working together to safeguard children (2023)
- National Youth Agency Guidelines surrounding Covid-19

Contact details

P4YE Designated Safeguarding Lead: Stephanie White
Email: Stephanie@p4ye.co.uk
Tel: 07958 040262

P4YE Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Wayne Lindsay
Email: Wayne@p4ye.co.uk
Tel: 07727 277431

NSPCC: whistleblowing helpline 0800 0280285.
This can be used by people who feel unable to report concerns regarding internal child protection failures
NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

For urgent child protection matters needing immediate attention: if there are concerns of risk if the child were to go home, 020 8255 2888 (9-5 pm)

Croydon Local Authority Designated Officer - LADO: (Allegations against staff)

Name: Tel/Email: **Jane Rowe (Formerly Jane Parr)**

- **Email: lado@croydon.gov.uk**
- **Tel: 0208 726 6000 ext. 24817**

590505 |

jane.parr@croydon.gov.uk

Other: LADO@Croydon.gov.uk

Croydon Single Point of Contact for Early Help & Children's Social Care (made up of MASH):

SPOC Professionals Consultation Line Tel: 0208 726 6464 (between 1-4.30 pm). This is for non-urgent enquiries to discuss with a social worker

Out of Hours Emergency Line: 0208 726 6400 (5 pm-9 am)

Croydon's Multiagency Referral Form (MARF)

Following a safeguarding referral call, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must complete a Croydon Local Authority Safeguarding online referral form needs to be completed straight away:

https://my.croydon.gov.uk/MashReferrals?qWname=New&qServiceRef=ChildReferral

Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Local Policies and Procedures

https://croydonlcsb.org.uk/professionals/policies/#cscp-child-protection-partnership-practice-framework

In addition, if you get really stuck and need urgent support or advice, please email MASHEducation@croydon.gov.uk and someone will be able to assist.

Review

Print name	Stephanie White
Signed by (Designated Safeguarding Lead):	*S White*
Date	11/05/2026
Policy review date	01/12/2026
Last reviewed	**08/05/2025**