



Fire Tech Safeguarding- Our Child Protection Policy

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

The purpose of this policy:

- to protect children and young people who receive Fire Tech Camp's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection;

Fire Tech Camp believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

TYPES OF ABUSE

Abuse can be:

- physical abuse, for example beating or punching;
- emotional abuse, for example rejection and denial of affection;
- sexual abuse, for example sexual assault or encouraging a child to view pornographic material;
- neglect, for example failure to provide appropriate care including warmth or medical attention.

Signs of abuse

Possible signs of abuse include (but are not limited to):

- the student says s/he has been abused or asks a question which gives rise to that inference;
- there is no reasonable or consistent explanation for a student's injury; the injury is unusual in kind or location; there have been a number of injuries; there is a pattern to the injuries;
- the student's behaviour stands out from the group as either being extreme model behaviour or extremely challenging behaviour; or there is a sudden change in the student's behaviour;
- the student's development is delayed;
- the student loses or gains weight;
- the student appears neglected, e.g. dirty, hungry, inadequately clothed;
- the student is reluctant to go home, or has been openly rejected by his / her parents or carers.

Duty of employees, directors and volunteers

Every employee and director of the Fire Tech Camp as well as every volunteer who assists the Camp is under a general legal duty:

- to protect children and young people from abuse;
- to be aware of the Fire Tech Camp's child protection procedures and to follow them;
- to know how to access and implement the procedures, independently if necessary;
- to keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event;
- to report any matters of concern.

Whistleblowing:

All staff are required to report to the Camp Director/Lead any concern or allegations about practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put students at risk of abuse or other serious harm. In exceptional cases such reports should be made to Ofsted. There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

Staff and student relationships: Sexual relationships between staff and students are strictly prohibited and may be a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

PROCEDURES

Initial complaint:

A member of staff suspecting or hearing a complaint of abuse:

- must listen carefully to the child/young person and keep an open mind. Staff should not take a decision as to whether or not the abuse has taken place;
- must not ask leading questions, that is, a question which suggests its own answer;
- must reassure the child/young person but not give a guarantee of absolute confidentiality. The member of staff should explain that they need to pass the information to a Senior Member of FTC who will ensure that the correct action is taken;
- must keep a sufficient written record of the conversation. The record should include the date, time and place of the conversation and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. The record should be signed by the person making it and should use names, not initials. The record must be kept securely and handed to a Senior Member of the FTC team.

Preserving evidence:

All evidence, (for example, scribbled notes, mobile phones containing text messages, clothing, computers), must be safeguarded and preserved.

Reporting:

All suspicion or complaints of abuse must be reported to the Camp Director/Lead or if the complaint involves the Camp Director/Lead, you should report to a FTC Company Director.

Action by Assigned Senior Staff:

The action to be taken will take into account:

- the nature and seriousness of the suspicion or complaint. A complaint involving a serious criminal offence will always be referred to Social Services or the Police without further investigation by Fire Tech Camp;
- the wishes of the student who has complained, provided that the student is of sufficient understanding and maturity and properly informed. However, there may be times when the situation is so serious that decisions may need to be taken, after all appropriate consultation, that override a student's wishes;
- the wishes of the complainant's parents, provided they have no interest which is in conflict with the student's best interests and that they are properly informed. Again, it may be necessary, after all appropriate consultation, to override parental wishes in some circumstances. If the Assigned Senior Staff member is concerned that disclosing information to parents would put a child or young person at risk, he or she will take further advice from the relevant professionals before making a decision to disclose;

- duties of confidentiality, so far as applicable;
- the lawful rights and interests of Fire Tech Camp as a whole including its employees and its insurers;
- if there is room for doubt as to whether a referral should be made, the Senior Assigned Person may consult with the LADO or other appropriate professionals on a no names basis without identifying the family. However, as soon as sufficient concern exists that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm, a referral will be made without delay (and in any event within 24 hours). If the initial referral is made by telephone, the Senior Assigned Person will confirm the referral in writing to Social Services within 24 hours. If no response or acknowledgment is received within three working days, the Senior Assigned Person will contact Social Services again

Referral guidelines:

A referral to Social Services or the Police will not normally be made where:

- the complaint does not involve a serious criminal offence; and
- a referral would be contrary to the wishes of a student complainant who is of sufficient maturity and understanding and properly informed, and contrary also to the wishes of the complainant's parents; and
 - the case is one that can be satisfactorily investigated and dealt with under Fire Tech Camps internal procedures, the parents being kept fully informed, as appropriate. However, if during the course of the internal procedures, it appears that the situation is more serious, the Senior Assigned Person will again consider whether a referral should be made.

External agencies:

Whether or not Fire Tech Camp decides to refer a particular complaint to Social Services or the Police, the parents and student will be informed in writing of their right to make their own complaint or referral to the Social Services Department or the Child Protection Unit of the police and will be provided with contact names, addresses and telephone numbers, as appropriate.

Allegations against staff:

Fire Tech Camp has procedures for dealing with allegations against staff (and volunteers who work with children and young people) that aim to strike a balance between the need to protect children and young people from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false or unfounded allegations. These procedures follow the guidance in the DfE guidance *Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff* (DfE-00061-2011) and should be used where the member of staff or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or young person, or may have harmed a child or young person;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person; or
- behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children or young people.

Suspension will not be an automatic response to an allegation. Full consideration will be given to all the options, subject to the need to ensure:

- the safety and welfare of the students or student concerned; and
- the need for a full and fair investigation.

Detailed guidance is given to staff to ensure that their behaviour and actions do not place students or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a student. This guidance is contained in the Staff Manual or Staff Code of Conduct.

If a member of staff tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide his or her services, any child protection allegations will still be followed up by Fire Tech Camp. Resignation will not prevent a prompt and detailed report being made to the Independent Safeguarding Authority in appropriate circumstances.

Allegations against students:

A student against whom an allegation of abuse has been made may be suspended from Fire Tech Camp. The Camp will take advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on the investigation of such allegations and will take all appropriate action to ensure the safety and welfare of all students involved including the student or students accused of abuse. If it is necessary for a student to be interviewed by the Police in relation to allegations of abuse, the Camp will ensure that, subject to the advice of the LADO, parents are informed as soon as possible and that the student is supported during the interview by an appropriate adult.

Suspected harm from outside Fire Tech Camp:

A member of staff who suspects that a student is suffering harm from outside FTC should seek information from the child or young person with tact and sympathy using "open" and not leading questions. A sufficient record should be made of the conversation and if the member of staff continues to be concerned, he or she should refer the matter to the Senior Assigned Person.

Informing parents:

Parents will normally be kept informed as appropriate of any action to be taken under these procedures. However, there may be circumstances when the Senior Assigned Person will need to consult the LADO and/or the Principal before discussing details with parents.

Secure Fire Tech Camp premises:

Fire Tech Camp will take all practicable steps to ensure that the premises are as secure as circumstances permit. There may be occasions where the camp is held in premises that are open to the public. In this instance, camp instructors will ensure that children under their care are within eyesight at all times. A Camp Director/Lead will supervise regular trips to the toilet.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: 04/11/2018

Reviewed by: 

C. Brierley