The Island Service Delivery Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how The Island plans, delivers, reviews and improves services so that children, young people and families receive safe, consistent, accessible and youth-centred support aligned with the charity's mission and values.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students and trustees involved in the organisations service delivery. It covers one-to-one and group mentoring, youth groups, holiday programmes, family support, outreach activities and online or digital delivery.

3. Service Delivery Principles

All services will be:

- child- and young-person-centred;
- inclusive, equitable and accessible;
- safe and led by safeguarding considerations;
- relational and strengths-based;
- designed to support children and young people to thrive and promote participation;
- delivered with respect for privacy, dignity and confidentiality; and
- responsive to individual need, culture, identity and circumstances.

4. Service Aims

The Island aims to improve wellbeing and resilience, reduce isolation, increase confidence and self-esteem, support personal development, strengthen positive relationships and enable greater engagement with the community.

Outcomes with each child or young person supported by the service are to be agreed with each young person where appropriate and reviewed throughout their involvement.

5. Eligibility and Referrals

The Island supports young people aged 8 to 18 and their families within the City of York local authority area. Referrals may be received during published referral windows, from an existing waiting list or directly from a young person. Parent or carer involvement and consent will be sought where required, while giving due weight to the young person's wishes and capacity.

All referrals will be considered fairly and without unlawful discrimination. The Core Service Team will determine whether a referral is appropriate, taking account of need, likely benefit, safety, service capacity and the availability of a suitable intervention.

Receipt of a referral will normally be acknowledged within seven working days. An initial review will normally be completed within 20 working days. Where more information is required, the referrer or family will be invited to provide it within a stated timescale. Eligible referrals may be placed on a waiting list and families will be kept informed of material delays. The Island may operate open and closed referral periods and may cap referrals at up to 30 per quarter where necessary to maintain safe and effective delivery; capacity will be reviewed quarterly.

6. Assessment and Matching

Every accepted referral will receive an appropriate assessment by a suitably trained member of the service team. This will normally include contact with the young person and their parent or carer and may include a face-to-face meeting. The assessment will identify needs, strengths, risks, goals, preferences and the most suitable form of support.

For one-to-one mentoring, matching will prioritise suitability rather than a first-come, first-served allocation. The team will consider the young person's needs and interests and the mentor's skills, experience, availability, boundaries and ability to provide safe support. Relevant information will be shared with the proposed mentor on a need-to-know basis before a match is confirmed.

An introductory meeting will explain roles, expectations, confidentiality, safeguarding, contact arrangements and how concerns may be raised. If a match is not effective, the service will review the difficulties and, where appropriate and practicable, offer a different mentor or alternative support.

7. Service Delivery Standards

7.1 One-to-One Mentoring

- A standard mentoring offer will comprise 26 sessions. Subject to review of need at approximately session 22, support may be extended to a maximum of 39 weeks.
- Sessions will normally last between one and three hours and take place at an agreed frequency and location.
- Mentors must complete an accurate session record after every session, including attendance, activities, progress and any concerns. Records will be submitted through the approved CRM process and concerns will be reviewed by the service team.
- Progress and the mentoring relationship will be reviewed at planned intervals, including at the start, midpoint and towards the end of the intervention, with additional reviews when required.
- Three consecutively missed sessions without an adequate explanation will trigger a review of engagement, need and next steps.

7.2 Group Work and Other Activities

- Activities will have clear aims, an appropriate session plan, an attendance register and a current risk assessment.
- Group delivery will normally operate at no more than one responsible worker to ten participants. A lower ratio will be used where age, activity, environment, individual need or risk requires it.
- Session planning will be led by the designated youth worker or service lead.

- Attendance will be recorded using the approved CRM form.
- Risk assessments will be reviewed at least quarterly and whenever circumstances, activities or identified risks change.

7.3 Digital Delivery

Online contact must use approved systems and follow the organisation's safeguarding, online safety, confidentiality and record-keeping requirements. Staff and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries and respond promptly to any safety or welfare concern.

7.4 Mentoring Expenses Guidelines

Allowances

Each mentoring pair has a shared budget of £5 per week for a mutually agreed activity during the mentoring session and, on average, £7.50 per week for travel costs, including mileage, parking and bus fares. Mileage is reimbursed at 55p per mile. Travel allowances may be assessed according to the circumstances of the individual mentoring relationship.

Where less than £15 is spent on an activity during a mentoring session, the remaining activity allowance may be carried forward for use towards a more expensive activity in a subsequent week, subject to the following conditions:

- If the mentor and mentee agree not to meet in a particular week, for example because of holidays, that week's activity allowance cannot be carried forward.
- If the mentee cancels or does not attend a session, the budgeted £15 cannot be used in a future week.
- When the mentor cancels within seven days before the session was due to take place, the unspent activity allowance may be carried forward. The mentor should normally use it for an additional meeting in the following week rather than for a more expensive activity.

Expenses Claim Process

The Island uses Dext to record and process expenses incurred while carrying out organisational duties. Once a mentor is authorised to act on behalf of The Island, the Finance & Operations Officer will set them up as an authorised expense claimant in Dext and send an introductory email with a link to download the app.

When incurring an eligible travel or activity expense, the mentor must obtain a receipt, including a VAT receipt where possible. To submit a claim, the mentor must take a clear, legible photograph of the receipt, enter a suitable description and any other information needed for coding, and submit the claim through Dext.

Claims must be submitted as promptly as practicable after the expense is incurred so that accounting records remain up to date.

On receipt, the Finance & Operations Officer will check the claimant's name, the validity and details of the claimed items, the amounts and any VAT content. Once approved, the Finance & Operations Officer will reimburse the claimant to the bank account provided during set-up as soon as practicable.

7.5 Transport

Where a mentor uses their own vehicle for mentoring activities or to transport a young person, they must:

- hold a valid driving licence and have motor insurance that includes appropriate business-use cover;
- ensure the vehicle is legally roadworthy, safe to drive and, where required, has a current MOT certificate and valid vehicle tax;
- ensure all occupants use an appropriate seat belt and that any legally required child restraint is used;
- drive safely and comply with road traffic law at all times; and
- not make or answer calls, send or read messages, or otherwise use a hand-held mobile phone while driving. If communication is necessary, the mentor must stop and park safely before using the phone.

Mentors must inform the Service Team promptly of any change that may affect their licence, insurance, vehicle safety or ability to transport a young person safely.

8. Safeguarding, Welfare and Safety

The welfare of children and young people is paramount. All delivery must comply with The Island's Safeguarding Policy, Managing Concerns Procedures, Online

Safety arrangements and Whistleblowing Policy. Any concern about a child or young person must be recorded and reported without delay through the designated safeguarding route. Confidentiality must never prevent proportionate information sharing where someone may be at risk.

Activities must also comply with the Health and Safety, Personal Safety, Risk Assessment and Lone Working policies. Workers must complete planned and dynamic risk assessments, use agreed check-in and emergency arrangements, and report accidents, incidents, near misses and emerging hazards promptly. Delivery must be adapted, paused or stopped when risks cannot be controlled to an acceptable level.

9. Staff, Volunteers and Supervision

People delivering services must be safely recruited and suitable for their role. Requirements will include an appropriate DBS check, two satisfactory references, induction and completion of mandatory training before unsupervised work begins. Role-specific learning will be refreshed as required.

Staff and volunteers must follow the Code of Conduct, maintain professional boundaries, work within their competence and raise concerns when they need support. Ongoing supervision will be provided through individual or group arrangements, with frequency reflecting role, experience and risk. Managers will address training needs, wellbeing, practice quality and any concerns about conduct or performance.

10. Managing Behaviour

The Island promotes safe, respectful and inclusive behaviour during all sessions. Staff and volunteers will model appropriate conduct, use clear and age-appropriate expectations, and support young people through consistent, proportionate and trauma-informed responses. Expectations should be explained at the start of support and revisited when needed.

Staff and volunteers must:

- treat each young person with dignity and respect and encourage the same conduct towards others;
- maintain professional boundaries and avoid language, physical contact, activities or behaviour that could be intimidating, humiliating, discriminatory or open to misinterpretation;
- use praise, encouragement, choice and restorative conversations to promote positive behaviour;
- respond calmly to challenging behaviour, consider unmet needs or triggers, and use de-escalation before considering whether a session should end;
- never use corporal punishment, threats, degrading treatment or unauthorised physical restraint;
- intervene promptly where behaviour creates a risk of harm, bullying, harassment, discrimination, damage or serious disruption; and
- record and report significant incidents, recurring concerns, safeguarding issues and any decision to end a session early through the approved procedures.

10.1 One-to-One Mentoring in the Community

One-to-one mentoring sessions must be planned and supervised in line with the young person's needs, the agreed support plan and, where relevant, the current risk assessment. The mentor remains responsible for active supervision throughout the session and must not leave the young person unattended or transfer supervision to another person unless this has been authorised in advance or is necessary in an emergency.

Before and during a community session, the mentor or worker must:

- use an agreed venue, activity, travel plan, start and finish time, and collection or return arrangement;
- follow lone-working and check-in arrangements and ensure the service has accurate contact and location information;
- carry an appropriate means of communication and know how to contact the service, parent or carer and emergency services;
- complete a dynamic risk assessment, taking account of the environment, transport, weather, other members of the public, the young person's presentation and any change in circumstances;
- remain within sight or immediate reach as appropriate to the young person's age, needs, activity and assessed risk, while respecting reasonable privacy and independence;
- use only approved transport and spending arrangements and avoid unplanned visits to private homes or isolated locations;

- not consume alcohol or illegal substances, smoke or vape during the session, and not permit the young person to do so; and
- end, relocate or seek assistance for the session if behaviour or circumstances cannot be managed safely.

Where a young person leaves unexpectedly, cannot be located, refuses to return, or presents an immediate risk to themselves or others, the mentor or worker must follow the emergency and safeguarding procedures without delay. Any incident and the action taken must be recorded promptly and reviewed by the service team before further sessions take place.

11. Confidentiality, Consent and Records

Personal information will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection and Confidentiality policies. Individuals will be told what information is collected, why it is needed, how it will be used, the limits of confidentiality and their rights. Consent will be recorded where required and revisited when circumstances change.

Information will be shared only when there is a lawful and proportionate reason, with relevant people and on a need-to-know basis. Safeguarding or serious welfare concerns may require information to be shared without consent.

Session records and case notes must be factual, timely, respectful and stored only in approved secure systems. Access, retention, correction and disposal will follow organisational requirements.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Island will monitor reach, attendance, engagement, outcomes, safeguarding concerns, incidents, complaints, waiting times and service capacity. Outcome evaluation will normally take place at the start of an intervention, around four weeks after support begins and at the end of the agreed sessions.

Quality assurance will include case reviews, supervision, case studies, exit interviews and feedback from young people, families, volunteers, staff and referring professionals. Learning from incidents, complaints and feedback will be used to improve delivery. Material trends, rejected referrals, service pressures and improvement actions will be reported to the Board of Trustees at appropriate intervals.

13. Service Closure

A review may be arranged when progress, engagement, safety, suitability or continuity is in question. Where possible, the young person, parent or carer and relevant worker will contribute to the decision and agree next steps.

Support may end when agreed outcomes have been met at 26 weeks, the young person no longer needs or wants the service, the family withdraws, the mentor or worker can no longer continue, risks cannot be managed, or repeated non-engagement makes delivery impracticable. Endings should be planned and communicated sensitively, following exit strategy beginning at week 20.

At closure, the service will record the reason and decision, notify relevant parties where lawful and appropriate, offer feedback opportunities, complete final outcome measures and identify any signposting or transition support required. Mentors will normally receive formal acknowledgement and thanks unless there is a recorded reason not to do so.

14. Complaints and Concerns

Young people, families, staff, volunteers and professionals may raise concerns verbally or in writing with any member of The Island team. Concerns will be acknowledged, recorded, handled respectfully and addressed under the Complaints Policy. A person will not receive a poorer service because they have raised a concern. Safeguarding matters will be referred immediately through safeguarding procedures rather than waiting for the complaints process.

15. Roles, Governance and Review

The Board of Trustees is responsible for oversight of service quality, risk and compliance. The Charity Manager is responsible for implementing this policy, maintaining appropriate procedures, allocating resources and reporting material issues to trustees. Staff and volunteers are responsible for following this policy and escalating concerns.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner following significant legal, regulatory, organisational or service changes, a serious incident, or learning that indicates revision is required.

Policy owner: Charity Manager
Approved by: Board of Trustees
Approval date: 02/11/2026
Next review date: To be completed 02/11/2028
Version: 1.0

16. Related Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy
- Date Protection Policy
- EDI Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Confidentially Policy