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# Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Version 1.2

Last Reviewed: May 2025 Depot Climbing ©

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## Introduction

The Yorkshire Climbing Company Limited trades as Depot Climbing and operates various sites across the United Kingdom. Depot Climbing provides world class climbing facilities for all members of the community, this includes Children and Vulnerable Adults. It is for this reason that this Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy has been produced in order to ensure the welfare and safety of these groups of people and support the people who look after them.

Through this document we aim to ensure that all staff and all other wall users are aware of what to look out for to ensure children and young adults remain safe, how to raise the alarm should they suspect something, what should be done next and other guidelines.

In this context wall users refers not only to participants, it covers anyone who has a relationship with Depot Climbing as a brand and facility.

It is mandatory that all staff agree to abide by this document.

The policy has been written using the latest advice and guidelines available from the NSPCC.

# Safeguarding and child protection policy statement

## Legal Framework

This policy statement is supported by the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

## Supporting Document

This policy statement should be read alongside the Depot Climbing Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2024.

## Depot Climbing Believe that

Depot Climbing believe that all children have the right to be protected from harm and live in a safe environment. We believe that everyone has a responsibility to promote the safety and welfare of all children and vulnerable adults in climbing to provide a safe and fun space for all. We strive to provide the best possible experience for everyone who uses our centres. To do this we work hard to make sure that all children and vulnerable adults are safe and feel comfortable when using the centres and to promote this with all staff and customers.

Depot Climbing has a duty of care to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults involved in our activities from harm. All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection and the needs of children and vulnerable adults from all backgrounds and abilities must be taken into account. Regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, everyone at Depot Climbing is equal and will be treated equally when visiting. We recognise that some children may be additionally vulnerable due to the impact of discrimination, previous experience, their own levels of dependency, communication needs or other issues. It is as a joint responsibility that we work together to accommodate any additional needs.

Depot Climbing will work to ensure the safety and protection of all children and vulnerable adults involved in its activities through adherence to its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Depot Climbing will support anyone who, in good faith, reports their concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of, or may actually be, being abused.

Our policy applies to all adults who are involved with any activity in which children and vulnerable adults take place in the centre. This includes but is not limited to all staff employed by us and anyone volunteering or assisting on sessions such as a parent.

## Principles of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The following principles underpin Depot Climbing's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;

- To provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care and responsibility of Depot Climbing
- To always listen to and respect all children
- To have a designated child protection lead at centre level and company lead at head office level
- All staff will have been correctly vetted and trained in line with this policy and all other Depot Climbing employment procedures
- All staff who work directly with children and young people to have completed an NSPCC Safeguarding course before being allowed to do so
- To provide the correct education and best practice to all staff through our safeguarding and child protection procedures and code of conduct
- To allow all staff to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection and safeguarding issues
- All staff are made aware of how to raise any concern they might have
- All suspicions of child abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All those in a position of responsibility are trained in how to respond to any concerns or allegations
- Recruiting and selecting staff, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- A child is defined as an individual under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)
- To help and support all individuals involved in providing activities for young people on behalf of Depot Climbing
- That all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to participate in a safe environment
- That the welfare of the child is paramount
- This is mandatory for all staff and individuals

- That all children, young people and their families are aware of our child protection and safeguarding policies and what to do if they have a concern
- To build a culture where everyone knows how to behave and feel comfortable sharing any concerns they may have
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families

## Find out more

[Safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities](#)

[Safeguarding d/Deaf and disabled children and young people](#)

[Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people](#)

[Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities \(SEND\).](#)

## Positions of responsibility and contact details

Overall policy written by the General Manager who takes the lead of Child Protection and Safeguarding across the company.

Each Depot Climbing has a Child Protection Lead who will take overall responsibility for child protection and safeguarding on a daily basis.

This is supported by the other members of the management team at the site.

Senior lead for safeguarding and child protection Name: Dan Crossdale

Email: [dan@theclimbingdepot.com](mailto:dan@theclimbingdepot.com)

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

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

This policy was last reviewed on: April 2025



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## Child Protection Leads

Child protection is overseen by Dan Crossdale (Group General Manager)

Each site has their own Child Protection Lead who should be the first point of contact for any concerns. When they are not present the Manager on duty will be the main point of contact and if they feel unsure of how to handle a situation should contact the centres Child Protection Lead or if not available Dan Crossdale.

This chain can always be used if you are not happy with the actions being taken and feel the need to escalate a concern.

Name	Lead location	Email address	Centre phone number
Dan Crossdale	All sites	dan@theclimbingdepot.com	Mobile available to Centres for emergencies
Liv Dunning	Pudsey	livdunning@theclimbingdepot.com	01133459295
Craig Palmer	Nottingham	craig@theclimbingdepot.com	01159589214
Dan James	Big Manchester	danjames@theclimbingdepot.com	07902332474
Matt Ballard	Birmingham	mattballard@theclimbingdepot.com	01216225143
Adam Cook	Sheffield	adamcook@theclimbingdepot.com	01149271948
Rik Battye	Big Leeds	rik@theclimbingdepot.com	01133183367
Laura Payne	Armley	laurapayne@theclimbingdepot.com	01135317485
Sian Chorley	Manchester	sianchorley@theclimbingdepot.com	01618489495

## Recognising how children can be harmed

### How can children be harmed - noticing the signs

The Children Act (1989) states that there are four main types of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. These are outlined below and an example of how this might be present in a climbing environment has been given. These are not conclusive and we may be told of/see signs of abuse from external settings. The NSPCC safeguarding course covers this in further detail.

### Physical Abuse

This is where adults physically hurt or injure a child. In climbing terms this may happen if a child is forced to train or climb beyond their capabilities. It may also occur if the training disregards the capabilities of the child's immature and growing body. In more extreme cases this can take the form of physical attack i.e. hitting, shaking, burning or biting them.

In climbing examples of physical abuse could include;

- Provision of any form of performance enhancing drugs
- Setting any training plans that exceed the capability of a child's growing body
- Forcing a child into a restricted or unhealthy diet

### Emotional Abuse

This is when a child is not given encouragement, help and is constantly derided or ridiculed. In climbing this may be present in the unrealistic expectations an adult has of a child. This can also occur in the undermining of a young person through ridicule. This abuse is often in the form of bullying. Further details on bullying are included in this document and in the NSPCC Safeguarding training.

### Sexual Abuse

Occurs when a child knowingly or unknowingly takes part in an activity which meets the sexual needs of the adult person or persons involved. It could range from sexually suggestive comments to physical sexual activities. Exposing young people to pornography is also a form of sexual abuse. In a sporting context this may take the form of photography or videoing for the

sexual gratification of the viewer. Coaches are often placed in a position of great trust and it is when this trust is abused that sexual abuse can occur. Further details on photography are included in this document.

## Neglect

This includes situations in which adults fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (e.g. food and warm clothing). This may involve the lack of medical attention or consistently leaving children alone and unsupervised or monitored. Neglect can also occur if a supervisor fails to ensure children are safe or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury.

Breaches of recognised best practice for coaches include;

- Exceeding level of competence and/or qualifications
- Employing practices that are inappropriate for the stage of psychological and physical development of the individual
- Excessive training of competition
- Inappropriate/excessive supporting or stretching

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated they may follow an individual into adulthood. For example an adult who has been abused may find it difficult to maintain a stable and trusting relationship.

The Yorkshire Climbing Company Limited will support anyone who in good faith reports their concerns that someone is at risk.

## Possible signs of abuse

It is not easy to notice signs where abuse may occur or has already occurred. Depot Climbing recognises that its staff are not necessarily experts at recognising signs of abuse. Depot Climbing therefore expects them to discuss any concerns they may have with regards to the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge. If necessary Child Protection Lead will investigate the incident and if necessary seek advice from the relevant body.

Below are some characteristics which may be evidence of abuse. These are by no means exhaustive and are only indicators of potential abuse, NOT confirmation.

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not prone to injury
- An injury of which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- Unexplained behaviour changes e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty making friends
- A child being prevented from socialising with other children
- Displaying variation in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- Becoming increasingly unkempt or dirty

It is important to note that presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that actual abuse is taking place. It is not the responsibility of people working for Depot Climbing or Depot Climbing itself to decide whether somebody is being abused; however it is their responsibility to act upon concerns of abuse.

## Raising Awareness

It is understandable that people who are well motivated, caring individuals with a commitment to climbing, are reluctant to believe that children may be suffering harm in a climbing environment or at home. It may be difficult to accept that children could be at risk because of the way an organisation or its events are run.

Levels of awareness need to be raised without creating an atmosphere of anxiety or suspicion. However a basic principle should be:

- If you become aware of anything that makes you feel uncomfortable, you should immediately speak to the Manager on duty and/or the Child Protection Lead
- If the behaviour gives rise to concern or is directly contrary to accepted good practice then some type of action must be taken
- Adults should also seek to help and support each other in avoiding situations of bad practice. This is achievable the more open and co-operative a working environment is
- If a young person behaves in a way that gives rise to concern then this may be an indicator of a problem. There may well be a perfectly acceptable explanation for this

behaviour . It is however important to act on a concern and ascertain that this is the case. If it is still felt there may be a problem it is important to seek further help

# Depot Climbing Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures

Depot Climbing has in place an Anti-Bullying Policy which all employees and Directors must be aware of and adhere to.

## What is bullying?

A range of abusive behaviour that is repeated and is intended to hurt someone either physically and/or emotionally.

Bullying is not an acceptable part of growing up and should not be tolerated or dismissed. Depot Climbing has a zero tolerance approach to bullying and has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them.

Depot Climbing recognise that;

- Bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development
- In some instances, bullying can cause significant harm
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying

## The purpose of this policy is;

- To prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who visit Depot Climbing by;
  - Instilling a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone should behave, inside and outside the organisation, face to face and online
  - Having clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place
- To make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does occur and that anyone involved receives the support needed

- To provide information to all staff, children and their families about what we should do to prevent and deal with bullying
  - Through regular discussion with all these groups we can not only find out about any bullying but look at ways to prevent it
- To provide support and training to employees on dealing with all forms of bullying including;
  - Racist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying

The main types of bullying are:

- Physical - such as hitting, kicking or stealing somebody's belongings
- Verbal - calling somebody names, racism, sexism, homophobic remarks
- Emotional - this can be giving negative feedback persistently to a child

The above forms of bullying will include/result in:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim
- A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully/bullies
- An outcome which is always painful and distressing to the victims

Bullying may also include:

- Many different types of violence
- The spreading of rumours, persistent teasing
- Ridicule, humiliation, torment
- Graffiti, racial or other taunts, gestures
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive, offensive comments of a sexual nature

Scenarios where bullying may take place in a climbing environment

- A parent or coach pushing a child too hard
- Coaches who adopt a 'win at all costs' philosophy
- A climber intimidating other climbers
- Peer pressure to climb something that is too hard or even too dangerous

Within a climbing situation emotional or verbal bullying can be found. These types of bullying are often difficult to define or prove. In adhering to this policy you must:

- Take all kinds of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns
- Ensure all allegations are investigated and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Remember to speak with the victim and bully/bullies separately and following the correct procedures
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, but do not promise that you will not tell anyone else
- Keep records of what is said (e.g. what happened, by whom and when)
  - A separate document is available for this from the Child Protection Lead
- Report all incidents to the appropriate Child Protection Lead

### Depot Climbing believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and operate in a way that protects them

### Depot Climbing recognise that:

- Bullying causes real distress and affects a person's health and development
- In some instances, bullying can cause significant harm
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying

### Depot Climbing will seek to prevent bullying by:

- Developing a code of behaviour that sets out how everyone involved in Depot Climbing is expected to behave, in face-to-face contact and online, and within and outside of our activities
- Holding discussions/sharing information with staff, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it

- Providing support and training for all staff on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic and sexual bullying
- Putting clear and robust anti-bullying procedures in place

Our regular discussions with staff, children, young people and families will focus on:

- Group members' responsibilities to look after one another and uphold the behaviour code
- Practising skills such as listening to each other
- Respecting the fact that we are all different
- Making sure that no one is without friends
- Dealing with problems in a positive way
- Checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well

## Responding to bullying

When responding to any bullying, we will always take into account;

- The needs of the person being bullied
- The needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- The needs of any bystanders
- Depot Climbing as a whole

Plans put in place to address any incidents of bullying will be regularly reviewed to ensure the problem is resolved in the long term.

- Talk to the bully/bullies explaining the situation and the consequences that their behaviour has. In doing this try to get the bully to understand what they have done and seek an apology
- Inform the parents of all parties involved in the bullying
- Provide any necessary support for the coach staff member responsible for the victim
- Impose any sanctions if needed such as a suspension from the wall pending investigation or an outright ban
- Encourage and support the bully/bullies to change their behaviour
- Regularly meet the families of all parties involved to report on progress made

## Diversity and inclusion

Depot Climbing recognises that bullying is closely related to how we respect and recognise the value of diversity.

We are proactive in seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference, increasing diversity in our staff, children and young people and welcoming new members to our organisation

## Cyberbullying/Online bullying

Depot Climbing recognises that bullying can also take place in an online environment.

This can include;

- Sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- Creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images and videos
- Excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups
- 'Trolling' sending menacing or upsetting messages on social channels

Any reports of Cyberbullying/online bullying will be investigated inline with this policy.

## Welcoming new participants

Depot Climbing encourages all staff and children to welcome new participants to our centres. We have always prided ourselves on being an inclusive place for people of all abilities to visit and climb together in a safe and welcoming environment.

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## Contact details for nominated anti-bullying lead at each location

Name	Lead location	Email address	Centre phone number
Liv Dunning	Pudsey	livdunning@theclimbingdepot.com	01133459295
Craig Palmer	Nottingham	craig@theclimbingdepot.com	01159589214
Dan James	Big Manchester	danjames@theclimbingdepot.com	07902332474
Matt Ballard	Birmingham	mattballard@theclimbingdepot.com	01216225143
Adam Cook	Sheffield	adamcook@theclimbingdepot.com	01149271948
Rik Battye	Big Leeds	rik@theclimbingdepot.com	01133183367
Laura Payne	Armley	laurapayne@theclimbingdepot.com	01135317485
Sian Chorley	Manchester	sianchorley@theclimbingdepot.com	01618489495

## Senior lead for safeguarding and child protection (for example safeguarding and child protection trustee)

Dan Crossdale	All sites	dan@theclimbingdepot.com	Mobile available to Centres for emergencies
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NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and practice at least once a year.

This policy was last reviewed on: April 2025(date)

## How to respond to a Disclosure, Suspicion or Allegation

### What to do if a child discloses something to you, you suspect something, or an allegation is made

A child who you are responsible for may disclose to you that they are being abused or some information may come to your attention of abuse which is taking place.

If you receive information such as this you should:

- Keep calm - do not rush into any action which may be inappropriate. What you have heard may be very shocking but the child will need stability from you
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame and that they did the right thing to tell someone i.e. you, about what happened
- Listen Carefully. Take what the child is saying seriously and listen carefully to what is being said. Don't try to investigate or quiz the child, but make sure you understand what they are saying. Only ask questions which clarify the situation. Do not question anymore than is strictly necessary. The law is very strict when it suspects a child has been led or ideas have been suggested
- Recognise that them telling you can not have been easy for them
- Use non-judgemental language
- Tell them that you now have to do what you can to keep them and the other children involved safe
- Try not to make the child repeat their account unnecessarily
- Do not make promises you cannot keep. Explain that you may have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening but that you will endeavour to keep the incident as confidential as possible
- Reassure the child that they can get help to change their behaviour and move forward with their life
- You may want to suggest the child contacts Childline for support
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible
- All records must be kept confidential, stored correctly and only viewed or discussed on a need to know basis

## Talking to a child about allegations against them

If allegations have been made against a child you should speak to your nominated Child Protection Lead, who can advise you on the best way to proceed. If you talk to the child about the allegations before taking advice, it may make the situation worse.

### **DO NOT**

- Take sole responsibility for further action taken
- Approach or try to contact the alleged abuser
- Ignore what has happened
- Make promises you cannot keep

## Responding to incidents

In some situations you may see a child behaving inappropriately and decide to talk to them about it there and then in order to manage the situation. In this situation remember that they may not know their behaviour is not acceptable. Talk calmly and explain it is unsuitable and what they can do to improve.

Refer to the code of conduct for how we expect everyone to behave in the Depot Climbing community.

## Recording Information

As detailed an account as possible should be made. This account should contain:

- The child's name and age
- Date and time of the incident
- What was happening before the incident took place
- What the child said or did that gave you cause for concern (write down their exact words if possible)
- Whether the behaviour appeared spontaneous or premeditated

- A description of any visible injuries

A document to use for this is available from the Child Protection Lead.

After all this information has been collated pass it on immediately to the Child Protection Lead.

If you think the child is in immediate danger you will need to act promptly with the Child Protection Lead to make sure the local authorities and if necessary police are informed.

## Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of previous abuse may be made a long time after an incident happened. Such as an adult being abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still working with children. When an incident like this occurs all the procedures detailed in this document should be followed and if appropriate the police and local authorities informed. This is important as children may still be at risk from the accused individual should the allegation be proved to be correct.

## Concerns about poor practice and possible abuse within Depot Climbing

This relates to all of those who work for or are associated with Depot Climbing.

Concerns and allegations about the abuse of a child require very careful handling and need to be dealt with in the strictest confidence. Any form of abuse can ultimately result in a criminal conviction. It is important to keep an open mind and that all allegations are kept in the strictest confidence. It is important you act on your concerns.

If the concern/allegation is suspected abuse and relates to a staff member of Depot Climbing it should be reported to the relevant Child Protection Lead who will then refer it to the local authority or the Police where necessary. Concerns over members of the public should also be dealt with this way where the concern/allegation relates to Depot Climbing or to a customer of Depot Climbing.

If the concern/allegation is against a senior member of staff of Depot Climbing then the concern should be addressed to a Child Protection Lead who is not involved in the concern/allegation.

Following advice from the appropriate bodies the parents/carers of the child involved will be informed by the Child Protection Lead. Where there is concern for the safety of the child, the local authority or the police will contact the child's parents. Where there is an allegation against a parent the police or social services will contact the family.

The member of staff will then be notified that an allegation has been made and may be suspended pending an investigation.

Depending on the course of action decided upon by Depot Climbing, and after consulting with professional child care services, further actions may be necessary.

## Concerns about abuse outside a Depot Climbing setting

If this happens you should ensure that the young person is safe. If he or she requires immediate attention, call an ambulance/the police, inform the responder of your concerns and ensure that they are aware that this is a child protection issue.

Depot Climbing procedures should then be followed wherever possible. You should refer your concerns to your Child Protection Lead, ensuring they are kept updated at all times.

If a formal referral is made make it clear that it is a child protection issue. All police forces have a specialised Child Protection Unit which deals with allegations of abuse within the family and by people in positions of trust. In a real emergency phone 999.

Parents/carers should only be contacted after advice from the relevant bodies in cases where the accusations being made are against them.

In all cases it is important that the welfare of the child is always paramount.

## Internal Enquiries and Suspension

In the event of Depot Climbing being informed of an allegation of poor practice, bullying or abuse against a person involved in Depot Climbing an investigation will be completed following the company procedures.

## What happens if you are accused of an abusive action

In the event of an accusation:

- Make notes of all your actions/contacts with the child in question as soon as possible
- Seek access to professional and legal advice if you feel this is appropriate
- Ensure that you are no longer working with the child/children making the allegation
- Follow the procedures laid out in this and supporting documents
- Accept that colleagues may not be in a position to discuss the matter with you while the investigation is underway
- Accept that you may be suspended from working with any young people pending the outcome of an investigation

Such events are difficult for all concerned. Depot Climbing will do its utmost to remain impartial in all matters relating to an accusation. The main concern with any incident is the child's welfare. For an individual, against whom an allegation has been made this will be a difficult time. There are no easy ways to deal with such a situation, it is important that you seek help and support. All employees of Depot Climbing have access to the Employee Assistance Programme which has the facility for legal information, formal counselling and 24/7 telephone helplines amongst other benefits which can be utilised. .

## Whistleblowing procedure

Everyone involved with Depot Climbing should feel confident about challenging the behaviour of others and voicing concerns. They should also know who to contact if they feel unable to report an incident within their organisation. They can make a report to the police or local child protection services, or by contacting the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 08000280285.

## Behaviour codes

### Behaviour Code for adults working with children

This behaviour code outlines the conduct that Depot Climbing expects from all staff. This includes anyone undertaking duties for Depot Climbing both paid and unpaid.

The welfare and safety of every child/young person in the group is the top priority at all times and this code exists to help us protect children and young people from abuse.

Depot Climbing is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood and agreed to follow the Behaviour Code and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

### The role of staff

Within your role you are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. It is likely you are seen as a role model by young people and are expected to act appropriately.

Depot Climbing expects that people who take part in our services display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside the organisation and behaviour that takes place online.

### Responsibility of staff

You are responsible for:

- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- Providing a safe environment for children and young people
  - Ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
  - Having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- Following our principles, policies and procedures
  - Including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, whistleblowing and online safety

- Staying within the law at all times
- Modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- Challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to your line manager
- Reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and child protection procedures
  - This includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age

## Respecting children and young people

You should:

- Listen to and respect children at all times
- Value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible
  - If you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity

## Diversity and Inclusion

You should always:

- Treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- Understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- Respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- Challenge discrimination and prejudice
- Encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

## Appropriate relationships

You should always:

- Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- Avoid showing favouritism
- Be patient with others
- Exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in
- Ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
  - If a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person, ensure that you are within sight or can be heard by other adults
  - If a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff know where you and the child are and you remain visible to another member of staff
  - Personal care should not be provided to any child whilst attending Depot Climbing, this should be left to the parent/guardian attending with the child

## Inappropriate behaviour

When working with children and young people, you must not:

- Allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- Take unnecessary risks
- Smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- Develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- Make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- Engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
  - Including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- Let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- Patronise or belittle children and young people

- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people

## Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you.

If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to the Depot Climbing disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be reported to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to your line manager. If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.

## Key points to remember

- Always avoid any situation where you could be completely alone with a child
- There should be no requirement for you to accompany a child/young person to the toilets or changing rooms. This should be left to the parents or supervisors if they cannot use them on their own
- If you need to have physical contact with a child i.e. spotting, make sure it is done openly with an explanation of what you are doing
- If a child/young person becomes injured physically or mentally or you witness this happening report it immediately to the Manager on duty. Report any area of concern to the Manager on duty no matter how small it may seem
- Respect a child/young person's right to choose their level of participation, whilst being appropriately enthusiastic for the child's development and enjoyment of climbing
- Children/young adults must be collected on time. If for any reason a parent/guardian is likely to be late or they have arranged for someone else to collect their child they must call the centre to let us know

You must ensure you never:

- Use inappropriate language
-

- Play rough physical games
- Invite children to climb with you outside
- Engage with children on any social media or messaging platforms
- Take children home or go to their home
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unreported (These should be reported directly to the child protection lead)
- Become involved in any kind of bullying
- Accept any gifts, monetary or otherwise without consent from line manager
- Photograph or film children without the consent of parents/guardians and the Centre Manager (There is a photography form which needs completing by parents for this)

Only in an emergency situation should the following be sanctioned and in the Depot Climbing environment and should normally be avoidable:

- Taking young people on car journeys
- Spending time alone with a young person who is not a direct relation or guardian

The following MUST NEVER BE SANCTIONED:

- Taking young people to your home
- Sharing a room with a young person or young people
- Allowing young people to engage in the use of inappropriate language
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person
- Doing things of a personal nature for a young person they can do themselves
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged not acted upon or not recorded
- Allowing young people to consume alcohol or take illegal recreational drugs
- Allowing any physically rough or sexually provocative, contact or games

## Positions of Trust

All adults who work with young people are in a position of trust which has been invested in them by the parents and the young person. This relationship can be described as one in which the adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their role. In climbing most adults recognise that there are certain boundaries in the coach/climber relationship which must not be crossed. The relationship is no different to a school teacher and pupil.

## Poor Practice

Poor practice constitutes anything that is contradictory to the Depot Climbing Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, any other Depot Climbing Procedures/Policies or any of the guidance outlined in supporting the Depot Climbing documentation. Poor practice may also be a failure to follow event guidelines, so putting children in danger, or emergency procedures where an accident has occurred or is deemed likely to occur in the future. A combination of minor incidents could also be regarded as poor practice.

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice by a members of staff, Managers and Directors of Depot Climbing will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by a senior member of staff of Depot Climbing or the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reviewed by all other members of senior staff who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

A Child Protection Incident Form should be completed.

## Good Practice

Depot Climbing staff work in an environment where a “hands on approach” may sometimes be necessary. Ensure that such contact is kept to the safe minimum (particularly when spotting), done openly, in response to the parents needs, and is within the knowledge and consent of the child and their parent.

Listed below are guidelines for creating a safe environment for children. They should also help in ensuring that a child or others do not misinterpret the behaviour of adults.

## Good Practice Procedures

Depot Climbing is responsible for its Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the implementation of this. The Senior Safeguarding Lead for Depot Climbing is Daniel Crossdale. He is responsible for ensuring that all senior staff and leads are familiar with this policy and abide by the policy. Child Protection Leads at each location take on responsibility for ensuring that all staff at the location are familiar with this policy and abide by the policy.

- This policy will be made available on request to any party who wishes to view it
- In the event of an incident occurring the guidelines outlined here will be followed
- Depot Climbing will provide guidance and training to all those working with young people
- Parents will be made aware of what Depot Climbing are doing and that the activities are being run in relation to accepted good practice
- All adults who work regularly with young people whilst working for Depot Climbing will be DBS checked
- All adults who work regularly with young people whilst working for Depot Climbing will have attended a Safeguarding course
- Depot Climbing will ensure that its photography guidelines are followed
- Depot Climbing will actively promote and develop its anti-bullying policy
- The Senior Safeguarding Lead will monitor staff and provide feedback with respect to good practice guidelines

## Good practice for adults working with young climbers

- Staff must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all. They must ensure they treat everyone equally
- All staff should ensure that the welfare of any young climber is paramount and that the activity is fun
- Staff should be thinking about:
  - Not over-climbing, or overtraining young climbers
  - That young climbers are climbing because they enjoy it. Winning competitions may only be a small part of this enjoyment
  - Use positive feedback and constructive criticism to motivate climbers. Do not be negative

- Ensure young climbers climb in an environment where inherent risk is kept to a minimum and is within accepted guidelines
- Never allow young climbers to climb when injured
- Ensure all equipment is appropriate and in good condition
- It is important that young people under supervision are never left unattended/unobserved at any time
- If physical support is required e.g. spotting, support when bouldering, ensure the individual is aware of what is happening and has consented to this physical help
- Encourage an open environment, always explain why you are doing something and try to facilitate, as far as is practical, an open and inclusive approach to all Depot Climbing activities. People often respond better if they feel they are part of the process

## Toilet, changing areas and handovers to parent/guardians

The following is applicable to all instructed and coaching sessions run within Depot Climbing Centres.

All sessions involving those aged under 18 years old (unless they have completed an Over 14 sign off and parents/guardians are happy for them to enter and leave the centre without their supervision) must start with a handover from parent/guardian/group leader to the instructor and end with the participants being handed back to the parent/guardian/group leader. Do not allow these participants to leave the centre unsupervised under any circumstances. All handovers wherever possible should happen at the designated instructor meeting point.

If a participant in your session needs the toilet - take the whole group to the closest place to the toilets. Allow the participant to go to use the toilet whilst you wait with the group outside for their return. Under no circumstances should any under 18 year olds be allowed to wander the centre unsupervised (unless they have completed an Over 14 sign off).

Never allow anyone under 18 years old (unless they have completed an Over 14 sign off ) who is in your session to leave your supervision to go anywhere in the centre. If they need to go somewhere, take the whole group with you.

## Recruitment of Staff

### Safer recruitment policy

Depot Climbing is committed to safeguarding and protecting all children and young people through our robust safer recruitment practices.

We will;

- Identify and reject any applicants who are unsuitable to work with children and young people
- Respond to any concerns raised through the recruitment process of the suitability to work with children and young people
- Respond to any concerns raised once an employee has started their role of the suitability to work with children and young people
- Ensure all new staff have an induction which includes child protection
- Ensure all staff who work directly with children and young people have completed a safeguarding course before they start this work

This policy comes into force from May 2024 and will be reviewed in May 2025.

### Safer recruitment procedures

In order to ensure a fair and safe recruitment process, Depot Climbing has in place and actions the following;

- Clear role descriptions
- Panel interviews
- References for successful candidates
- Checking all relevant qualifications
- DBS checks for successful candidates who will have direct contact with children and young adults
- Safeguarding training before instructing or coaching
- External instructor training including shadowing of sessions

- Appraisals and checks on instructed sessions
- Refreshers in all key training areas

## Induction process

Depot Climbing has a full induction process in place covering all aspects of the business. This includes but is not limited to;

- Health and safety induction
- Instructing induction
- General induction

## Ongoing supervision, support, appraisal and child protection training

Throughout their time working for Depot Climbing all staff will receive regular reviews, appraisals and further development and training. This includes instruction and child protection training and refreshers.

## Activities and events

Some activities and events may require different operating procedures to be implemented. In terms of special events such as competitions a designated Child Protection Lead will be in place and available to advise and assist all staff and wall users.

For events specifically designed for children and young people additional measures and staffing may be implemented to ensure the safe running of events for all those involved. These will be clearly explained to all those involved in advance of the event.

## Overnight stays for events

In the event of a coach needing to stay over at a location where members of our Academy are also staying.

The coaches are made aware that they are not there to assist the parents/guardians in attendance with any form of childcare.

Coaches must act in a professional and respectful manner at all times as expected under the behaviour code set out in the employee handbook.

## Fitting equipment

The fitting of safety equipment should be done in a way that promotes openness, explanation and where consent is sought before assisting.

Openly demonstrate in front of the group what you are going to do, such as putting on a harness. Many young people can fit a harness themselves with clear explanation, adjustments may be required and consent must be sought for this and safety is paramount.

## Risk assessments

Child protection and safeguarding risk assessments will be carried out for all activities and events which are run by Depot Climbing. These will be done in consultation with the staff at each centre and any other parties involved. These are often included as part of the overall risk assessment for the activity rather than in a standalone document.

## Safeguarding Incident Document

A reporting document is available to all Child Protection Leads to record any incidents which occur.

These need to be completed accurately and as soon after the incident as possible. They should be stored securely in a locked location only accessible to the Child Protection Lead.

All uses must be reported to the main Child Protection Lead.

## Guidelines for the use of Photography

Depot Climbing does not discourage the use of photography or video and understands that it is a vital tool in promoting the sport and as a training tool. Depot Climbing encourages all employees to be vigilant of people taking photos or video especially when young people are using the same facility or are at the same venue. If you have concerns about someone taking photos make sure the Child Protection Lead is aware and ask the person what they are taking photos of and why.

When a competition is held where there is a professional photographer present Depot Climbing will issue a parental consent photography form which informs parents that photos are being taken and their intended use. It gives the option for them to opt out of their children being in the pictures.

All official photographers will be wearing a high-vis vest to make them easily identifiable.

## Briefing for Photographers

If professional photographers or the press are at a venue run by Depot Climbing they will be informed of Depot Climbing's expectations of them in relation to child protection.

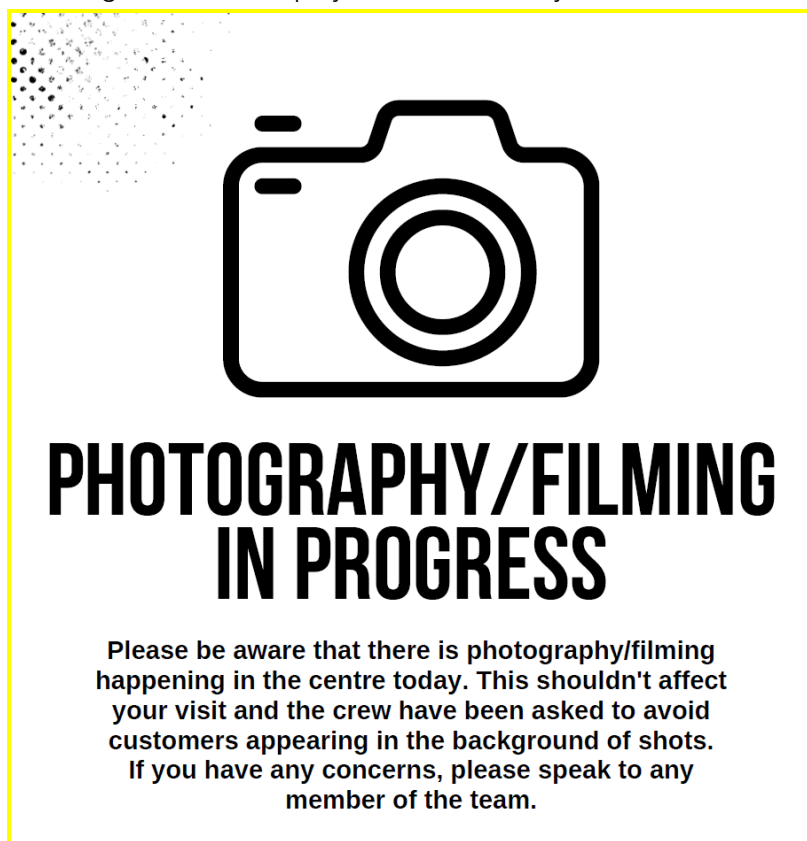
- It is ensured that all individuals involved are aware of what is appropriate in terms of content and behaviour
- The event organiser must be aware of all individuals who are taking photographs. Official photographers have to wear identification or another means of making them identifiable to staff and centre users, this is usually a high-vis vest
- At all events the parents of young people will be informed that there is a photographer present and given the opportunity to object to photographs being taken of their children
  - If anyone opts out they will have a visual identification to help the photographer avoid taking photographs/videos of them, this is usually a piece of tape on their upper back
- All people present at a competition including both children and parents will be informed that a photographer is present and it will be made sure that they consent to both the taking and publication of photographs and film. This is done by displaying notices at various points on entry and through staff communications

- Depot Climbing will ensure that there is no unsupervised access to young people and that no one-to-one photo sessions take place
- The use of the first name and surname of photos will be avoided when dealing with young people. Thus reducing the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the sport

Follow these rules:

- If the climber is named avoid using their photograph
- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the climber/participant. In situations where it is necessary for climbers to be named ensure there is permission from both the climber and parents/guardians
- Ask the parent permission to use an image of a young person. Thus ensuring the parent is aware of how the photograph is to be used
- Ask the climbers permission. This ensures that they are aware of how their image is to be used
- Never under any circumstances give out contact details of a young person
- The procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risk to young people is to report the image to a Child Protection Lead or Depot Climbing senior member of staff who will take further action

Where young people are present at an event where members of the public are also present the following should be displayed and abided by at all times.



All people who wish to take photographs/film will have to ask permission and explain their intended use for the photographs with a senior member of staff of Depot Climbing.

## Example photography consent form



### Filming/Photography Confirmation

Depot Climbing Sheffield | 27.04.22

#### Details

<b>Date</b>	Date of filming/photography (e.g. 01.06.22)
<b>Time</b>	Time of filming/photography (e.g. 10am - 12pm)
<b>Location</b>	Full address of centre
<b>Purpose</b>	Brief description (e.g. brand promo images)
<b>Depot Climbing Contact</b>	E.g. Centre Manager, Name, Phone
<b>Film/Photo Contact</b>	E.g. Videographer, Name, Phone
<b>Shoot Participants</b>	Name and any other relevant details of any participant

#### Notes

Add any notes/plans/agreements that are relevant for both parties here, e.g. Ben (photographer) will be arriving with Molly at around 11:00, Nick (CM) to show them around and where they can shoot. Tape to be provided so that area can be closed off for filming.

#### Before Arrival

1. Please ensure that everyone involved with the shoot has watched the online induction video and has completed the unsupervised waiver. These can be found here:  
<https://www.depotclimbing.co.uk/sheffield/classes/beginners/> (change per centre)
2. Please provide a copy of your insurance via email if possible, or on arrival at the centre.

#### On The Day

1. Avoid customers appearing in shots. The team will display filming notices at reception and any customers that specifically ask not to appear will be made known.
2. Footage must be captured from ground level only.
3. Please mark areas being used for shooting with the tape provided.
4. Adhere to all centre procedures and rules.

## Coaches Eye

Within a coaching session Depot Climbing Coaches may use an iPad and Coach's Eye application to record a child on a climb. The Coach's Eye app allows this footage to be reviewed and annotated to assist the coach and child.

The images recorded will only be used for this purpose and will be removed from the iPad after use. The iPad will not be linked to any cloud applications or other accounts, so the images will only be on this iPad.

At any time, a parent can ask to review the images stored of their child on the iPad by asking the coach on the session. The iPad will be stored securely by the coach and will only be accessible to Depot Coaches and the kids on their session.

A parental consent form is required to be signed for Coaches Eye before being used by the coach. This is for Academy purposes only and should not be used on any other session.

## General

### First aid, accidents and emergencies

If an accident happens requiring first aid to a young person, and it is safe to do so without jeopardising the safety of the injured party, the adult who brought them to the site should be made aware and be present for any first aid. Clear explanation of what you are doing and why it is needed when appropriate, in some cases it can be better to explain to the adult rather than the child so as not to panic them.

The parent or guardian should be made aware at the earliest opportunity if not present or if the needs of the injured party are more paramount this should be prioritised.

If there is no adult present, the parent or guardian should be made aware by another member of staff to the staff member administering first aid. This can be done through contacting the emergency contacts listed on Rock Gym Pro which were provided during registration.

First aid must take place in an open way, with clear explanation and consent. Where possible do this in the presence of another adult.

Do not travel in an ambulance or other vehicle to a hospital or transport a young person in a vehicle unless express permission is given by the Child Protection Lead at the Centre. This would be a last resort when all other options had been tried including calling an ambulance, calling parents/guardians and listed emergency contacts.

Always make sure all first aid is documented in detail by using the first aid forms provided by Depot Climbing. If required, a separate report can be written by the first aider after the event detailing the incident to include alongside the first aid form .

## Registration

At registration for all young people an emergency contact name and phone number should be recorded for use in emergency situations.

Depot Climbing requests that parents/guardians inform us of anything that may have an impact on the young person's ability to participate in the activity. This will be recorded on Rock Gym Pro. Staff should be aware of anything listed here for the participants they are responsible for.

The information should not be shared, downloaded, copied or removed from Rock Gym Pro without express permission from the Depot Climbing Data Protection Officer, this is Dan Crossdale. Doing so is a serious breach of GDPR and data protection and could result in disciplinary action.

In the event of an accident this information is readily available by accessing Rock Gym Pro at reception to get the necessary information.

## First aiders

Depot Climbing operates with a minimum of one first aider present on site at all times of operation.

## Health and safety

Full health and safety procedures are in place on all activities and include risk assessments, staff training and monitoring.

## Recording, storing and sharing information

Depot Climbing have conducted a full GDPR and data protection review which is updated regularly inline with the latest legislation. Information on what is collected and stored is available in our Privacy Policy via the website.

Any information held relating to a child protection statement is secured securely and only accessible by Child Protection Leads.

Depot Climbing will share information on any child protection or safeguarding matter with local or national agencies and the police where it deems a child is at risk. This information may include names of young people, date of birth, details of an incident and personal details including emergency contacts and addresses.

Who do we work with to support of CP and Safeguarding

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Depot Climbing actively works with the Local Authorities, NSPCC, Association of British Climbing Walls and the British Mountaineering Council to help support Child Protection and Safeguarding within our facilities.

## Right to access the centre

Depot Climbing prides itself on being inclusive.

To achieve a friendly, family atmosphere for all customers, we reserve the right to refuse entry or cancel any bookings bookings (without refund) from:

1. Anyone that disrupts other customers or staff;
2. Anyone found to be using the centre under false details;
3. Anyone who is violent, verbally abusive or aggressive to our staff or any other customers
4. We don't knowingly allow any customer or visitor to use or visit our centres who: (i) has an entry on a criminal register (including the sex offenders' register); (ii) is a convicted sex offender, subject to the notification requirements of the Sexual Offences Act 2003; or (iii) is subject to a Risk of Sexual Harm Order or Child Abduction Notice. If this information becomes known to us, we reserve the right to cancel any bookings and refuse entry/ask you to leave

## Local services and contact details

Location	Authority Name	Phone number
Pudsey	Leeds Child Protective Services	0113 376 30336
Nottingham	City Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	0115 876 4800
Manchester	Manchester Community Central	0161 234 5001
Birmingham	Birmingham Community Healthcare	0121 303 1234
Sheffield	Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership	0114 273 4855

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Big Leeds	Leeds Child Protective Services	0113 376 30336
Armley	Leeds Child Protective Services	0113 376 30336