



Vision 4 Youth

Governing Document

July 2023 - Version 4

Contents:

1. Introduction	3
Aims and Objectives	3
2. Opening Statement	4
3. Definitions:	4
4. Training, Support and Accountability for Volunteers	4
5. General Guidelines for Child Supervision	5
A. Safe use of facilities	5
B. Alcohol and Drugs	6
C. Team monitoring & preparation.....	6
D. Registers.....	7
E. Health and food issues	7
F. Contact with parent/carer	7
G. Provision of resources and equipment.....	7
H. First aid, fire & incidents: response and reporting	8
I. Team recruitment.....	8
J. Best practice: your conduct with young people	8
K. In the event of identifying possible abuse:.....	9
6. Approaches to challenging behaviour	9
7. Control and direction through physical contact	10
Physical restraint	10
Restriction of liberty	11
Hitting young people	11
Searching young people	12
Young people and special needs.....	12
8. Safeguarding.....	12
Please see the separate Vision 4 Youth Safeguarding Policy.	12
9. V4Y Responsibilities	13
Introduction	13
Reporting Lines.....	13
Responsibilities.....	13
10. General fire evacuation instructions	15

1. Introduction

Vison 4 Youth (V4Y) is a charitable organisation committed to providing facilities, programmes, projects and activities for young people in the community; in Yateley and the surrounding areas.

Aims and Objectives

V4Y, aim to work with Young People and the wider community by:

- Empowering Young People to make a difference in Yateley and the surrounding areas.
- Stimulating a strong feeling of self worth and confidence.
- Increasing health and well-being
- Increasing their independence and empowering young people to make 'age appropriate' decisions
- Promoting a sense of belonging and encouraging them to be proud of the area they live in.
- Acknowledging children's and young people's rights to be accepted as fully included citizens in society
- Developing a greater understanding of religious, cultural, racial and ethnic diversity among young people
- Promoting the development of positive relationships with peers
- Increasing the knowledge of services, facilities and opportunities for young people in Yateley and the surrounding areas
- Signposting regarding advice, information, education and practical support

V4Y aims to provide a space were young people can enjoy meeting their friends and joining in organised activities in a friendly and safe environment.

2. Opening Statement

V4Y has a duty to protect young and vulnerable people in its care, and to do everything possible to ensure they are protected, as far as possible, from any risk of abuse (physical, sexual and emotional) or neglect. It also has a duty to guide, supervise and protect those people that take the time to work for V4Y.

Volunteers who work with V4Y place themselves in a position of trust and responsibility to those in their care. This is also the case for those employed by V4Y.

The recommendations and guidelines in this document relate specifically to all children and young people and vulnerable adults.

3. Definitions:

Young person / Child: Anyone under 18 years of age regardless of appearance.

Young Adult: Person aged 18 – 25 years.

Parent/carer For the purpose of these guidelines, references to parents should be taken to include carers and those with parental responsibility

Youth Worker/Detached Youth Worker: Anyone whose work involves working with under 25's

Team Leader: Those Leaders who have overall responsibility for the teams.

Trustees: These have legal responsibility for the running of V4Y ensuring compliance with all legal, fiscal, employment and safeguarding requirements.

Counsellor: Those people trained in Counselling.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS): A central access point for checking criminal record information.

DBS: Required for those (both paid and voluntary) working with children, Youth or vulnerable adults, this checks information with the Police National Computer, Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and the Local Police Force.

Safeguarding Co-ordinator: The person to whom V4Y has given the responsibility for coordinating the actions and procedures of those working for V4Y. They are also responsible for obtaining Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosures.

Safeguarding Policy: This policy agreed by V4Y Planning Team/Committee members enabling the safe care of children and Youth.

4. Training, Support and Accountability for Volunteers

Although roles are voluntary, there is an expectation that Youth Workers/helpers working for V4Y will attend all information and training meetings as arranged by the Trustees or Development Manager which are relevant to their role.

Subjects covered by training will include:

- Guidance on engaging with young people
- Organising activities
- Safeguarding

- First Aid
- Health and Safety

Please read this handbook carefully as it forms part of the training available for Youth Work/helping in activities and identifying and handling suspected cases of child abuse.

Discuss it with colleagues in your Team and raise any queries you may have with the Development Manager or Trustees

All Staff / Volunteers will be asked to sign a form saying that they:

- Have read and understood this document
- Will follow the guidelines on safe working practices
- Will attend further training where necessary that will help with working with young people or with regard to Safeguarding.

No worker, voluntary or paid, is allowed to operate in isolation. All staff should know who other members of their team are, and to whom they are responsible. Each team will have this Governing Document, which will help identify who these people are. If Staff / Volunteers do not understand or cannot find this information they should contact the Development Manager.

Any changes which a Team may wish to make to a Group's structure, (e.g. times of operation, name, leadership) should be discussed with Development Manager (and agreed by them) before being put into practice.

5. General Guidelines for Child Supervision

The following guidelines will help staff to run their group and activities safely and in compliance with current law relating to voluntary groups working with children and young people. If staff identify an area of concern where these guidelines are not being met, they should talk to the Development Manager

ALL LEADERS AND YOUTH WORKERS WORKING WITH A GROUP MUST HAVE A CURRENT DBS DECLARATION

A. Safe use of facilities

When preparing a session or series of sessions please consider carefully the following criteria:

- The maximum number of young people that can be looked after in any session, given the restrictions of space and assistance.
- The requirement that no young person should be left unattended, and no Leader or Helper allowed to work in isolation.
- Arrangements to ensure that the venue is secure so that no young person can leave unaccompanied by an appropriate adult, except in reference to a drop in

club.

- Whether the room(s) are clean and attractive, with suitable access for the young people attending.
- Whether seating/table space suitable for the age of the group and is the floor covering suitable for the activities planned.
- Where immediate access to a Telephone, Fire Extinguishers and First Aid Kit is located.
- The cleanliness of equipment, the regular checking of them for damage and cleanliness, and the arrangements made for replacing them regularly if required.
- Where adequate and suitable storage space is located so that space is not blocked by unnecessary clutter, before, during or after your group meet.

B. Alcohol and Drugs

- V4Y operates a no alcohol policy in and around it's groups, events or buildings and a no smoking policy inside or nearby any it's groups, events or buildings. Anyone found with alcohol are to be told to either dispose of it safely (*pour it down the drain*) or take it away. If they are under 18 the Police may be informed.
- Anyone believed to be drunk or under the influence of drugs are also to be requested to leave.
- Anyone found in possession of any illegal drugs are to be reported to the police.

C. Team monitoring & preparation

Team members should take responsibility for monitoring each other (including in the area of physical conduct between themselves and young people). They should feel free to constructively challenge a colleague if necessary. If specific help or guidance is required for working with a group or individual (child or adult), staff should speak to the Development Manager in the first instance

The following things should be considered:

- Encourage team work and mutual accountability. Plan meetings and agree what they should be for.
- It should be accepted by all workers that anyone seeing another worker behaving in a way that is contrary to the guidelines in this document, which could be misconstrued or be potentially harmful to a child, should be able to speak about it to the individual concerned or to the Development Manager.
- It is accepted that situations may occur when perhaps for the protection of a young person or in an emergency these guidelines will be departed from. In such cases permission should be sought prior to this or it should be reported immediately afterwards.
- Regular feedback and review meetings should be held as individual teams, and areas of difficulty highlighted at open meetings of Staff.

- It is advisable to keep a written record of issues discussed / decisions made at meetings.
- Team members should wear an authorising badge to denote their position and job responsibility.

D. Registers

There is a legal requirement to keep a register of those who attend your groups. These should be kept for every group involving children under 18, and be taken on every occasion when that group meet.

There is also legal requirement to keep a register of events. These should be kept for every group involving children under 18, and be taken on every occasion when that group meet. The register should clearly identify for each session:

- Names of Leaders, Youth Workers and Helpers present
- If the group met in their normal facilities, or if not, where?
- Any incidents which may have incurred injury or where a heavy reprimand was issued to a participant.
- Anything unusual (e.g. unusual behaviour or unaccountable, previously sustained injuries) observed should also be logged and attached to these sheets.

This register should be kept in your group records, for the duration of the year. It should then be passed to the Safeguarding Co-ordination for safe storage indefinitely.

E. Health and food issues

Parents should identify food allergies and health related issues when completing their "Consent Form". All team members should then be made aware of the issues for each child, and a note made in the Register; this is particularly vital in case people have to cover a session in an emergency, as they will need to be able to see the issues at a glance.

If staff have planned an activity, which is not covered by this information, they should make sure parents have appropriate details before the session starts so that possible consequences are accounted for. These should be noted in the Register for future easy reference.

F. Contact with parent / carer

Every endeavour should be made to meet the parents of children and young people. Introduce yourself and other team members when children are dropped at and collected from sessions.

All children should be returned to the carer who delivered that child, except where specific alternative arrangements have been agreed in advance with members of the team leading that group.

G. Provision of resources and equipment

A Team can purchase minor equipment themselves up to an agreed amount and

reclaim the money through Petty Cash. Major equipment, including **any** electrical equipment, must be authorized by the Development Manager or Trustees in advance. Please contact them with your requests.

H. First aid, fire & incidents: response and reporting

There are specific procedures for responding to First Aid, Fire and other Incidents, as well as how and who to report these too. These should be made clear to *all* Team Leaders and Youth Workers.

I. Team recruitment

All Staff & volunteers are encouraged to identify and encourage interest in helping in a V4Y team. There is a system for formal recruitment of new volunteers for Children's and Youth Work.

Each new volunteer must undertake the following:

- Complete a simple Application Form.
- All Team Leaders and Youth Workers must supply at least two references.
- A DBS Check and basic Safeguarding Training.
- Read this Governing Document & Safeguarding Policy and know their reporting lines.
- No person under 16 will be accepted as a Team Leader or Youth Worker.

Whilst this process is being undertaken, the volunteer cannot be given a supervisory role with any group and can only attend under supervision to observe and assist.

J. Best practice: your conduct with young people

The following is a brief outline of how Leaders, Youth Workers and Helpers should conduct themselves with young people in their Group:

Do not be alone with a young person if you are working in a group setting. If a worker does need to have a confidential conversation with a young person, please ensure that they are clearly visible to other Leaders / Helpers through a window or clear door panel. If this is not possible, please ensure another adult is on the premises, making both the young person and the other person aware of each other's presence.

Workers must not invite a child or young person to their home.

Staff must treat all children with the respect and dignity appropriate to their age. Care must be taken regarding language, tone of voice, appearance and demeanour. Refer to them as a person (i.e. by name), not as 'the teachers son' etc. Remember that banter between adults may not be acceptable to young people. Give them encouragement and positive eye contact but be careful how much personal information you divulge. Do not engage in any rough or provocative games or make suggestive comments to them. **Avoid** inappropriate touching and do not joke, tease, ridicule, scape-goat, show favour or reject a child.

All staff should have agreed ground rules that explain how both young people

and adults are expected to behave and set boundaries for acceptable behaviour. Leaders and Youth Workers should be shown how to discipline without physical punishment or belittling a young person. They should be consistent in their behaviour and not allow a young person to become excessively attention-seeking. Staff should be aware of any precedents they set. They may know that the young person is safe with them but their actions could leave a young person vulnerable on other occasions, e.g. rewarding a young person with sweets for carrying out a task may give the young person the impression that it is safe to accept treats from anyone. Be firm, impartial and consistent. Reject the behaviour, not the young person, never hit a young person or shout in anger, talk to the young person in private when away from the youth group setting. The requirement to behave responsibly always rests with the leader, not the young person.

K. In the event of identifying possible abuse:

What to do if someone discloses something to you that you are concerned about

- Ensure the young person is protected from any immediate risk/danger
- Alert your Team Leader and/or our Safeguarding Officer to the situation
- Pass on all information you have to your Team Leader and/or our Safeguarding Officer
- Be supportive to the young person – do not ask questions that either of you feel uncomfortable about, just listen if they are willing to talk but do make notes of what you're told
- Once an investigating agency is involved, co-operate with them and work closely with their investigation as directed.

If something has been disclosed to you and you are not sure what to do or whether it poses as a safeguarding issue – speak to your Team Leader or our Safeguarding Officer for advice.

Contact Details

V4Y Safeguarding Officer

Contact No **07423 336516**

Email address admin@vision4youth.org.uk.

6. Approaches to challenging behaviour

Practice should be based on positive approaches to behaviour management. Youth workers should always seek to encourage appropriate behaviour and build up a young person's self-esteem. Where it is necessary to exercise authority youth workers should:

- Distinguish between serious and minor offences
- Apply agreed rules consistently and fairly
- Avoid sanctions against groups for the activities of individuals

- Focus on the ringleaders
- Avoid sanctions that are humiliating or degrading.

It is important to make it clear that unacceptable behaviour will not go unchecked. Rules of behaviour should be constructed in such a way as to ensure that young people learn to expect, when merited, fair and consistent treatment.

Recordings

A permanent record should be made within 24 hours and the Development Manager notified next day, of the imposition of any disciplinary measures and should include:

- The name of the young person concerned
- The sanction measures taken
- The reason they were used
- The person by whom they were used
- Full details of any physical contact with the young person and any outcomes

7. Control and direction through physical contact

There are occasions when control can be maintained by holding a young person in a manner, which does not carry the force of physical restraint. Young people may be successfully re-engaged in an activity by an arm on the shoulder: similarly a young person may be diverted from destructive behaviour. Again, young people engaged in an argument or a fight, which itself is not likely to cause serious harm but is nonetheless disruptive and detrimental to the well being of other young people, may be successfully separated by being guided away and held with little or no force. The main factor separating the holding from physical restraint is the degree of force applied, the intention of the action and how the young person perceived that action. It is appropriate to use such physical prompts and guidance when positive verbal prompting has been unsuccessful.

Physical restraint

Physical restraint is the positive use of force in order to protect a young person from harming themselves, others or seriously damaging property

On rare occasions there is no alternative to restraining young people physically in their own and others' interests and safety. In such instances no more than minimum necessary force should be used, taking in to account all of the circumstances. Such interventions should only be made when they are likely to succeed. Ideally, more than one adult should be present. Young people should not be locked in a room even if a member of staff is with them. Physical restraint is normally only necessary to prevent a young person causing harm to themselves or to others, seriously damaging property, or committing some criminal act, which risks harm to people or property, when verbal commands will not control the behaviour. The purpose of intervention is to restore safety and restraint should not be continued for longer than is necessary. Physical contact and restraint should never be used in anger and youth workers should make every effort to avoid any injury to the young person. They are not expected to restrain a young person if by doing so they will put themselves at significant risk. Brief period of withdrawal away from the point of conflict to a calmer

environment may be more effective for an agitated young person than holding or physical restraint.

Youth workers should note:

- The use of restraint should always be a last resort when all other attempts to control a young person have failed
- During an incident of restraint, the minimum force necessary should be used and the young person should continuously be offered the opportunity to regain self-control
- Restraint should never be carried out in anger by youth workers
- When restraining, gender or cultural differences should be taken into account.
- Young people should never be restrained by being tied up or bound

All incidents where restraint has been necessary should be clearly recorded noting:

- Date and time the restraint occurred
- Why restraint was necessary
- How restraint was carried out
- Who restrained the young person
- How long this restraint lasted
- Who was present during this period of restraint
- Any marks noted on the young person as a result of the incident and how they occurred
- Action taken (e.g. treatment) in relation to any marks or injuries occurring as a result of the incident

The young person's parent/carer should be informed when physical restraint has been necessary.

The Development Manager must be informed of the incident as soon as is reasonably possible.

Restriction of liberty

A young person attempting to leave a room or the premises should only be physically restrained if they are considered to be at risk of harming themselves or others. Young people should not be locked in a room and should not be required to remain in a building for an unreasonable length of time without relief. If a young person is being required to wait in a room while parent/care, Social Services or the police attend, a member of staff should remain with them. It is important to recognise that any practice or measure that prevents a young person from leaving a room or building of his or her own free will, may be deemed by the court to constitute a restriction of liberty.

Hitting young people

Youth workers should never hit or strike young people. If a young person is assaulting a member of staff, due force may be used in self-defence. Due force can be described as the minimum force necessary to prevent or deflect the assault.

Searching young people

In the interests of safety for other young people, common sense dictates that youth workers must have some right to establish if young people are concealing unacceptable items such as illegal drugs or weapons.

When a young person is suspected of concealing unacceptable items youth workers should not carry out a search. The young person should be invited to empty out their pockets and bags to satisfy staff they are not concealing unacceptable items. This should always take place in front of a suitable witness.

In the event of a young person refusing to reveal the contents of their pockets or bags they should either be asked to leave or parent/carers and police informed as appropriate.

Any search without a young person's consent could become the subject of an assault charge against the Youth Worker concerned.

Furthermore, if drugs or stolen property were suspected, the police would be more appropriate to deal with it.

Young people and special needs

Young people with special needs who require complex or repeated physical management should have a prescribed handling policy agreed with their parent/carer.

8. Safeguarding

Please see the separate Vision 4 Youth Safeguarding Policy.

9. V4Y Responsibilities

Introduction

1. The Trustees are responsible for all matters arising in connection to any issues to Youth and Young Adults provided by V4Y.
2. The members of the Trustee Board are listed on the Charity Commission website.

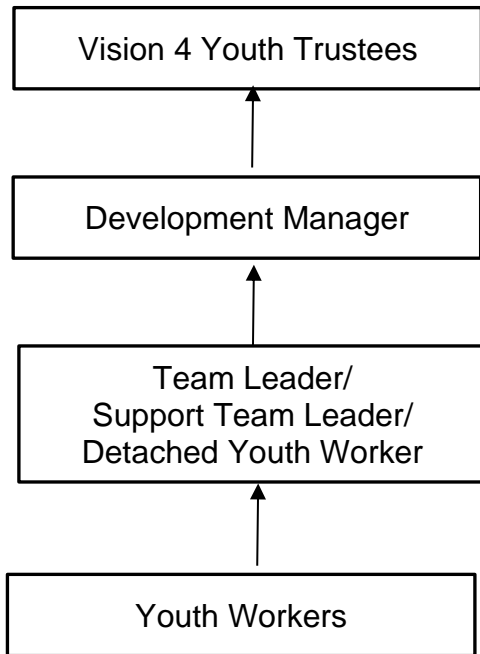
Reporting Lines

1. The reporting structure within V4Y is given in the attached chart.
2. In line with V4Y policies, a hierarchical reporting structure is in place for all adults working within children and young people.
3. Each group is required to have a designated leader, approved by the Development Manager or Trustees. All assistants and youth workers are under the authority of the Team Leader.
4. Anyone organising an event will be responsible to the Development Manager / Trustees. Any such events and expenditure associated with them will need to be approved by Development Manager or Trustees in advance of them taking place. Regular reports to the Development Manager on organisational details and progress will be required to enable the Trustees to be adequately informed.
5. Representatives from the Trustees will meet regularly with staff (ideally six times per year) to discuss future plans, progress, strategy and any issues that have arisen.

Responsibilities

1. The Trustees will, when required, make decisions regarding Youth and Young Adult matters and report those decisions to staff as soon as is reasonably practical.
2. The Development Manager or Trustees will assume supervisory responsibility for all V4Y events.
3. It is expected that any matters which require funding, permission and sanction or other decisions will be routed via the structure outlined in Reporting lines above.

CHART 1



10. General fire evacuation instructions

Your first responsibility is to ensure the safety of the children or young people in your care

You are responsible for ensuring that you and your fellow leaders are familiar with the specific fire evacuation instructions for the building(s) in which you meet

In the event of a Fire or other emergency the following actions should be taken:

- In the event of you discovering a fire - Operate the nearest fire alarm call point.
- In the event of any other emergency — notify the other building users near you

On hearing the fire alarm or being told to leave the building, take the following actions:

- Ensure that all children, young people and adults in your group are with you or are accounted for.
- Do not stop to gather any personal belongings or equipment
- Exit the building via the nearest available exit
- Assemble with your group at the assembly point, as shown on the evacuation plan
- Check that all of your group is accounted for and report to the Team Leader

Date of last review: April 2024