

# **Community Intercultural Programme**

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**This Policy covers all of CIP activities inclusive of Oasis Children & Youth  
Programmes**

Amended Oct 2020

## SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW

### 1A Safeguarding Policy Statement

1. Community Intercultural Programme (CIP) will seek to ensure that all children and young people (under 18 years of age) attending children/youth activities will be protected and kept safe from harm.
2. CIP will also seek to ensure that all vulnerable adults that access CIP activities are protected and kept safe from harm.
3. All CIP workers must recognise that they are legally obliged to place the welfare of children & vulnerable adults in their care above other considerations such as loyalty or personal preference and must co-operate with Social Services and the PSNI in any child abuse investigation.
4. CIP will ensure that the children in its care, their parents / carers and vulnerable adults are aware of their rights and they should have someone to turn to or report any concerns they might have. (Designated Person, see section 3D) A culture of safety awareness will be created within our organization, affording users with confidence to speak about a situation which they may feeling uncomfortable about.
5. We commit ourselves to fully co-operate with the appropriate statutory services when they are conducting an official investigation into the physical, emotional or sexual abuse of children or a vulnerable adult by an adult or young person.
6. The organisation will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all CIP staff & volunteers involved in 'regulated' or 'controlled activities' are suitable persons for such work. They must also subscribe to screening by Access NI or PSNI and to any training provided by the said organisation. This is set out in our recruitment and selection section
7. CIP will continually seek to educate children and vulnerable adults regarding boundaries around abuse and exploitation and will work to develop skills in assertiveness, self-esteem and encourage an environment whereby young people feel able to discuss their concerns with leaders.
8. Anyone who has been convicted of a physical or sexual assault on a child or vulnerable person may never work with children or young people or be party to the policy making or staff recruitment for this organisation.

## **1B Mission Statement**

The Management Committee of CIP recognises the importance of its work among children and vulnerable adults and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the organisation's care.

As part of its mission, the organisation is committed to:-

- ✓ Valuing, listening to and respecting children and vulnerable adults as well as promoting their welfare and protection
- ✓ Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all staff and volunteers within the organisation.
- ✓ Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- ✓ Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- ✓ Supporting those affected by abuse in the organisation
- ✓ Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities and other organisations.

## **SECTION 2 – OUR PRACTICE**

### **2A Safe Recruitment for Staff/Volunteers Statement**

- CIP Staff & volunteers will be carefully selected, trained and supervised.
- Declaration of past convictions or cases pending and agreement to have an 'Access NI' check completed is a pre-requisite in order to be involved in regulated or controlled activities.
- In cases where a report is returned as part of the Access check with information regarding criminal activity the Designated Person and the Chairperson of the Management Committee will consider the contents of the report and make a decision on the suitability of the proposed staff/volunteer to work with the organisation.
- All staff/volunteers must agree to abide by the CIP Safeguarding Policy.
- Any concerns or objections with regard to suitability of a staff/volunteer must be submitted to the 'designated person'.
- The leadership is committed to on-going child protection training for all CIP staff and volunteers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.

## **2B Good and Safe Working/Playing Practices Statement**

CIP agrees to provide a safe and caring environment for children and vulnerable adults. The Management Committee has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereby called 'the policy') It also recognises the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies. The leadership agrees to:

- Proper supervision of children within the club and with a satisfactory ratio of leaders/children.
- Use of proper recommended equipment.
- Use of equipment only when supervised by a leader.
- A clearly defined area of recreation, in bounds and safe from vehicular traffic.
- Public Liability Insurance in place, covering all members of the club.
- Only children within the similar age bands will be selected for the more competitive activities.
- A first aider and first aid kit on hand in the event of an accident, with an accident/incident book/folder to be marked up when the situation arises. All accidents will be reported to parents at collection.
- In the event of transport being required this will be provided and supervised by leaders/volunteers in possession of a valid driving license and road worthy vehicles only.
- A safe environment for members.
- Ongoing training and information for Staff & Volunteers.
- Facilitation of open discussion on member protection issues.
- Support to all members who report accusations of abuse.
- Suspected abuse information treated confidentially.
- Appropriate action if members breach standards of reasonable behavior in line with our code of conduct policy.
- The establishment and maintenance of a staff/volunteer register.
- The designated officer has knowledge of statutory child protection procedures and their responsibility in reporting concerns.

## 2C User Supervision

1. CIP Staff & Volunteers should treat all children & vulnerable adults with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
2. Where possible, ensure that a worker is not left alone with a vulnerable person. This is not always possible – such as taking a young child to the toilet, but other workers should be made aware of such incidences and where possible, doors should be left open.
3. No person under 16 year so age should be left in charge of any children of any age, Nor should children or vulnerable persons attending a group be left alone at any time.
4. The level of personal care, e.g. toileting must be appropriate and related to the age or ability of the child whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
5. Guidelines on touch for those who work with children:
  - ✓ Keep everything public:- a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
  - ✓ Touch should be related to the child's needs not the worker's.
  - ✓ Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker,
  - ✓ Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child
  - ✓ Children and vulnerable persons have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
  - ✓ CIP Staff & Volunteers should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything which could be misunderstood.
  - ✓ Concerns about abuse should always be reported.
6. A register of children or vulnerable adults attending activities should be kept as well as a register of volunteers. This should include arrival and departure times even if an individual is not attending the whole session, and any others in the building at the time.

7. Keep a log of each activity. Staff/Volunteers should record unusual events with their team leader recording what they witnessed. This will be very helpful if workers have to deal with a difficult young person who may subsequently make accusations of assault. A young person who constantly makes throwaway sexual comments about workers may later make an allegation of actual abuse. Records of previous examples of this behaviour will enable any allegation to be seen in context. Of course, if a number of children/young people all make similar comments about a worker; this should warn the leadership that they have a problem with that person. Log books can protect both children and workers

It is recommended that workers also record in the log book incidents such as fights and what action was taken by the leaders. As the information in the log book is likely to be very sensitive, the log book should be kept separate from the accident book which is used to record any accidents or injuries.

8. Make sure that only people allowed into a children's activity area are the workers assigned to that group. You should not allow other adults to have free access. If they need to be there for a specific reason (e.g. guest speaker) ensure that you note in your log book their name and the time they came/left.

## 2D Code of Conduct

As a general principle, staff & volunteers are advised not to make physical contact with children or vulnerable adults and should ensure that they take precautions that they should not be left alone with them for long periods.

When dealing with children and vulnerable adults **never:**

- ✓ Use force, save for intervening to prevent the risk of physical injury to any person or serious damage to property.
- ✓ Discipline out of anger
- ✓ Belittle children or vulnerable adults
- ✓ Humiliate a person in front of others
- ✓ Reject the child or vulnerable adults
- ✓ Allow some children or vulnerable adults to take all your time and energy
- ✓ Compare children with each other.

When disciplining children **always**

- ✓ Reject only the child's negative behaviour
- ✓ Be a good role model and set a good example
- ✓ Be consistent and work together as a team

Staff/Volunteers should **never**:

- ✓ Take children or vulnerable adults to your home without the knowledge of the individual's parents or carers and the leader of the organisation or other responsible person
- ✓ Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- ✓ Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- ✓ Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- ✓ Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child even in fun
- ✓ Let allegations made by a child go unchallenged or unrecorded
- ✓ Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do themselves

## 2E Membership Statement

On an annual basis CIP will require all our members to complete a membership form. This will ensure that the staff in charge of activities have important information for each user e.g. contact details for parents/ carers, medical info etc. All information will be treated with the strictest of confidence and will only be used in the event of an emergency.

## 2F Photographs and Images of Children Statement

At CIP we feel it is important to recognize the achievements and successes of our users and of the various CIP programmes as a whole. One of the ways to do this is to publish photographs, video and details of achievements in various presentations and often in our local press.

We take the issue of safety and vulnerability very seriously and this includes the images of persons in our care. For this reason we have put the following guidelines into place:

- We ask parental/carer consent (on a yearly basis) for CIP to take and use photographs or videos of their children and for permission to use the press, media, presentations and in-house publicity to promote our youth program.
- Photographs and interviews will at all time take place in the presence of at least two staff or volunteers.
- All images or recordings will be stored only on computers that are the property of CIP and are accessible by the "designated person at any time". Staff and volunteers should not store images on personal computers or mobile phones.

## 2G Guidelines on transporting a child or vulnerable adults in a personal car

It is not the practice of CIP staff or for a volunteer to transport children or vulnerable adults in their private car to or from CIP activities. However, it is recognized that in certain exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to arrange occasional transportation for participants 'in need'.

### Examples of exceptional circumstances: (not exclusive)

- When a child/person becomes ill and needs to be taken home
- An individual's lift does not turn up as expected and you feel that the person may be vulnerable.
- When you are concerned for a person's safety if he/she must walk home alone.
- Attending an event with a small number of individuals. Ex: 2 young people going to make a presentation to a funder.

### In all of the above circumstances the following action should occur

- Permission will be sought from the senior person at the session
- All such journeys will be recorded on "Private Vehicle Transport Log"
- Every effort will be made to contact the parents/next of kin and inform them of the journey. For prearranged trips, full consent must be given. Parents/carers should be informed of the person who will be transporting their child, the reasons why, and how long the journey will take.
- A person *other than the planned driver* should talk to the child about the transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans
- 2 staff/volunteers will accompany the minor or vulnerable adult, where possible
- The driver should have a point of contact and preferably a mobile phone, should they break down.
- Children and vulnerable adults should wear seatbelts at all times.
- Drivers who have produced and evidenced valid insurance and driving license will be chosen to transport children or vulnerable persons in such events.



## **Personal Arrangements re Transportation**

CIP recognizes that staff or volunteers may have previously formed connections with children and vulnerable adults who attend CIP activities. For example: Family members, neighbours or family friends. Under certain circumstances it may be acceptable for staff or volunteers to bring such children/vulnerable persons to and from activities on a regular basis, provided the following guidelines are followed.

- Arrangements will be prearranged outside of CIP activities and should not be on a 'ad-hoc' basis.
- Arrangements will be made with the person in question and the parent/carer, never directly with the vulnerable adult.
- CIP will have consent from the parent/carer that have authorized this private arrangement.
- This arrangement will only be authorized for those who have connections beyond CIP activities and should not be carried out on a leader/user person basis relationship.
- Never transport a vulnerable person without the consent of the session leader.

It is not the role of CIP staff or volunteers to transport children or vulnerable adults to and from activities. All CIP staff/volunteers must operate strictly within the above guidelines.

## **2H Use/Misuse of Mobile Phones Statement**

CIP understands and respects the importance that parents/carers place on the use of mobile phones as a means of contacting their children when they are away from the home setting. However, there are times that the use of mobile phones must be limited in order to protect all children or vulnerable adults within a CIP activity. For this reason we have placed the following limitations on the use of mobile phones in our activities:

- It is recommended that children/vulnerable adults are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to CIP activities. This will help avoid loss and/or damage.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers and vulnerable adults to ensure that mobile phones are kept in a safe and secure place at all times.
- CIP holds no responsibility for mobile phones lost or stolen on its premises or while away on trips or residential.
- Staff and volunteers will avoid persistent contact with children or vulnerable adults through phone call, text message or Internet/Social Network Chat Rooms. All contact should be in direct relation to club or program activities and should occur during agreed working hours. Any contact which needs to occur outside this time frame should be reported to the Line Manager.

## **21 Statement on Trips and Residential Activity**

- Written permission of parents/carers should be obtained for all away day trips/overnight trips.
- The permission form should be completed by parents/carers before a child or vulnerable person can participate in a proposed trip.
- Details of the trip should be given to parents/carers e.g. location, guidelines in respect of clothing, provision of lunches etc.
- Medical conditions or special needs details of children/vulnerable persons should be sought from parents
- Emergency contact details of parents/carers should be sought from the same.

## SECTION 3 – ABUSE AND SUSPECTED ABUSE

### 3A Definition of abuse

Children or a vulnerable adult may be abused by a parent, a sibling or other relative, a carer (i.e. a person who has actual custody of a child such as a foster parent or staff member in a residential home) an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or of a failure on the part of a parent or carer to act or to provide proper care, or both. The abuse may take a number of forms, including:

**Neglect** The actual (confirmed) or likely (suspected) persistent or significant neglect of a child or the failure to protect a vulnerable adults from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

**Physical Injury:** actual or likely deliberate physical to a child or vulnerable persons or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.

**Sexual Abuse:** actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or vulnerable person. The involvement of children and adolescents, under the age of consent, in sexual activities whether or not they comprehend the nature of the activity

**Emotional Abuse:** actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child or vulnerable person. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This is where it is the main or only form of abuse.

### A Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 years or over, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability a sensory impairment, is old and frail or has some form of illness.

Vulnerable adults are entitled to have their civil and human rights upheld and to live free from abuse. They need to be treated with respect and dignity, be able to choose how to live their lives independently. They should be afforded the opportunity to participate in their community as active citizens.

In the course of CIP duties, staff may become aware of situations where a vulnerable adult is at risk or is being abused. It is important that staff are alert to signs of abuse and take action to safeguard vulnerable adults.

## Human Trafficking

**Definition of Human Trafficking** - The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.'

When a child (anyone under the age of 18) is trafficked the process is defined into 3 distinct phases:

- RECRUITMENT
- MOVEMENT
- EXPLOITATION

The recruitment phase can involve deception, coercion, violence or being sold by a third party. It can also involve the child going willingly with an adult because they have been groomed. There is no requirement to prove physical threat or coercion to determine if the child has been trafficked. Under international law it is accepted that a child cannot consent to his or her own exploitation and so even if a child or young person agrees to travel from one place to another, this could still be considered human trafficking if there is the intent to exploit them along the way or at the final destination.

### Definition of Child Exploitation & Grooming

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse that involves the manipulation and/or coercion of young people under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for things such as money, gifts, accommodation, affection or status. The manipulation or 'grooming' process involves befriending children, gaining their trust, and often feeding them drugs and alcohol, sometimes over a long period of time, before the abuse begins. The abusive relationship between victim and perpetrator involves an imbalance of power which limits the victim's options. It is a form of abuse which is often misunderstood by victims and outsiders as consensual. Although it is true that the victim can be tricked into believing they are in a loving relationship, no child under the age of 18 can ever consent to being abused or exploited. (Barnardo's, 2012).

### 3B Indicators of Abuse

The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not exhaustive:

#### Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas
- Repeated injuries
- Inconsistent stories/excuses relating to injuries
- Black eye
- Injuries to the mouth
- Burns or scalds
- Bites or Fractures
- Marks from implements

#### Behavioral Indicators

- Unexplained changes in behavior, becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Difficulty in making friends
- Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults
- Sudden drop in performances
- Changes in attendance patterns
- Inappropriate sexual awareness, behavior or language
- Reluctant removing clothing

### 3C Indicators of Grooming and Sexual Exploitation

- acquisition of expensive clothes, money, mobile phones or other gifts without plausible explanation
- a significantly older 'boyfriend'
- phone calls, letters or texts from unknown adults
- persistently going missing or returning late
- persistent unexplained truancy from school
- leaving home in unusual clothing for his or her age
- entering or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults
- being picked up or taken home by a taxi not order by their carers
- low self-esteem self-harm and other expressions of despair
- inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- physical symptoms, eg sexually transmitted infections, bruising etc.
- requesting the morning after pill upon return from a missing episode

### 3C Responding To A Disclosure

#### DO

- ✓ Be aware the child or vulnerable adults may have been bribed not to tell, or threatened and so be afraid and hesitant.
- ✓ Accept what the victim says – experts will soon discover if lies are being told. Your role is to let the child /person speak without fear.
- ✓ Stay calm.
- ✓ Listen and hear. Give the person time to say what they want to say.
- ✓ Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling and that it will be dealt with appropriately.
- ✓ Make accurate notes of all that has been said and keep original notes even if you type them up later.
- ✓ Let the child/vulnerable adults know what you are going to do next and tell them that you will let them know what happens.
- ✓ Report to someone else in the organisation – ‘the designated person’.
- ✓ Record your report.

#### DON'T

- Panic
- Promise to keep the matter a secret. Make it clear that you need to tell someone who will be able to help the child. Do not promise confidentiality.
- Push for information; let the child tell you without prompting or you making suggestions. Interviewing a child is a specialist work. You may cause problems by being inquisitive.
- Blame the child even if they have done something foolish. Keep calm and look them in the eye.
- Make a child repeat the story unnecessarily.
- Take on the role of investigator, your role is to accurately record the information and inform the designated person.

#### Helpful things you may say or show

- ✓ I believe you ( or acceptance of what the child says)
- ✓ Thank you for telling me
- ✓ It's not your fault
- ✓ I will help you

#### Don't say

- ✓ Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- ✓ I can't believe it
- ✓ Are you sure this is true?
- ✓ Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- ✓ Never make false promises
- ✓ Never make statements such as 'I am shocked, don't tell anyone else'

### 3D The Designated Person

Under no circumstances should a member of the organisation carry out their own investigation into the allegations or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

- ✓ Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to Mr Andrew McCreery ('hereafter the designated person') 10 Ballynacor Manor, Portadown. Tel no 07990556719, who is nominated by the Management Committee to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- ✓ In the absence of the designated person, or if the suspicions in any way involve the designated person of a such suspicions may be regarded as having a conflict of interest with the designated person (I.e. Close family member then the report should be made to Miss Laura Cloughey, (hereafter the 'Deputy designated person') of. If the suspicions implicate both the designated person and the Deputy designated person then the report should be made in the first instance to the local Social Services Gateway Team.
- ✓ If either of the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person is unavailable and you feel the child is in immediate danger, you might have to consider referring to Social Services or to the PSNI.  
E.g. If a Child was to declare that a family member was abusing them and that family member was due to collect them from the current activity.
- ✓ Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with CIP Procedures and kept in a secure place.

- ✓ Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the designated person, the absence of the designated person or the deputy designated person should not delay referral to the Social Services Department.
- ✓ The leadership will support the designated person/Deputy designated person in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- ✓ It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child protection agencies, although the leadership hope that members of the organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the designated person/Deputy designated person has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the designated person/s as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the leadership demonstrate the commitment of the association to effective child protection.
- ✓ The role of the Co-ordinator/Deputy Co-ordinator is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the department of Health, Social Service and Public Safety. It is a Social Services task to investigate the matter under Article 66 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.



## 4 Conclusion

- 1 Again reassure the child /vulnerable adults that they were right to tell and show acceptance. Let the person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- 2 Contact the designated person immediately using the procedure below.
- 3 Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking to you) writing down exactly what the child/vulnerable person said and when she/he said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity) Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

## 5 Review of this policy

CIP will review its safeguarding policy every three years and will regularly update its policy as appropriate with current legalisation

Note:

An Access NI Compliance Audit took place on 25 Feb 2019. On 13 March 2019, CIP was found to be compliant with the Access NI Code of Practice. Certification is valid for 3 years, subject to continued adherence to the code of Practice

