

WFCA GROUP WEST FAVERSHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE BYSING WOOD ROAD, FAVERSHAM, KENT ME13 7RH
West Faversham Community Association Registered Company No 07296070 Charity Registration No 1139228

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Parent Communication Policy – Youth Services

Our youth service is open access, meaning young people can drop in and out during opening times. You should not send your child to youth club if you are expecting staff to make them stay on site, they cannot do this, it is down to parents and young people to agree to these boundaries and have the trust in place.

Our youth service works towards the key aims of giving young people a place they feel safe coming to; to relax; keep away from trouble; grow as individuals; and to have somewhere to come if they are in crisis or need help from people they have come to trust.

Our youth clubs are about being a place young people feel confident in coming to, and where they can build trust to talk to the team when they need help. Some cannot get this at home. To ensure we can do this, we have to balance, the young person's privacy, maintaining a relationship to help keep them safe, and parents' wishes. The majority of young people accessing the youth service would often be out with friends, without adult supervision, so all of the situations outlined in this policy would go unnoticed, with no support being provided. Although not making parent contact about these issues may seem odd, it is in this context that we have based our policy so that these young people feel confident in accessing our service and have some support when they are out.

The charity operates strict safeguarding arrangements, outlined in our safeguarding policy. Staff working in youth settings have enhanced DBS checks and are recruited by Safer Recruitment trained managers. Staff undergo regular and detailed safeguarding training and are confident in using our online safeguarding system to report concerns to our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Our

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policy on parent contact is based on the principle of being able to build trust with young people so that we can help safeguard them and support them when they are not able to get support at home or are not comfortable asking for it.

Parent contact and response to situations

We have outlined below how we will deal with situations and when parents will be informed;

- Although we do not condone it, and do not allow it in our building, young people often vape outside. We discourage this and inform them about the risk, but this is not something we would report back to parents.
- Swearing and inappropriate comments are not accepted and this behaviour may be dealt with using time-outs, but this is not something we would report back to parents.
- If a young person is violent or acts in a dangerous way, we would deal with this via our behaviour policy and this would usually involve contacting parents to make them aware, particularly when resulting in a temporary ban.
- We have a strict no alcohol policy and do not allow young people who consume or attempt to bring alcohol on site to stay at youth club. They will be banned for a minimum of 1 week and parents will be contacted to pick up their child.
- If a young person arrives at youth club and has been drinking off site, they will be able to remain at youth club and parents will be contacted by text. As long as they do not drink anymore so they can be kept safe, however, we cannot stop them leaving.
- If a young person damages our property they will be dealt with via the behaviour policy, this may result in up to a one month ban and if the damage warrants it then parents will be contacted

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- Young people will explore sex as they get older, we will always ensure that young people are given regular sexual health advice, and condoms are made available to encourage safe sex. We do not promote sex, but will ensure when we hear young people are sexually active, that the young people have the knowledge and tools to be safe. We will not normally inform parents but encourage the young people to discuss this at home, in most situations.
- If a young person asks for a pregnancy test, we will support them with this and maintain confidentially for a negative test, but strongly encourage them to discuss it at home. However, if a positive test is indicated, we will facilitate a conversation with the young people and parents.
- Drugs are not tolerated at youth club. Young people bringing drugs on to site will be reported to the police or parents as appropriate. We will seek to give advice to young people we suspect may be using drugs on the impact of drugs and how to stop using. This will only be reported to parents in the most serious case, at staff judgement.

Personal information

When young people attend for the first time, they complete a registration form, with basic details including parent contact details we verify this where possible, but due to young people self-registering this information may not always be correct. In these situations, when we do not have accurate information in an emergency we will contact the emergency services, the same as if the young person was in the park and something happened.

Data collected as part of the registration or logged onto our safeguarding system, is held in line with our data protection policy.