

Safeguarding policy statement

Absolute Travel and Tours Limited acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring a safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and [National Guidance](#) requirements. The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience on our school trips in a safe and child centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in our school trips

Absolute Travel and Tours Limited acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. As part of our safeguarding policy, we will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in Absolute Travel and Tours Limited. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

The policy is reviewed annually, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and/or appropriate National Governing Bodies.
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashley Gowing', with a horizontal line underneath.

Ashley Gowing
Managing Director

Date: 1st September 2021

Safeguarding guidance for adults accompanying school trips including Coach Drivers, Representatives, Guides & Contractors

The following sets out the expectations for those acting in their professional capacity whilst travelling and/or working with our groups and are for the protection of children and adults:

1. You are a responsible adult representing Absolute Travel and Tours and should maintain a professional, respectful relationship with the Group Leader, other staff and the children during the trip.
2. The Group Leader and other leaders are *in loco parentis*; you must not adopt this responsibility.
3. Behavioural or disciplinary issues concerning children/students should be referred to the Group Leader or other leaders; do not discipline a child/student.
4. Your behaviour, appearance and language must always be appropriate and should not be capable of being misconstrued as threatening, offensive, discriminatory, suggestive or of a sexual nature.
5. Avoid making physical contact with a child/student unless for the welfare of the child it is necessary, such as to move to safety where the child is incapacitated. It is inappropriate to put an arm around a child or to physically comfort.
6. You should not be alone with a child/student, nor should you enter a child's/student's bedroom.
7. If requested to participate in photographs, where possible, do so with the Group Leader or other leaders in the photo with you.
8. Do not exchange personal contact or social networking details with children/students during or after the tour nor exchange any gifts or presents.
9. Report as soon as possible any advances or inappropriate behaviour from children/students to the Group Leader of the trip and to Mr. Ashley Gowing, Director, Absolute Travel and Tours Limited.
10. If any situation arises where you feel uncomfortable, remove yourself from the situation and report the circumstances to the Group Leader and immediately advise Mr. Ashley Gowing, Director, Absolute Travel and Tours Limited.

Safeguarding reporting procedure

Application and aim of the procedures:

This procedure follows our policy and applies to staff members including all employees and directors of the company and those contractors and volunteers that work on behalf of Absolute Travel and Tours Limited. The purpose is to:

- protect children and young people who receive Absolute Travel and Tours' services.
- provide all staff members of Absolute Travel and Tours with the processes they should undertake to support our approach to safeguarding.

The different categories of abuse and how to recognise them:

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse. An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online. More detailed information about the types and symptoms of abuse can be found on the NSPCC website.

How to respond to a child telling you about abuse:

In cases where the children themselves report abuse to you:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is being said.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that are leading or suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.

Staff members must never agree to receive information in confidence. If a child discloses information about abuse, whether concerning themselves or a third party; the staff member must always pass this information on to the company Appointed Person (see below) as soon as possible (the same day). It is important to remember that it can be more difficult for some children to disclose information than for others. For example:

- Children with a disability will have to overcome barriers before disclosing abuse. They may well rely on the abuser for their daily care and have no knowledge of alternative sources. They may have come to believe they are of little worth and so simply comply with the instructions of adults.
- Children who have experienced prejudice and discrimination through racism may well believe that people from other ethnic groups or backgrounds do not really care about them. They may have little reason to trust those they see as authority figures and may wonder whether you will be any different.

How to report signs, suspicions or allegations of abuse:

Absolute Travel and Tours Limited has appointed Ashley Gowing, Managing Director, to be the company's Appointed Person(s) to handle all reported safeguarding issues.

It is not the responsibility of staff members to determine whether abuse or harm has occurred or whether there is a 'real' risk to a child or children. Staff members should neither investigate nor wait to see if further information comes to light to support their concerns but make a report of the matter per the procedures as soon as practically possible.

The staff member should record in writing what has been said using the child's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated by you.

In all instances where abuse is suspected, alleged or identified the Appointed Person should be informed as soon as practically possible, by the most appropriate means, with details of the alleged incident. The company Appointed Person will decide the most appropriate action.

How information will be acted upon:

The Appointed Person is responsible for:

- To receive information from staff, group leaders, teachers, accompanying adults, children, parents or suppliers who have safeguarding concerns and record that information.
- To assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- Where appropriate, to inform the relevant supervisory adult to enable them to take appropriate actions on behalf of the child concerned.
- If however it is not possible to be satisfied that relevant supervisory adult will take appropriate actions on behalf of the child concerned, following consultation with the company directors, to make a formal referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to discuss the appropriate next steps.
- To make, or direct that a written report of the matter is made to the LADO and assist with any follow up process that might arise.
- The Company recognises that it is not the role of our staff to investigate or to decide whether or not a child has been abused.

Confidentiality policy:

The legal principle is that the "welfare of the child is paramount". Privacy and confidentiality should be respected where possible but if doing this leaves a child at risk of harm then the child's safety has to come first.

Remember:

- Legally, it is a mandatory requirement to share information if someone is worried about the safety of a child.
- Not everyone needs to know when a concern or worry is raised. This respects the child's, family's and/or staff's rights to privacy. So only people who need to know should be told about it. Otherwise there might be gossip and rumours or other people may be genuinely concerned.
- It is acceptable to say that a concern has been raised and it is being dealt with following the group's procedures.