



Safeguarding policy

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that an organisation takes to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults [and] to protect them from harm, including physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm, and neglect (Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)).

Above Adventure aims to enable children and adults to participate in the sport of climbing in a way which promotes their enjoyment and wellbeing, whilst also keeping them safe. Children are inherently vulnerable because of their age. Some adults and children are additionally vulnerable because of their specific life circumstances. These may relate to health, disability, age, previous experiences, or anything which makes someone less able to protect themselves.

Why do we need a safeguarding policy?

We have written a safeguarding policy because we want Above Adventure staff and volunteers to know what to do if they are concerned about someone being harmed. We want climbers and families to know about our safeguarding policy, and to be confident that they are as safe as possible at Above Adventure. We want to build a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers and participants know how they are expected to behave, and feel comfortable about sharing concerns.

We need to be alert to the risk that Above Adventure could be targeted by those who want to gain access to children or vulnerable adults in order to abuse them. Having a safeguarding policy does not remove all risk of harm, but it helps to reduce it. Any failure by charity trustees to manage safeguarding risks adequately may be considered [misconduct](#) by the Scottish Charity Regulator.

We want to maintain public trust that we have zero tolerance to abuse.

Scope of this policy

For the purpose of this policy, 'children' means climbing participants, staff and volunteers aged under 18 years. 'Vulnerable adults' means climbing participants, staff and volunteers aged over 16 who are unable to fully protect themselves, their property or their rights.

The intended audience for this safeguarding policy is Above Adventure staff, volunteers and trustees.



This policy supersedes the Above Adventure draft child protection policy of 2019.

Selecting suitable staff and volunteers

The Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, managed by Disclosure Scotland, helps to ensure that those who work with children or protected adults do not have a known history of harmful behaviour. Currently all those working or volunteering in outreach activities with the Above Adventure mobile climbing tower have received child protection training and are members of the PVG scheme. Climbing centre staff and trustees are not all members of the scheme. Staff who supervise climbing activities at the centre and minibs drivers are being prioritised for PVG applications over 2022 and 2023.

Safeguarding responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, wherever we are. At Above Adventure we have appointed a member of staff and a trustee to specific safeguarding roles.

Safeguarding officer: Dean Pastulovic 07460 404523 dean@aboveadventure.co.uk
Trustee for safeguarding: Jo Abbotts 07988 604707 jo@aboveadventure.co.uk

Raising concerns

If something you have seen, heard or been told about makes you think that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed or is at risk of harm, use this procedure to raise a safeguarding concern. This applies even if the person involved insists on it being kept secret. If a child or vulnerable adult tells you something that makes you think that they are being groomed or abused, listen to them and take them seriously, but do not probe for more information. Reassure them that they have done the right thing and that what they have told you is important.

If a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, call [Police Scotland](#) on 999. Then tell the Above Adventure safeguarding officer.

If you think that a crime has been committed, tell the Above Adventure safeguarding officer who will support you to report it to the police on 101.

If you have a safeguarding concern but do not believe it meets the threshold for criminal behaviour, tell the Above Adventure safeguarding officer who will support you to pass the information onto East Ayrshire Council Social Work Service on 01563 554 200 (Kilmarnock) or 01290 427 720 (Cumnock) or 0800 328 7758 (out of hours).

The person raising a safeguarding concern should record full factual details as soon after the incident as possible, and pass them to the safeguarding officer for secure confidential storage in a locked filing cabinet or password-protected file. The record should include the nature of the concern, how it was revealed, the exact words said (if recalled), any injuries, the names, roles/relationships and contact details of all relevant parties; any culture/language/communication issues; and whether a child is



known to be on the Child Protection register. The safeguarding officer will keep the record until any criminal and formal procedures are complete, and then destroy it.

Do not delay passing on the concern, or creating a written record of the incident, if you do not have full information. If you cannot immediately contact the safeguarding officer, contact the trustee for safeguarding or duty manager.

Do not talk to other people about the concern. This includes the parents/carers of the child or vulnerable adult, or other colleagues.

Actions after a concern has been raised

The Above Adventure safeguarding officer must report harmful behaviour by a staff member or volunteer to [Disclosure Scotland](#), whether or not the person is a member of the PVG scheme; even if it takes place outside of work; and even if it is only discovered after the person has left their role.

The trustee responsible for safeguarding should notify the Scottish Charity regulator of any significant incident involving a child or a vulnerable adult by emailing notifiable@oscr.org.uk.

Anyone can request a [check of the Sex Offender's register](#) in relation to a particular adult with access to children. You don't need to have any specific concern to use this scheme. Any disclosure under this scheme will be passed to the parents/carers of the children who may be at risk.

We want to create a culture where it is safe for staff to challenge managers on any topic. Staff raising safeguarding concerns ('whistleblowing') are protected from unfair dismissal or treatment by the [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#) (PIDA).

The centre manager should refer to page 59 of the [staff manual](#) for the disciplinary policy, which describes how to manage staff or volunteers where a concern has been raised about their behaviour.

What situations pose a particular risk?

We want all children and vulnerable adults to enjoy their climbing experience with Above Adventure, and to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness. We reflect below on which situations might pose particular risks and how to minimise these.

Falling

New climbers are briefed on how to climb safely. Thick mats surround the bouldering area to help with safe falling. Climbers aged over 16 years, and parents/carers of climbers aged under 16 years are required to give informed consent before participating in climbing activities. If someone is injured while using the centre, the duty manager should administer first-aid, call an ambulance if required, and record the details of what happened on an accident report form.

Competition

Competition can be fun, and motivating, but it can also be stressful. Put the welfare of each child before performance goals. Avoid excessive training, competition and pressure.

Toilets

The toilet facilities at Above Adventure include:

- one female-designated room with multiple toilet cubicles, an enclosed shower cubicle, sinks, and a communal changing area
- one male-designated room with multiple toilet cubicles, an enclosed shower cubicle, sinks, and a communal changing area, and
- one Changing Places toilet with a single lockable door. This room contains a hoist, a bed which can be used as a changing table, a sink, and a shower.

All the facilities are shared by adults and children; and by staff, climbers, visitors, and parents/carers. This means that in the gender-designated toilets there is a risk of children/vulnerable adults and non-connected adults or teenagers being together in an unobserved place. All centre staff and users (including transgender, intersex and non-binary people) are welcome to use whichever toilet room they feel most comfortable in, based on their own circumstances.

Private lessons

Supervise children or vulnerable adults in an open environment. For a 1:1 lesson with no other climbers present, ask a staff member or parent to chaperone. Avoid being alone with a child or vulnerable adult.

Minibus

When groups of children or vulnerable adults are transported by minibus, they should be collected and dropped off at a common point. Individual home pick-ups and drop-offs are not permitted. This is to avoid a driver being alone with a child or vulnerable adult.

Assistance with shoes and harnesses

Talk climbers through putting on their own shoes and harnesses, even if this takes a bit of time. Where assistance is required, ask a parent or carer to help. Staff and volunteers should avoid touching climbing participants.

Bullying

Speak encouragingly and kindly. Challenge adults or children who shout at, push, or belittle someone else, or use inappropriate language. Consider excluding climbers who spoil activities for others.



Social media

Before posting photographs, videos or names of children or vulnerable adults on social media, obtain permission from both the climber and their parent/carer. Avoid direct messaging with children or vulnerable adults.

Smoking and drinking

Staff and volunteers should not smoke or drink alcohol in the company of children or vulnerable adults, or condone the use of illegal substances. Any staff member or volunteer under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances will be escorted home and managed in accordance with the Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy on page 26 of the [staff manual](#).

Publication, action plan and review

This safeguarding policy was approved by the Above Adventure board in June 2022, following consultation with staff and trustees.

For public accountability, it is published on the Above Adventure website. A paper copy is available at the climbing centre.

To implement this strategy a number of actions have been agreed. Progress against the action plan will be monitored monthly by the board.

The policy will be reviewed when the full climbing centre opens, and thereafter whenever there is a significant change in the law or the nature of Above Adventure's activities, or when feedback suggests the need for an update.

If you have a suggestion about how to improve this policy (at any time), please contact the trustee for safeguarding.