

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Class Tours operates educational tours under the Voyager School Travel and COGO brands, and provides residential stays at Château de la Baudonnière, La Grand'Ferme, Moulin aux Draps and Château de Chantereine, operated by Class Tours France SAS.

The policy extends to all Class Tours employees, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers and seasonal workers, agency staff and students.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To work with our client school party leaders to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of the children and young people on our trips;
- To make sure that all roles and responsibilities of our staff and associates relating to the safeguarding of children are understood and upheld;
- To provide our staff and volunteers with the appropriate training, support and guidance regarding our approach to safeguarding and child protection;
- To minimise the risk of employing individuals who are unsuitable to be working with children;
- To outline the procedures for reporting in the event of concerns, incidents and allegations of abuse or harm.

Class Tours believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind and be safeguarded appropriately. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people to help keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Promoting the welfare, health and full development of children and protecting them from harm of any nature.
- Recognising the rights of children as individuals and treating them with dignity and respect.
- Raising awareness of the dangers from which children must be protected.
- Consistently applying a thorough and clearly defined method of selection and vetting of staff.
- Planning our work and organisation to minimise situations in which children may suffer harm.
- Developing effective procedures in responding to accidents and complaints.
- Developing effective procedures in responding to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.
- Establishing links with teachers, party leaders and other relevant bodies/organisations.
- Implementing a staff code of conduct and setting protocols.

In case of alleged or suspected abuse

Dealing with abuse cases is a matter for professionals within local authorities – the police and the social services department. If faced with such a situation, a senior member of staff (Director) must be consulted to deem whether local authorities should become involved. The employee's responsibility is to record, report and pass the disclosure onwards. Staff should not enter into counselling procedures. Any information should be treated with caution and sensitivity.

Management of Allegations

The lead people within Class Tours responsible for safeguarding children are Nigel English, Chief Executive Officer (nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com) or Louise Richardson, General Manager (louise@voyagerschooltravel.com)

Their role is to

- Be the first point of contact for all concerns, incidents and allegations in relation to the safeguarding of children on our tours and trips
- Support the informer with guidance on next steps how to deal with the situation
- Assess the information given and gain clarification as needed in order to make a prompt decision on how to move forward
- Ensure full transparency and timely communication with the school group, party leader and all relevant parties
- Follow all legislative processes in reporting safeguarding incidents, including reporting individual staff members or volunteers and referring cases of dismissal due to risk or harm to a child to the relevant authorities *(eg. Disclosure and Barring Service)
- Review all reports of safeguarding concerns are raised with and discussed with the company management in order to review and learn from for the future
- Ensure measures are in place to mitigate the risk of incidents and concerns in relation to safeguarding
- Ensure the safeguarding policy and procedures are communicated to and followed by all staff, especially those in a role in contact with children
- Review, amend and improve the safeguarding policy and procedures as necessary

If it is alleged that a person who works with children has;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Any allegation must be reported immediately to Nigel English, Chief Executive Officer of Voyager School Travel (nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com), including a comprehensive account of the concerns and full particulars of all persons concerned. All reports and records are to be sent to nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com and need to include:

- Your name, Position, Contact number
- The Name and Group Name of the individual(s) concerned
- A report of the concern, incident or allegation
- Names and Contact details of witness(es)
- Any further information that may be relevant

If a child makes a disclosure to you:

- Remain calm and approachable
- Repeat the following: "I believe what you are saying but I need someone with us while we talk"
- Take the child to the Party Leader and if unable to, ensure that the Party Leader is informed as soon as possible
- Listen carefully and note down key facts and in the child's words
- Complete the Safeguarding Incident Report Form as soon as possible and send to nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com
- Details of any disclosure should be recorded in a retrievable and permanent medium. If possible record the details immediately or as soon afterwards as possible. Record the actual words spoken by the child. Include who is present and where the information was disclosed (e.g. after morning briefing in hotel reception).
- In an emergency, inform the emergency services

Do not:

- Make promises to keep secrets
- Ask for unnecessary detail or repetition
- Investigate beyond reporting the facts
- Allow witnesses to give an account in the presence and hearing of other witnesses (a child who is a victim is also a witness).
- The child should not be asked questions except to establish whether there is any immediate or ongoing risk to them or any other child, or to establish whether the matter needs to be reported to the authorities locally or in the UK.
- Under no circumstances should a child be asked to give detailed information of an incident that is clearly an offence requiring referral to the social services or police.

Schools should also report as per local procedures, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or team for managing allegations against professionals that work with children or to the Safeguarding Adults service in the Local Authority if an adult at risk makes an allegation.

Voyager School Travel will make referrals to the DBS when deemed necessary or when advised by the LADO and in liaison with local agencies as relevant and in line with current legislation.

Low- Level Concerns

A low- level concern is any concerns about an adult's behaviour towards a child that does not meet the allegation threshold set out above or is not otherwise serious enough to consider a referral to LADO. These are also known as minor concerns. A low- level concern is any concern- no matter how small, and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt'- that an adult may have acted in a manner which;

- Is not consistent with Voyager's code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to LADO.

Low- level concerns must be reported immediately to Nigel English, Chief Executive Officer of Voyager School Travel (nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com), including a comprehensive account of the concerns and full particulars of all persons concerned.

Class Tours' Safer Recruitment policy for French centre staff

We recruit all French centre staff by obtaining full personal details and application forms, with particular reference to previous work with children and young people. The recruitment and training process is as follows:

- A detailed application form is received and vetted by a senior member of staff
- The applicant's motives and suitability to work with children are discussed
- The applicant's references are verified, wherever possible prior to commencing employment and the employee's probationary period is not passed until satisfactory references are received.
- All applicants provide a French police check record.
- Original qualification certificates are checked.
- New applicants complete a 12 week intensive residential training course, including safeguarding training, and all staff receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates.
- Ongoing support, development training and monitoring is undertaken by senior staff.

Class Tours and its Employees should:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Provide an example they wish others to follow
- Plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least which are within sight or hearing of others
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- Ensure separate sleeping accommodation for leaders and young people
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Remember that others can misinterpret actions, no matter how well- intentioned
- Recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse
- Under no circumstances attempt to deal with an accusation of abuse alone

Class Tours and its Employees should never:

- Spend time alone with children away from others
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay
- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. Initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying)
- 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 go unchallenged or unrecorded
- Do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves
- Be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes
- Exaggerate or trivialize child-abuse issues
- Show favouritism towards an individual
- Rely on their own good name to protect them
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'
- Form a relationship or keep in contact with children via social media

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely;

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- NSPCC Safer Recruitment

This policy should be read alongside company policies and procedures on:

- Recording and information sharing - GDPR
- Complaints
- Health and Safety – Safety Management System

Disclosure and Barring

Class Tours offers various travel components and activities for children. Therefore, adult staff members, adult leaders and coach drivers that come into contact with children all undergo a DBS and/or French Police check under the Safeguarding Vulnerable groups Act 2006. The required level of checking (if any) will broadly reflect the degree and frequency of unsupervised access given to a child.

The team will take very seriously any allegation of impropriety on the part of any member of Class Tours Ltd employees. Any staff member who discovers anything amiss should get in touch immediately with either Nigel English – Chief Executive Officer or Louise Richardson – General Manager.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Nigel English", written on a light blue background.

Nigel English
Chief Executive Officer
Class Tours Group of Companies
Appendix 1: What is Child Abuse?

What is child abuse?

A child is normally considered to be anyone less than 18 years of age. Adults or children can be abusers. There can be many different reasons for inflicting abuse on others. Whatever the reason, abuse must be stopped or, preferably, prevented. It is always wrong and it is never the victim's fault.

Abuse falls into four main categories - although a child may experience more than one kind at any one time (e.g. the child may be both physically and emotionally abused at the same time).

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child (e.g. by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation) can result in the impairment of the child's health or development. Children who are neglected may often show signs of unhappiness; they may appear withdrawn or unusually aggressive in some way. They may have lingering health problems or have difficulties at school.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse of a child, whether the injury was deliberate or knowingly not prevented, can cause injuries such as bruising, burns, fractures, internal injuries and brain damage.

Sexual abuse

The sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent occurs when an adult forces them to take part in a sexual activity, using the child to satisfy his or her own sexual desires.

This can involve rape, fondling, masturbation, or exposing children to pornographic videos, books, magazines or other material.

Emotional Abuse

Severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection can cause adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child. Emotional abuse hurts children very deeply. Children need love, reassurance and praise from their parents and carers, so that they become fulfilled, confident and happy in themselves.

Bullying

Child abuse, therefore, is the result of a direct act or failure on the part of the parent or carer to act to provide proper care or both.

Child exploitation

Child trafficking is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited.

Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the total or partial removal of female genitalia for non-medical reason. FGM is a criminal offence.

For more detailed information on the types of abuse, visit: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

Appendix 2: Code of Conduct

Some schools have asked to see the following excerpt from our staff code of conduct

Working with children Code of Conduct

This behaviour code outlines the conduct that Voyager School Travel expects from all our staff. This includes interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

This behaviour code is there to help us protect children and young people from abuse. It has been informed by the views of children and young people. Voyager School Travel is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

The role of staff and volunteers

In your role at Voyager School Travel 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. You are likely to be seen as a role model by young people and are expected to act appropriately.

We expect people who take part in our services to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our 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
 - o ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
 - o having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- following our principles, policies and procedures
 - o 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 Nigel English, nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and child protection procedures
 - o 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
 - o 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:

- 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:

- 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
 - o 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
 - o if a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible
 - o unless it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

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
 - o 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 our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you might be asked to leave Voyager. We might also make a report 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 Nigel English, nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com

If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Appendix 3: ICT, Digital Communication and Online Safety

Class Tours recognises that technology plays an important role in education and communication, but also presents safeguarding risks. All employees, volunteers, contractors, tour leaders and anyone representing the company are expected to use ICT responsibly and professionally at all times.

Professional Communication

All communication with teachers, school staff and educational establishments must be conducted through approved business channels.

Class Tours employees, volunteers and contractors must not:

- Exchange personal mobile telephone numbers with students.
- Exchange personal email addresses with students.
- Communicate with students through personal social media accounts, messaging services or gaming platforms.
- Accept or send friend or follow requests to students on any social media platform.

Where direct communication is necessary for operational reasons, only company-approved communication methods and work telephone numbers or email addresses may be used. Personal contact details must never be shared with students.

Communication with group leaders and school staff should also be conducted through company-approved systems wherever possible. If telephone contact is required, staff should use work telephone numbers rather than personal numbers.

Digital Images and Photography

Photographs and videos taken during school tours must always respect the dignity, privacy and safeguarding of children and young people.

Class Tours employees, volunteers and contractors must:

- Only take photographs where permission has been obtained in accordance with the school's consent procedures.
- Use company-approved devices where photography is required for business purposes.
- Ensure images are appropriate, respectful and support the educational or promotional purpose for which they are intended.

Class Tours employees, volunteers and contractors must not:

- Take photographs of individual children on their own unless there is a clear educational or operational reason and appropriate authorisation has been obtained.
- Take or store images on personal devices unless specifically authorised by the company.
- Share photographs or videos of students via personal social media accounts, messaging apps or personal email.
- Use images in any way that could identify or place a child at risk.

Where photographs are used for marketing or promotional purposes, the appropriate permissions must have been obtained by the school or parent/carer, as required.

Cyber Bullying

Class Tours has a zero-tolerance approach to cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying includes the use of electronic communication to intimidate, threaten, humiliate, harass or target another person. This may occur through text messages, email, social media, messaging applications, online gaming platforms or other digital technologies.

Any concerns regarding cyber bullying involving students, staff or members of the tour must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the school group leader. Incidents will be managed in accordance with the company's safeguarding procedures and, where appropriate, in partnership with the school and relevant authorities.

Online Grooming and Exploitation

Class Tours recognises that children and young people may be vulnerable to online grooming and other forms of online exploitation.

Online grooming occurs when an individual builds a relationship with a child or young person through digital communication with the intention of exploiting, abusing or manipulating them.

All staff must remain vigilant for indicators that a child may be at risk, including:

- Secretive online activity.
- Contact with unknown individuals through social media or messaging platforms.
- Requests for personal information, photographs or videos.
- Changes in behaviour linked to online activity.
- Attempts by adults to establish inappropriate contact with children.

Any concern, disclosure or suspicion of online grooming must be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported immediately to the company's Designated Safeguarding Lead and the school group leader. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, the appropriate emergency services and safeguarding agencies will be contacted without delay.

Acceptable Use of ICT

All Class Tours employees, volunteers and contractors are expected to:

- Use company devices, systems and networks responsibly.
- Protect confidential and personal information in accordance with UK data protection legislation.
- Keep passwords secure and never share login credentials.
- Report any suspected data breach, inappropriate online activity or safeguarding concern immediately.
- Model safe and responsible online behaviour at all times.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, referral to external safeguarding agencies or statutory authorities.

Appendix 4: Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Reporter details

Name:

Position:

Telephone number:

Email:

Organisation:

Affected individual's details

Name:

School/Group:

Details – all the key facts including time, place, actions, people involved:

Witness details

Name(s):

Telephone number:

Email:

Any further relevant information. Any detail may be crucial to an investigation:

I have completed this form and provided information which I believe is factually correct.
Where my opinions or observations are given, I have stated them as my own judgement.

Printed name:

Signature:

Date:

Please send this form to Nigel English, Designated Safeguarding Officer nigel@voyagerschooltravel.com