



Tir Coed Child Protection Guidelines

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers:

Taken from: NSPCC, firstcheck, putting safeguards in place

You must:

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- be aware that even physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- operate within the Tir Coed's principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.

You must not:

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- rely on your good name or that of Tir Coed to protect you
- believe "it could never happen to me"
- take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach.

You should give guidance and support to inexperienced helpers.

Please note: If a child or young person has to be removed from the activity for whatever reason (e.g.: accident / disruptive behaviour) the activity should be terminated, unless there are at least 2 responsible adults in charge of the remaining group of children or young people.



Tir Coed Child Protection Procedure for Staff and Volunteers

Taken from: NSPCC, firstcheck, putting safeguards in place

Protecting children and workers

Contact with children

You can reduce likely situations for abuse of children and help protect your staff and volunteers from false accusations by making sure that everyone is aware that, **as a general rule, it doesn't make sense to:**

- spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others
- take children alone in a car on journeys, however short
- take children to your home.

When it is unavoidable that these things happen, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation(s) that you are working with and/or the child's parents.

Relationships with children

You should make it clear to all staff and volunteers in Tir Coed that **they should never:**

- engage in rough physical games including horse-play - apart from structured sports activities
- engage in sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form

- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in fun
- let allegations a child makes be ignored or go unrecorded
- do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.

Restraint

Restraint is where a child is being held, moved or prevented from moving, against their will, because not to do so would result in injury to themselves or others or would cause significant damage to property.

Restraint must always be used as a last resort, when all other methods of controlling a situation have been tried and failed. Restraint should never be used as a punishment or to bring about compliance (except where there is a risk of injury).

Only staff or volunteers who are properly trained in restraint techniques should carry it out.

A young person should be restrained for the shortest period necessary to bring the situation under control.

All such incidents should be entered into the Restraint Log Book, detailing the facts of the behaviour, witnesses, who restrained the young person and how, what other methods had been tried and what follow up action took place.

A restraint policy applies to all young people equally, regardless of age or sex. It is acceptable for a member of the opposite sex to restrain a child because it is being used to prevent a serious injury. There should be a programme of training in place on restraint procedure.

Intimate care

It may sometimes be necessary for your staff and volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents or carers and every effort should be made to ensure that the child or young person also understands and gives informed consent, taking account of their disability or impairment. In an emergency situation that requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed, as soon as reasonably possible.

In such situations, it is important that you ensure that all staff are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

Relationships of trust

"The inequality at the heart of a relationship of trust should be ended before any sexual relationship begins." *Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable? Guidance for preventing abuse of trust* (Home Office 1999)

This statement recognises that genuine relationships do occur between the different levels of volunteers and participants in a group but that no intimate relationship should begin while the member of staff or volunteer is in a position of trust over them. The power and influence that an older member of staff has over someone attending a group or activity cannot be under-estimated. If there is an additional competitive aspect to the activity and the older person is responsible for the young person's success or failure to some extent, then the dependency of the younger member upon the older will be increased. It is therefore vital for volunteers to recognise the responsibility they must exercise in ensuring that they do not abuse their positions of trust. Young people aged 16 – 18 can legally consent to some types of sexual activity; however, in some provisions of legislation they are classified as children (see relevant legislation).

In certain circumstances the abuse of trust is a criminal offence (*Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act* 2000 (UK wide)).