



Staff Handbook

Safeguarding Children Policy

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

In order to make it easier for all staff to keep themselves informed of Bowerbirdy's policies and any changes made to them, we will highlight any changes made from one update to the other.

New text will be highlighted as follows: **This is new text xxx xxx xxx.**

Any old text that has been deleted will be highlighted as follows: **This is old text that has been deleted yyy yy yyyyyy.**

We hope this will help you to quickly be able to identify any changes made to our policies.

Our Safeguarding Policy

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Bowerbirdy.

Introduction

1. Bowerbirdy is a for-profit organisation run by:-
Mr John-Paul White; Bowerbirdy Ltd (Company reg.10132196).
2. Bowerbirdy is based at:-
The Incuba
1Brewers Hill Road
Dunstable
LU6 1AA
3. Bowerbirdy is managed by a management team (the Team). One of the management team has particular responsibility for safeguarding children. One member of the management team acts as Lead Safeguarding Officer, providing strategic oversight of safeguarding across the organisation. A Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of safeguarding concerns, including receiving and responding to disclosures and liaising with external agencies.
4. The Team has adopted this safeguarding children policy and expects every adult working or helping at Bowerbirdy to support it and comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all staff, managers, directors, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of Bowerbirdy.

Purpose of the Policy

1. This policy is intended to protect children and young people who receive any service from us, including those who are the children of adults who may receive services from us.
2. As an organisation we believe that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and are committed to the protection of children and young people and this policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

The Risks to Children

Nearly every child grows up in a safe and happy environment and it is important not to exaggerate or overestimate the dangers. Nevertheless, there are situations where children need protection including:

- Sexual abuse
- Grooming
- Physical and emotional abuse and neglect
- Domestic violence
- Inappropriate supervision by staff or volunteers
- Bullying, cyber bullying, acts of violence and aggression within our schools and campuses
- Victimisation

- Self-harm
- Unsafe environments and activities
- Crime
- Exploitation

Universality of Protection

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children regardless of race, gender, religious belief, disability, age, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from harm.
- Some children are more vulnerable to harm as a result of their circumstances, prior experiences, communication needs or level of dependency.
- Working with children, young people, their parents and/or guardians, carers or other agencies is essential to protecting their wellbeing.

Safeguarding Children at Events / Activities

1. There are three kinds of events/activities:
 - i. Those open to adults and children of all ages,
 - ii. Those for children accompanied by a 'parent',
 - iii. 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 throughout 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, then the children will have to stay together, so that the one 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 event and activities are to be defined broadly to include any occasions where Bowerbirdy will be providing a service.
6. Wat's On provided by Watford Borough means all sessions are free, but participants or their parents/carers must register each child at every activity they attend by signing in. Providing us with emergency contact details, medical requirements and non-compulsory equalities data. In the event of an emergency every effort will be made to contact parents or guardians using the information supplied. Signing in at each session opens at the advertised session start time, allowing approximately 15 minutes enrolling before activities commence. We recommend to maximise the opportunities to join in users attend from the outset of the session. We deliver open access sessions, which mean that Children and young people are free to come and go as they please. We can only supervise children and young people that have signed in and while they are on site and participating in the activities.

Disclosure and Barring

1. Bowerbirdy offers the following activities for children:
Acting, dance, art and sport classes, adventure play, mascot entertainment, face painting and parties.
2. Some of our activities may therefore require adult participants or adult leaders to undergo DBS and/or police checks under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The required level of checking (if any) will broadly reflect the degree and frequency of unsupervised access given to other people's children.
3. The Team will take very seriously any allegation of impropriety on the part of any member of Bowerbirdy. A member of Bowerbirdy who discovers anything amiss should get in touch immediately with the following: Mr John-Paul White.
4. The Team 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 Bowerbirdy.



Health and Safety Aspects of Safeguarding Children

1. Before starting any event for unaccompanied children, the Team 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 of the steps to be taken to minimise those risks. The Team 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.

Policy on the Prevention of Bullying

We will not tolerate the bullying of children either by adults or by other children. If any incident of child-on-child bullying should arise at a Bowerbirdy event, those involved will be separated immediately and the parents of the children involved will be asked to deal with the matter. The Team will review all incidents of child-on-child bullying and assess the likely future risk to children. If appropriate, the Team will consider banning a child from future events, but only in full accordance with the rules and procedures of Bowerbirdy. Allegations of adults bullying children will be dealt with under paragraph number 3 above

Photographing Children

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.

Managing Behaviour, Discipline and Acceptable Restraint

1. Adults supervising children at Bowerbirdy events must never use any form of corporal punishment. If physical restraint is absolutely necessary to prevent injury to any person or to prevent serious damage to property, then the minimum necessary restraint may be used — but for that purpose only.
2. Unacceptable behaviour at Bowerbirdy events for unaccompanied children will generally be stopped by separating the children from each other and from the group. The miscreants will be suitably supervised and will be returned as soon as possible to the care of their parents.
3. Bowerbirdy may apply a further disciplinary sanction; namely the banning of the child from one or more future events over the following 18 months. Any such sanction would be determined and applied by the following officer: Mr John-Paul White.
4. A parent who is aggrieved by this ban may appeal to Bowerbirdy who will hear the views of all relevant persons. The decision of Bowerbirdy is then final. Any such appeals should be made to, and will be determined by the following officer: Mr John-Paul White.

Other Policies

This safeguarding policy should be read together with the following policies and resources:

- At work policy
- Recording and information sharing
- Description of lead safeguarding officer
- Role of the designated safeguarding officer
- Guidance on handling a disclosure from a child or young person
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Safer recruitment
- E-safety
- Anti-bullying
- Complaints procedure
- Induction and training
- Whistleblowing
- Disciplinary and grievance avoidance procedures
- Equal opportunity and anti-harassment policy
- Health and safety
- Staff support and supervision
- Lone working procedure

Legal Framework

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

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice - Guidance on the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system for children and young people aged 0 to 25, from 1 September 2014
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services
- Working together to safeguard children (2017)

NOTE: This Policy was approved by the following officer on 01/01/2026 and is due for review every 1 year:
John-Paul White

Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Name: John-Paul White

Phone/email : 07931 425625 / john-paul@bowerbirdy.co.uk

Deputy DSO(s)

Name(s): Finlay Bevan

Phone/email: 07851 863103 / finlay@bowerbirdy.co.uk

Senior Lead for Safeguarding

Name : John Dixon

Phone/email : 07964 527247 / john@bowerbirdy.co.uk

CEOP

www.ceop.police.uk

Young Minds

www.youngminds.org.uk

0207 089 5050

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000