

## **M13 YOUTH PROJECT**

### **Good Practice Guidelines for work with Young People**

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## A INTRODUCTION, AIMS AND CONTEXT

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### 1 Introduction & Definitions

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- 1.1 These Good Practice Guidelines are intended to be a general guideline for all work that M13 Youth Project carries out with children and young people, setting a base line for procedures, standards and behaviour particularly in relation to Safeguarding and Health and Safety concerns. Workers should consult specific related policies for more detailed procedures relating to the planning and delivery of specific pieces of work, eg. Detached Work, Residentials and Transport.
- 1.2 Throughout this policy the term '**workers**' (and related pronouns) shall be used to refer to people who **work with** young people, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity. Much of this policy will be relevant equally to staff and volunteers, but when a distinction between paid and unpaid workers is necessary, the term '**staff**' will be used for employed workers and '**volunteers**' for workers who act in a volunteer capacity.
- 1.3 This policy refers to young people up to the age of 18 in almost all cases. Throughout the document the terms young person / people is used to refer to a child(ren) or young person (people) under the age of 18.

### 2 Aims and Purpose of Work

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- 2.1 The general aims of M13 Youth Project's youth work is to create and nurture environments which foster learning and transformation within young people, which enable young people to explore their life and experiences, develop their autonomy and capacity to take responsibility and which support them in making changes and taking action; in a way which enables them and others to flourish, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. We seek to do this in an age appropriate way.
- 2.2 We do this by **working with** young people; not 'on' them, 'for' them or by doing things 'to' them. We seek to engage in a shared **partnership with** young people in any of the activities we engage in together. Young people choose to interact with workers and participate in activities and we aim to establish an atmosphere of co-operation together with, rather than control over, young people.
- 2.3 Workers have a duty to provide a safe, fun, stimulating, challenging and age appropriate environment in which to work with young people, to ensure young people's safety and to promote their learning and development. This involves carefully and thoughtfully managing and controlling environments. This is not the same as 'controlling / dominating' young people themselves and workers should not seek to 'control / dominate' a young person. We should however, seek to work with young people and support them in managing their behaviour, in order to create a safe and equitable environment for all young people and adults.
- 2.4 In the majority of contexts, it is appropriate and right to offer choice, negotiation and responsibility in an appropriate way to young people. There are clearly times when it is necessary to expect young people to follow instruction, eg. in a fire or other emergency when their safety is at stake. Workers should establish consistent relationships with young people where it is clear when choice and negotiation is an option and when it is not.
- 2.5 In the same way, workers should make it clear early on in working with young people what M13's policy on confidentiality is, what can be kept confidential within the M13 team and what may need to be referred on to other agencies, particularly the Police or Social Services in relation to Safeguarding issues.

### 3 Context and Roles of Workers; Living and Working in the Area of Work and Accountability

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- 3.1 M13 Youth Project is a grassroots community project established by local churches and the nature of our work – detached youth work – means that workers seek to engage young people in diverse community settings where they congregate; on the streets, in cafes, in shops, in local buildings and even, at times, in local homes. In addition to this, workers and volunteers are often community members themselves, living in the neighbourhood and possibly attending local churches. This means workers will often be known to young people and their families as neighbours, friends and community members as well as M13 youth workers, and workers' homes and non-working lives may be known to young people in a way that they wouldn't be if the worker lived outside the Projects' neighbourhood.
- 3.2 Running youth and children's work in this neighbourhood context has huge advantages, but can also create a complexity of roles and boundaries. It is important to recognise this and to work with the challenges this brings as well as taking up the opportunities it offers.
- 3.3 **As a youth worker (whether voluntary or paid) entrusted with young people's safety, M13 youth workers' primary concern should be for young people's safety and for safe practice, at all times, and in all contexts, whether 'in work' or 'on personal time'.** Whether 'at work' in the project or 'in their personal time', a worker's actions will reflect both positively and negatively upon the worker, the Project and its work, local churches (as we are known as a Christian Project) and possibly on the local community. Consequently workers should always work for young people's respect and safety and should not take any action, which would bring their own professional standing and reputation of the Project, local churches or community into disrepute.
- 3.4 These policies are intended primarily to safeguard young people from any harmful situations, but are also intended to safeguard workers from placing themselves in situations where they are vulnerable to allegations of harm or misuse of power or trust. Any allegations of harm or inappropriate actions towards young people would be detrimental not only to the worker concerned, but to the young people with whom the project works, to other workers and project members, to local churches and to the community.
- 3.5 Similarly, all workers should be willing to be completely open about and accountable for the access and contact they have with young people who both are engaged with the project and those who aren't, whom workers contact through M13 work and through other (non-M13 work) settings when not in M13 work, for example through other local groups with which they are involved or through living locally.
- 3.6 This has important implications for communication, management, training, support and supervision of workers and reference should be made to the M13 Youth Project Safeguarding Policy. Where the workers are volunteers, appropriate communication, support, training and management should be established that offers an appropriate level of support and accountability to safeguard children and ensure quality of work, yet is not onerous beyond the remit of a volunteer who may offer help one night a week. In the case of staff who have increased access to children and young people, they should have regular line-management meetings with an appropriately qualified member of the organisation and the opportunity for external supervision.
- 3.7 It is expected that **workers** would not invite a young person they are working with to their home without the prior agreement of the Project Manager, without the written consent of the young person's parents and without another worker being present. This is true whether a worker lives within or beyond the M13 area. Any youth work done within a home context must be treated like any other youth work situation, with parental permission sought for the young person to attend. Two workers / DBS checked adults should always be present in this situation. The same applies when a young person 'turns up' on a worker's doorstep, unless they are 16 or over and they are in distress requiring immediate support. In this instance, the worker should contact the Project Manager to let them know the young person is at their house. All work of this nature should be recorded as with other M13 work.
- 3.8 It may be that the **worker's son / daughter** invites another local child / young person (who may or may not attend an M13 group) into their home, as a friend. In this situation, the worker must be very clear

to the young person's parents that they are acting in the capacity of neighbour / friend and not as an 'M13 worker'. However, it must be recognised that the fact they are engaged by the project as a staff member or volunteer might be the very reason the parent of the friend trusts the parent / M13 worker sufficiently to allow their child into the M13 worker's house. This situation is very complex and a worker (whether staff or volunteer) will be expected to recognise and understand the 'status' that being a worker in the project bestows upon them.

- 3.9 In relation to contact and relationships with young adults aged 18 and over, workers should understand their actions will still have a significant impact on the project. Due to the relationship-based nature of M13's work, and our aim for these relationships to be age appropriate, as young people approach adulthood and beyond, it is entirely possible that workers may befriend young adults with whom they have worked at M13, either through development of M13 work into community action or in other local community contexts, for example as a member of a local church, or community interest group. As this friendship can be open to much misunderstanding, by the young adult themselves, but also by community members and other professionals, with the potential to lead the worker and project into disrepute, workers should take real care over such relationships. Workers should be open to disclosing the development of such relationships within work and any contact outside of work. Workers should be careful when initiating this contact and should be aware, not only of how the young adult themselves perceives this, but also of how other young people and adults might perceive these actions. This contact should always be approached within an appropriate professional framework of Christian accountability. Workers should not be in the habit of inviting young adults to their home.

## **B PLANNING AND ORGANISING THE WORK**

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### **4 More Than One Worker**

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- 4.1 There should always be more than one worker for any regular activity with young people aged 16 and under, including group work, no matter how small the group. There should always be two workers on every street-based detached session. For group work, there should be at least one worker in attendance of the same anticipated gender as the young people attending. This is not always possible on detached sessions. If workers on a detached session encounter a situation which they feel requires the presence of a male / female worker, they should contact a colleague of the appropriate gender and ask them to attend as soon as possible.
- 4.2 Workers from other agencies may count as a 'worker' within an M13 setting by negotiation with the Project Manager and if they meet M13's worker requirements, ie. DBS checked, willing and able to work within M13's policies and practices, or working within their own organisation's appropriate policies and practices and with appropriate insurance.
- 4.3 Workers have to be at least 18 years old. In the case where a young person is being trained in youth work and is offering help, they cannot 'count' as an adult worker when considering the young person / worker ratios. They should be counted as a child / young person when calculating ratios.
- 4.4 Workers should avoid situations where they are on their own with a child / young person, out of sight of other adult workers. This is important to watch in building-based work, where workers are running activities in different rooms, when moving a group from one room to another and at the beginning and end of clubs.

### **5 Worker / Young Person Ratios**

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- 5.1 The following guidelines are absolute minimums. When assessing how many workers are needed, workers', young people's and the general public's safety must be taken into consideration first and then the ability to look after property / buildings being used and workers increased appropriately to ensure this.

### **Recommended numbers of workers to young people according to their age:**

- 5.2 Any **detached work** session - minimum 2 workers
- 5.3 **In a building**  
For 10's - 15's - 2 workers for the first 14 young people followed by 1:10  
For 16's and over - 2 workers for the first 20 young people, followed by 1:12
- 5.4 **On trips out**  
For 10's - 15's - 2 workers for the first 14 young people followed by 1:8  
For 16's and over - 2 workers for the first 16 young people, followed by 1:12  
(Note; number of workers may depend on number of vehicles in use)
- 5.5 **Residentials**  
For 10's -15's - 2 workers for the first 10 young people followed by 1: 6  
For 16 and over - 2 workers for the first 12 young people followed by 1: 8
- 5.6 On residentials, there **MUST** be a worker of the same gender as the young people present.

## **6 One-to-One Work**

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- 6.1 In the context of a detached or building-based session, if a young person needs to speak to a worker privately, this request should usually come from the young person and the worker should assess it carefully; eg. is it attention-seeking behaviour, or is it because they want to discuss something important, which would be difficult in a busier place? In the event that a worker considers it appropriate to speak with a young person alone, they should **FIRST** inform their co-worker / another worker and make sure a worker 'keeps an eye out' or looks in on them occasionally, to check whether they need any help / support.
- 6.2 Workers should not normally plan to meet up with young people under the age of 14 outside a standard M13 setting. Should a worker plan to do this with an older young person, they should first consult with the Project Manager and inform them where and when the meeting will take place. One-to-one meetings should be conducted in as public a place as possible, preferably in view of another worker or of other adults. Meetings should not be arranged in a building or location with no-one else present. In the case of one-to-one meetings with young people under the age of 14, workers should discuss this carefully with the Project Manager, before any plans are made.
- 6.3 Workers should inform the Project Manager of chance one-to-one encounters with children / young people, which result in conversations as soon as possible after the event, whether whilst in work or in personal time. In that situation, whilst the worker is with the young person, they should not put themselves in a vulnerable or compromising position, they should remain in a public place in view of others and they should not invite the young person anywhere else or to move into a more secluded setting. If the encounter becomes an extended conversation, which moves on to somewhere more comfortable, the worker should text the Project Manager, to inform them of this.
- 6.4 Occasionally, young people or young adults invite workers into their home, eg. when workers drop off trip consent forms, or call to chat with a parent. If there are two workers together, and there are other adults in the house, then the workers may accept the invitation. If workers enter a young person's house at the invitation of a young person, the workers should be sensitive to how other family members might respond to this invitation. They should only enter 'communal' rooms, and should under no circumstances enter a young person's bedroom.
- 6.5 If the young person is alone in the house, workers should decline an invitation into the house, unless, in an extreme circumstance, workers consider it is more dangerous to leave the young person in the house on their own. If the young person is 14 and over and wants to talk, then workers may suggest meeting in a more public venue, suggesting the young person informs their parents as to their whereabouts.

- 6.6 If a worker is on their own, and is invited into a child's home, they should check whether other adults are around in the house. If another adult of the same gender as the worker is in the house, gives permission for the worker to come in and the worker feels safe to do so, they may enter the house. The worker must only enter 'communal' rooms in the house where there is another adult (asking the adult to stay with them if necessary) and under no circumstances should a worker enter a child or young person's bedroom. If the worker is alone with the young person, they must decline the invitation, unless in an extreme circumstance, the worker considers it is more dangerous to leave the young person in the house on their own. In this situation, the worker MUST text / phone their manager or another worker for back-up. If the young person wants to talk, they should arrange another time to meet with the young person, with another worker, or, having consulted with the Project Manager, to meet them one-to-one if of age.
- 6.7 If a young adult/parent invites a worker into the house, workers should be alert to the possibility that there may also be children in the house and, if they are on their own, they should ensure they are not left alone in a room with a child.

## **7 Administration of Activities, Consent and Medical Information**

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**When planning detached work, workers should refer to M13's separate Detached Youth Work policy and Health and Safety policy, as well as the guidelines below.**

### **Consent: For Trips and Residentials**

- 7.1 Young people aged 15 and under MUST have a consent form and medical information form signed by a parent or guardian to participate in project activities involving trips out or residentials. A young person is NOT permitted to go on a trip or residential with the project without written parental/guardian consent and medical information. Young people aged 16 and over MUST provide a completed and signed own medical information and consent form, signed either by their parent / carer, or by themselves, for trips within Manchester.
- 7.2 Young people aged 17 and under must have a consent and medical information form signed by parents or guardians for hazardous activities, trips outside of Manchester and its environs and for residentials. Good practice would suggest that even when consent is not required, workers make every effort to check that parents / guardians know that their sons / daughters are on a trip with us.

### **Consent: For Activities in a Local Building**

- 7.3 Ideally, young people attending building-based activities should have completed consent and medical information forms. However, for advertised activities in a local building, where requesting full consent forms is not appropriate, young people should register their attendance and should provide the following;

- name
- date of birth
- address
- home phone number
- name of parent / carer and contact details
- their signature.

An attendance sheet should be signed by all young people in the building, as they enter, for Health and Safety purposes. Workers might also want to consider asking young people to agree to working co-operatively and within building guidelines, through adding an appropriate sentence which young people sign agreement with.

## **Medical Information**

- 7.4 All young people regularly participating in project activities must have completed and signed medical information form before they can attend trips, hazardous activities and residentials. If 16+, this can be signed by themselves, if under 16, it must be signed by a parent/guardian. The medical information should include:
- young person's name
  - parent's/carer's name
  - home address
  - phone number
  - emergency contact name and phone number
  - date of birth
  - name and address of doctor
  - and specific medical information, including any illness, disability, allergies, information pertinent to operations (eg. HIV status, medication being taken etc.).

It must include a section giving permission for workers to take appropriate action in the event of a medical emergency, including authorising emergency surgery / operations in the event of an accident.

- 7.5 All medical information shall be kept confidential to project staff and appropriate medical staff. Medical information forms must be renewed annually.

## **Attendance Registers and Emergency Identification**

- 7.6 For all trips out, residentials, and building based work, workers should keep an attendance register, which must be easily accessible in an emergency. This should identify who is in charge, which workers and young people are on the trip / in the building and any extra personnel (eg. worker's partners and children, community members, etc.). For trips out and residentials, this list should be duplicated, and along with trip details, should be left with Project staff or their representative in Manchester, with a worker's mobile phone number, in case of emergency. Workers should carry their ID with them at all times.

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## **8 Insurance**

- 8.1 M13 Youth Project has insurance which covers detached work and non-hazardous trips. Workers should liaise with the Project Manager about taking out any other insurance necessary for residentials and hazardous activities, in consultation with the Trustees.

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## **9 Recording and Evaluating Work**

- 9.1 The purpose of recordings is to keep an accurate account of the work done for two reasons; a) to be accountable to Trustees, young people, funders and other interested stakeholders for our work; and b) to enable M13 staff to monitor, evaluate and learn from their work, and to share this learning with Trustees, young people, funders and the wider youth work community.
- 9.2 All M13 work should be recorded in legible writing in BLACK INK on the agreed M13 monitoring sheets and stored safely in the M13 office. Sometimes our recordings may be required to be used in legal proceedings (in cases of harm to young people, or where a serious accident has been sustained), so it is vital workers record carefully and appropriately.
- 9.3 Workers should record dates, times, location and workers on session, young people and community members contacted and any significant issues, points of conversation or incidents arising, which enables appropriate monitoring and evaluating of the work.
- 9.4 When recording highly sensitive or confidential information, workers should consult with the Project Manager about how to do so appropriately.

## **10 Critical Incidents and Accidents**

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- 10.1 All incidents where a young person or worker has sustained injury, trauma or harm during M13's work, whether accidental or deliberate, must be recorded in the Accident Report Book. This should always be kept in the Project Office. This should be done in addition to any recording / incident sheet for that work's log book.
- 10.2 Records must include; who was involved, when and where the incident took place, what led up to the incident, what happened during and after the incident, whether the young person was supervised and by whom (not applicable in detached sessions on the street), whether the child had permission to be doing what they were doing (not applicable in detached sessions on the street), the worker responsible for the session, interventions made by any workers, any first aid given and by whom.
- 10.3 All entries must be dated and signed with the full signature of the worker/s who supervised/ dealt with the incident, by the worker in charge and by the person who administered first aid.
- 10.4 Any critical incidents which a worker considers of note, involving workers and / or children and / or members of the public, must be reported to the Project Manager and a critical incident report written in full as soon after the incident as possible.

## **11 Financial Contributions from Young People**

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- 11.1 Workers should refer to the **M13 Trips and Financial Contributions Guidelines and M13 Youth Workers Accounts Procedures in relation to how to collect and account for financial contributions from young people.**

## **12 Transport**

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- 12.1 Workers should refer to the **M13 Transport Policy** for guidance on organising transport with young people.

## **13 General Health and Safety of Activities**

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- 13.1 **M13 has a separate Health and Safety Policy which workers should also refer to.**
- 13.2 M13 shall appoint a Health and Safety Officer, to monitor health and safety issues both in the office base and in work with young people. This person's name shall be displayed in the office.
- 13.3 A risk assessment should be taken for all pieces of work, especially those involving unusual risk, residential and trips abroad. All risk assessments shall be signed off by the Health and Safety Officer and when finished with, filed in the Risk Assessment file in the Project office.
- 13.4 Workers should always carry their M13 work mobile phone with them and have the appropriate phone numbers for emergencies stored on it. **Please see M13's separate Mobile Phone Policy.**
- 13.5 In any work setting, workers should familiarise themselves with the venue / area and consider emergency exit strategies / where their nearest emergency exit is in the case of fire or other critical incident. Workers must be aware of safety/fire procedures, in the office and in any buildings / transit they are using for work purposes. A fire drill should be carried out regularly. Fire extinguishers should be available and regularly checked and workers should know where they are.

### **Premises Requirements**

- 13.6 When hiring or using premises / equipment (eg. building / residential centre / minibus) for M13 work, workers should check that;
- premises / equipment is appropriate for work / use for which it is required
  - everything is in working order and that there are no risks, hazards, dangers
  - terms and conditions of use of building / equipment and any relevant information
  - there is appropriate insurance cover
  - they know fire drill procedures / exits / location of extinguishers
  - special needs can be catered for if required
  - activities are registered with the appropriate body (eg. Holiday clubs with Social Services) if required

### **Medical Information & First Aid**

- 13.7 Young people should submit a medical information form before a residential, trip or hazardous activity. Workers **MUST** take medical information forms when going off-site. Young people with infectious illnesses should not attend organised activities.
- 13.8 A first aid kit should always be available and its location must be well-known. No medication should be administered without written parental consent.
- 13.9 M13 should always have at least one qualified first-aider with up-to-date training. Ideally, a first-aider should be available for each activity.

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### **14 Volunteers & Casual Visitors**

- 14.1 Volunteers particularly those under the age of 18, should never work unsupervised and should be given clear guidance and support. Appropriate application procedures should be followed as outlined in the main M13 Safeguarding policy.
- 14.2 Casual adults visitors to clubs, sessions etc., including parents/guardians/older siblings, i.e. those who have not been authorised by M13 as workers or volunteers, should not have access to young people without the presence of a worker who is deemed to be responsible for the work.
- 14.3 Casual adult visitors to sessions (ie. non-participants) should not be encouraged to regularly attend M13 activities where there are young people under the age of 16 present, without going through the appropriate vetting procedures for adult workers /volunteers. If they are not willing to do this, workers should gently and firmly encourage them not to attend.

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### **15 Accountability to Trustees**

- 15.1 Trustees and management groups should be clearly informed of all the activities organised by M13 in which young people may take part.

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### **16 Other Organisations**

- 16.1 **M13 has a separate policy on Engaging Outside Services for work with young people. This policy should be referred to** when engaging outside people / organisations to lead workshops / deliver services to young people in partnership of on behalf of M13.
- 16.2 When working in partnership with other organisations, work needs to be conducted in line with M13's policies and procedures. M13 workers are responsible for ensuring that workers from other agencies are aware of and agree to work within M13's guidelines and procedures.

## **C RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE & COLLEAGUES: GOOD PRACTICE**

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### **17 Wisdom in a Community of Practice**

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- 17.1 When thinking about good practice in how workers relate to young people, it is important to recognise that workers are engaging in interpersonal relationships for which technical, generalised responses are not appropriate. Each situation / encounter with a young person needs to be considered on its own merits and what works in one situation might not in another. Workers cannot develop 'pre-determined' responses which work uncritically in every situation.
- 17.2 In this sense, workers should strive to develop a practice of 'wisdom', which is able to assess situations in-action and derive appropriate routes of action from those assessments and from their prior learning through experience. M13's practice should be communal, open and accountable and one which seeks to learn from experience, through reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Although workers seek always to make the best decisions and act in the most appropriate ways possible in situations with young people, it is important to acknowledge that we won't always do this, because we are human. For this reason, workers should be willing to reflect on their actions in community, being accountable and willing to learn. This is the best possible safeguard for young people.
- 17.3 Just as young people bring feelings related to external events into youth work settings, so do workers. Workers should be able to recognise and acknowledge the feelings and thoughts that they bring to sessions. If they are under particular stresses that may adversely affect their judgements in practice, they should make another worker aware of these and negotiate their work in the session accordingly.
- 17.4 Workers should treat all young people with respect and dignity at all times, expecting, hoping for and looking for the best in young people; holding them in unconditional positive regard, even if the workers are not receiving the same treatment in return. Workers convey this through the way they use their bodies, their language and the way they listen to and work with young people.

### **18 Body Language & Touch**

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- 18.1 Workers communicate respect of young people firstly through body language. Workers should be aware of the way they use their bodies, the attitudes they convey through their body language and how they locate themselves physically in relation to young people. An M13 worker's aim is to communicate their interest in, availability and willingness to listen to young people, without being intrusive or threatening. Whilst with young people, M13 workers should seek to give their undivided attention and interest to young people, reflecting the positive regard in which we hold young people.
- 18.2 It is important, both in detached work and building based work, to consider where workers stand in relation to young people and what the young person may understand by this. Workers should never block a young person's exit from a room, or 'corner' a young person in what could be perceived as a threatening or domineering way. A worker should not use their size to threaten a young person.
- 18.3 Touch is an important part of human relationships: for example, it can be necessary to stop a young person from hurting themselves or others; it can also be a natural way of responding to someone in distress or in celebration. Workers should be sensitive to what both they and the young person / young people may consider is appropriate physical contact in each situation, both in general terms, and in relation to a specific individuals. Workers need to be conscious of situations in which their actions, however well intended, could be harmful or misconstrued by others. Where possible and in an appropriate way, a worker should introduce how they are going to touch with a young person and should seek permission (either verbally or non-verbally) where possible.
- 18.4 If a young person sends out any kind of signal that they are uncomfortable with the contact a worker is engaged in with them, it is really important that the worker refrain from contact immediately, however foolish this may make the worker feel / appear, except in the case where a worker is restraining a young person from harming someone else (see 18.g below).

- 18.5 Generally, workers should seek to minimise and not prolong any physical contact with young people and they should not encourage young people to engage in prolonged physical contact with them.
- 18.6 Workers should not instigate contact with a young person of the opposite gender and should minimise and end contact initiated by a young person of the opposite gender, without snubbing them. The 'rule of thumb' is to demonstrate and hold appropriate boundaries without diminishing a young person's self-esteem. Male workers should not engage in physical games with young women and female workers should not do so with male young people.
- 18.7 Workers should not instigate rough game playing with young people and should seek to limit and extricate themselves from any such games instigated by young people, whilst recognising that this is a natural part of young male identity development.
- 18.8 Workers should NEVER enter into sexually provocative games with young people.
- 18.9 Workers may use no more than reasonable force in order to protect a young person or worker in a critical situation. This should be recorded in the incident book.

## **19 Use of Language**

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- 19.1 How we speak can be more important than what we say, so in general conversation, workers need to consider the tone of their voice, keeping it calm, not shouting/ raising their voice in anger, but keeping it low, speaking slowly and in a controlled manner. Worker should ensure that the language they use is easily understood by the young people they are working with, and they should not use language that is sarcastic, threatening or superior.
- 19.2 Workers should not engage in any of the following:
- invading the privacy of young people through intrusive questioning
  - making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in fun;
  - any scapegoating, ridiculing, sarcasm, or rejecting a young person, or making them look stupid;
  - allowing young people to involve us in excessive attention seeking through long conversation.
- 19.3 Workers should be aware of making personal comments to a young person, either as a joke, or in a way which is intended as supportive, but which the young person might misconstrue, find upsetting or take offence at.

## **20 Giving Young People Space & Overnight Accommodation**

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- 20.1 It is as important for workers to consider how they give young people 'space' away from workers during clubs, activities, residentials, etc, as it is to consider how workers manage their time with young people, in order to give young people space to act without adults present and make their own decisions. This needs to be done in a way that takes into account the age of the young people and with reference to the environment, and Safeguarding and Health and Safety concerns.
- 20.2 On residentials, workers should not share sleeping accommodation with young people, except in the unlikely event where not doing so puts young people in a dangerous or vulnerable position. In this instance, a decision should be taken with the Project Manager as to whether to continue with the trip and how to manage this situation.
- 20.3 It may be appropriate for two or more workers to share sleeping accommodation with young people in a large hall / room (eg. sleepover in a church hall). Ideally this would be with a single sex group. If the group is mixed gender, workers should consult with the Project Manager about the appropriateness of this, in relation to the age and development of the young people and Safeguarding concerns. In this event, young men and young women should each have separate sleeping areas / rooms with two workers of the same gender as the young people in each area / room.

Workers should sleep in a separate, clearly marked part of the room from the young people. Under no circumstances should male workers sleep in the same area as young women or female workers sleep in the same area as young men. Under no circumstances should one worker be left alone in the sleeping accommodation with a young person / young people at any time.

## **21 Managing Conflict**

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- 21.1 Workers should learn to manage difficult situations through negotiation and discussion and without using physical contact, abusive violent language or raised voices. In tense situations, or where a young person is upset or angry, it is important for workers to remain calm, to be a calming influence, and to promote a calming environment. Workers should never respond aggressively to a young person and should 'take time out' if necessary, alerting another worker to their need to do this.
- 21.2 Workers should not let young people involve them in excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- 21.3 If a disagreement between young people escalates to violent physical contact between the young people, workers must carefully consider the risks to the young people and themselves of any intervention they may make to stop the fight / violence. Workers may use no more than reasonable force in order to protect a young person or worker in a critical situation. This should be recorded in the incident book.

## **22 Vulnerable Young People and Young Adults**

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- 22.1 It is not M13 Youth Project's intention that vulnerable young people or young adults are encouraged to become dependent upon any worker, especially one who lives in the worker's neighbourhood. It is not unusual for a young person or young adult to need more intensive support through a crisis. M13 Youth Project workers should offer such support with an end in view, to enable the young person / adult to regain / retain their autonomy. The locus of choice, as with any work, should remain with the young person, not the worker. If a worker considers it helpful to offer any kind of support to an individual or group outside of regular session hours, they must consult with the Project Manager about this course of action.

## **23 Good Practice With Colleagues**

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- 23.1 M13 workers should treat all colleagues with respect and dignity, reflecting the value and ethos of M13. Under no circumstances should they ridicule, argue with or scapegoat colleagues, whether with young people or on their own.
- 23.2 Wherever possible, workers should not undermine or challenge a colleague in front of a young person. Workers should deal with any disagreement about working procedure discreetly, preferably after the session, if it can wait, or discreetly during the session if not.
- 23.3 If a worker sees another worker acting in ways which might be misconstrued, they should be prepared to speak to them or to the Project Manager about their concerns. Workers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss and explore each others' practice, attitudes and behaviour. If the Project Manager is the cause of concern, and the worker feels unable to speak to them directly about this, then the worker should speak to the Senior Worker or a member of the Trustees.
- 23.4 If workers need to make an 'on the spot' decision about the work, and they don't want to discuss this in front of the young people, they should briefly excuse themselves and move away from young people, to consult with each other, discuss options and make a decision.