



**Scottish Association of Young Farmer's Clubs**

**Safeguarding Policy**

The Scottish Association of Young Farmers (SAYFC) is an organisation for young people and run by young people between the ages of 14-30 years. National, Regional, District and Club officials are all elected annually from within the membership.

This policy document sets out the position and responsibilities of SAYFC in relation to safeguarding children and young people. The policy provides specific guidance and procedures for responding to a range of specific incidents where abuse is known or suspected. The policy provides guidance to all SAYFC staff, members and volunteers across Scotland. SAYFC recognises that young people attend SAYFC events for enjoyment, social contact and personal development. They should be safe within this environment. Staff, elected officials, volunteers and members who are appointed to work and supervise children and young people should be confident in their knowledge of appropriate policies and procedures in relation to child protection and safeguarding.

For the purpose of this document the term young people refer to SAYFC members aged 14 to 18 years.

### POLICY STATEMENT

While the Association recognizes that the primary responsibility for the care of young people rests with the parents and guardians the community as a whole has responsibility for their well being and for protecting them and the association has a duty to protect their members.

The policy of the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs is to safeguard the welfare of all young people who come into contact with the Association by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm. The Association is truly committed to safeguarding the well being of its members and young volunteers who should at all times show, and be shown, respect and understanding regarding their rights, safety and welfare and should conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the principles of the Association.

It is also the Associations policy to develop staff, elected office bearers and volunteer's awareness of child protection issues and to review the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs Child Protection Policy annually.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

The Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs expects all Staff, Office Bearers and Volunteers to adhere to this code of conduct. The code of conduct has been drawn up in order to support SAYFC Staff, Office Bearers and Volunteers to perform their youth work, and protect them especially when working in isolation and vulnerable situations.

#### **Staff, Office Bearers and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to equal opportunities and to young people**

- ✓ By being honest with, and showing respect for, young people.
- ✓ By respecting the confidentiality of the young person and by being clear and open when confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- ✓ By offering challenging and exciting experiences undertaken in a safe environment.
- ✓ By recognizing unacceptable behavior and taking action, which enables changes to take place.

#### **Staff, Office Bearers and Volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to themselves and colleagues**

- ✓ By being honest with, and showing respect for colleagues
- ✓ By respecting and keeping appropriate levels of confidentiality

- ✓ By working and planning to the best of their ability within the constraints of the club or allocated responsibilities.
- ✓ By only working alone when immediate support is available and / or the Health & Safety of the young people is at risk.
- ✓ By offering support to colleagues and seeking it when necessary.

**Staff, office bearers and volunteers are expected to demonstrate a consistent commitment to educate members, office bearers and staff**

- ✓ By leading by example and setting good, positive role models:
  - Not using language, which is racist, sexist or abusive.
  - Dressing appropriately to the occasion task, and company present.
  - Not smoking, drinking alcohol, or using other substances whilst on duty and working with young people.
- ✓ By creating an environment within which young people can feel safe and learn
- ✓ By enthusiastically seizing all learning opportunities either programmed or otherwise.
- ✓ By fully implementing the aims and objectives of SAYFC.

**Behavior of all Staff, Office Bearers and Volunteers whilst on duty must, of course be within the law.**

**Recommendations**

The Association does not recommend the following when assuming positions of responsibility.

- Spend excessive time alone with young people away from others.
- Take young people alone on car journeys no matter how short except in emergencies or with specific permission from parents / guardians.
- Take young people to their home except in emergency situations.

While in many young farmers clubs this is unavoidable practice it should only occur with the pre determined knowledge and consent of the young person's parents.

Staff, office bearers and volunteers should never:

- Engage in inappropriate physical contact
- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay – apart from structured sports activities.
- Engage in sexually provocative games
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person even in fun.
- Let allegations a young person makes unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for young people that they can do themselves.

**Sanctions**

Failure to comply with the above code of conduct will result in the implementation of sanctions, which may be imposed by the appropriate Club Committee, District Committee, Regional Committee or National Council.

Parents of members, office bearers or volunteers will be informed and given the right to representation throughout the process.

## **Supervision of young people**

Making arrangements for the proper supervision of young people is one of the most effective ways of minimizing opportunities for the young people to suffer harm of any kind. Our duty to care suggests that it is good practice when organising journeys / visits / trips that the following should be adhered to:

### **Planned Activities**

- The organizers of journeys / visits should plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities for the young people who are involved in the project.
- Organisers are responsible for the welfare and safety of the young people for the full duration of the time that they are away from home.
- Young people should not be left to their own devices in for example a town for the evening or shopping expeditions.
- All young people should be adequately supervised and engaged in suitable activities at all times.
- In circumstances where planned activities are disrupted, e.g. due to adverse weather conditions, then organizers would have a number of alternative activities planned.
- Organisers should obtain in writing, parental consent to children joining a trip
- Parents should be given full information about a trip, including details of the programme of events and the activities in which the children will be engaged.
- Separate male / female sleeping arrangements should be implemented on residential visits or exchanges. Staff and leaders must not share arrangements with participants or allow young people to enter their rooms. Staff and leaders should not enter young people's rooms unless accompanied or in emergency situations.
- In the event of a disclosure, allegation or concern during SAYFC activities the Associations reporting procedure should take precedence.

### **Supervision of children**

- The Association may be satisfied that those staff and elected office bearers who accompany group parties are fully competent to do so.
- Young people should be supervised at all times under normal circumstances.
- Workers should know at all times where young people are and what they are doing.
- Any activity using potentially dangerous equipment should have constant adult supervision.
- Dangerous behavior by young people should not be allowed.

## **Definitions of Abuse and Reporting**

Good protection of young people means ensuring that staff and volunteers know how to recognize abuse of young people. This does NOT mean that they are responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred but that they have a responsibility to be alert to behavior by young people or staff / office bearers/volunteers which suggests something may be wrong.

See appendix 2 for definitions of abuse.

Who can abuse?

- You can't tell by looking at someone if they are an abuser – they don't appear different from the rest of society.
- Abusers come from any classes in society, any profession, from any sex and any origin.

- Abuse of young people may sometimes be carried out by strangers but is much more common that the abuser is known to the young person and is in a position of trust and / or authority.
- It is not only adults who abuse young people. Young people may suffer abuse from other young people.

What is a disclosure?

A disclosure is when a young person tells someone that they have been or are being harmed or abused in some way. This may be physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect or bullying.

What is a concern?

Inappropriate or unacceptable behavior or communication, favouritism or negligence are examples of what may constitute a concern or observed by an office bearer or volunteer.

### **Bullying**

It is important to recognize that bullying is a very common form of abuse both physical and emotional and causes great stress. Bullying can leave children with feelings of worthlessness and self-hared; they can feel lonely and isolated. At its worst bullying can result in a young person attempting suicide.

### **Reporting Procedures**

It is not the role of SAYFC to investigate an allegation but to simply collate the information . If any member of staff, office bearer or volunteer suspects that a young person has been abused it is important that the collated information is given to the designated child protection officer.

Do not contact an investigating agency directly. In the first instance listen to the young person, collect relevant information and immediately inform the designated member of staff. (See appendix 3) for Reporting Procedures Guidelines). Responding to incidents of alleged abuse, affecting members within the association is based upon clearly defined procedures. It is important that you follow the outlined procedure, and that you adhere to the following Do's and Dont's.

Do:

- Stay Calm
- Listen and hear
- Give time to the child to say what they want
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing
- Record in writing what is said using the exact words use by the child
- Report tot eh designated member of staff
- Keep a note of your report, giving the date, time, name of the individual whom you have told and course of action agreed

Don't

- Do not panic
- Do not make a child repeat the story unnecessarily
- Do not interpret what has been said using your own words
- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Do not enquire into details of the abuse

- Under no circumstances should you attempt to deal with the problem

If you are concerned that the young person has been abused or is at risk of abuse there is one thing that you must not do and that is NOTHING

Details should be reported to:

Chief Executive, SAYFC, Courtyard (East), Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Edinburgh, EH28 8NB.

Email : [Penny@SAYFC.org](mailto:Penny@SAYFC.org) or Tel: 0131 333 2445

It is important that you take what the young person says seriously and follow it up with action straight away. The sooner you take action, the more likely it is that the abuse will stop, and the child will recover from his or hers experiences.

If you know someone you think may be abusing a young person or a young person's words or behaviour indicate to you that it is likely that he or she is being abused, report it to the designated member of staff.

### **Confidentiality**

On the premise that the welfare of the young person is paramount considerations of confidentiality must not be allowed to override the right of young people to be protected from harm.

Staff, Office bearers, volunteers and members must be aware that there are circumstances in which confidentiality must be broken, specifically if it suspected that abuse has occurred and an offence committed.

On receipt of both a verbal and a written report on suspected abuse the Chief Executive will make a formal referral to the appropriate authorities. Who will then take on the responsibility for dealing with the matter.

### **Sensitivity**

Due to the nature of child abuse the whole matter and those involved must be dealt with the utmost sensitivity. This however should not be a stumbling block to making a report of an incident nor a subsequent referral.

### **Recruitment and Management of Staff, Office Bearers and Elected Officials**

While most office bearers are elected annually from within the membership it is important to recognize the need to validate the credentials and ability of staff, office bearers and volunteers who have access to young members. In order to secure validation staff, office bearers and volunteers (trainers) the following process will be adhered to.

1. Each appointee will sign a copy of the Associations Child Protection Policy, confirming their having read and understood the document
2. All Staff, Office Bearers, Volunteers and trainers will become members of the PVG Scheme if their work is directly connected with work with junior members. This will apply only to volunteers / trainers who have individual contact with member on more than one occasion over a twelve month period (no more than 6 hours).

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually at the August meeting of National Council.

## Appendix 1

### **The Association fully accepts young people's rights to self protection and:**

**To be safe** – Teach young people that everyone has rights such as the right to breathe, which should not be taken away. Tell young people that no one should be able to take their rights to be safe.

**To protect their own bodies** – Young people need to know that their body belongs to them, particularly the private parts covered by their swim suits.

**To say NO** – Tell young people that its all right to say no to anyone if that person tried to do something to them that makes them feel wrong. Most young people are taught to listen and obey adults and the older people without question.

**To get help against bullies** – Bullies usually pick on younger children to enlist the help of friends or say no without fighting – and to tell an adult. Bullies are cowards and a firm loud “no” from a group of young people with the threat of adult intervention often puts them off.

In cases of real physical danger, young people often have no choice but to surrender to the bully's demands. Sometimes young people will fight and get hurt to protect a possession because of a fear of what will happen when they arrive home without it. Tell a young person that keeping themselves safe is the most important consideration.

**To tell** – You must assure young people that no matter what happens you will not be angry with them and you want them to tell you of any incidents that frightens or confuses them or makes them unhappy.

**To be believed** – When young people are told to go to an adult for help they need to know that they will be believed and supported. This is especially true in the case of sexual abuse which young people very rarely lie about. If the young person is not believed when he or she tells, the abuse may continue for years and result in suffering and guilt for the young person.

**Not to keep secrets** – Teach young people that some secrets should never be kept no matter if they promised not to tell. Child molesters known to the young person often say that a kiss or a touch is “our secret”. This confuses the young person who has always been taught to keep secrets.

## Appendix 2

### **Definitions of Abuse**

There are several different categories of abuse:

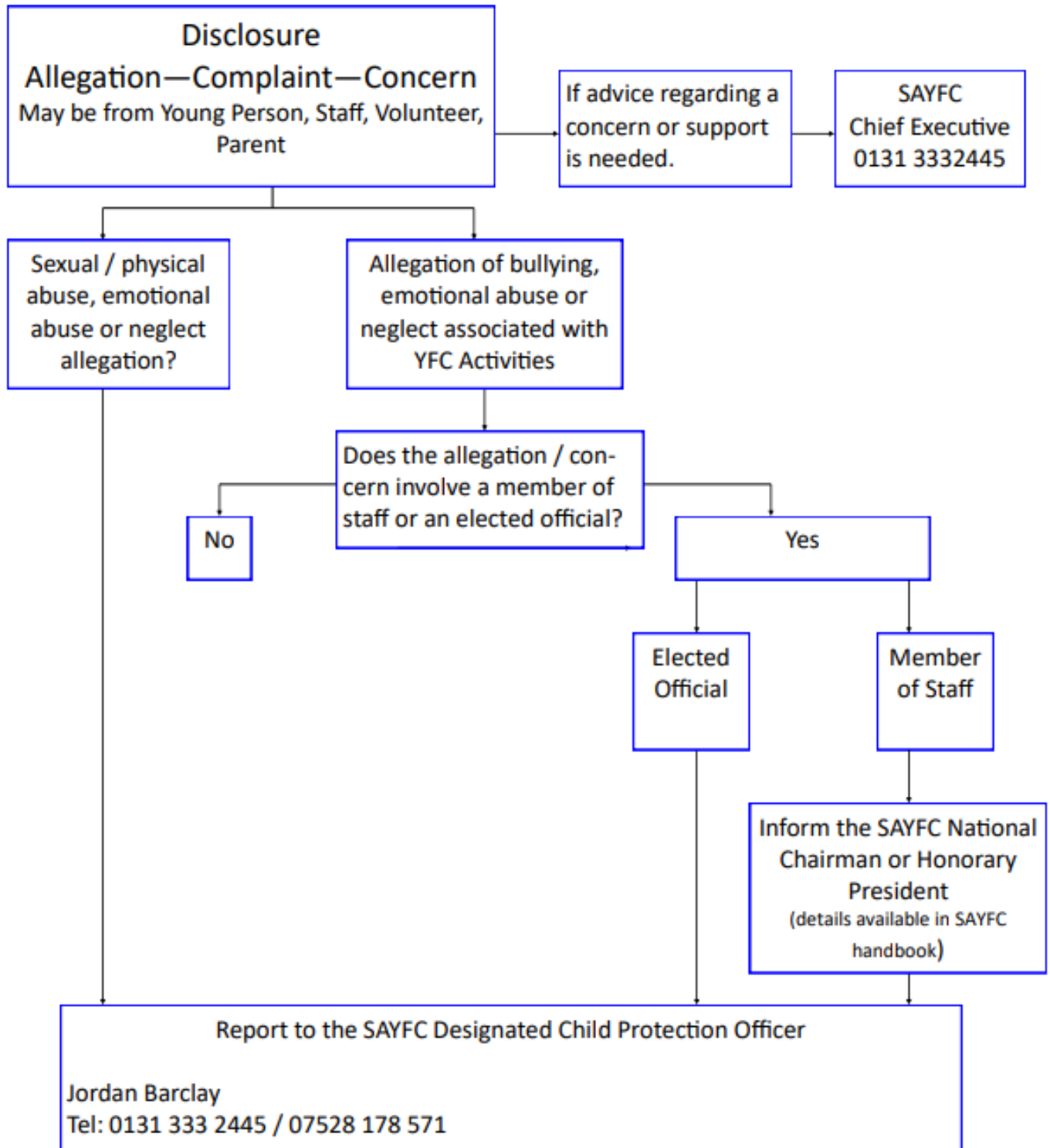
**Physical** – where young people are hurt by ill treatment, or deliberate or neglectful failure to prevent injury or harm.

**Emotional** – where people are persistently or severely emotionally neglected or rejected, for example by not being given enough love or attention, being made to feel worthless, or being intimidated by threats or taunts.

**Sexual** - where young people are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity. The involvement of young people in sexual activities that they do not truly comprehend to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate social taboos of family roles.

**Neglect** – where young people's physical and / or psychological needs are severely or persistently neglected, or failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger.

# Child Protection Reporting Procedure





# Designated Officer Reporting Process

