

Safeguarding: Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

**The Wildlife Trust
for Birmingham and the Black Country**

July 2016

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1. Introduction

Purpose of this Child Protection Policy

To inform staff, volunteers and trustees about the charity's responsibilities for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

To enable everyone to have a clear understanding of how these responsibilities should be carried out.

Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures

The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham & The Black Country (WTBBC) follows the procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards (L.S.C.B.) (For example see W.S.C.B. <http://wolverhamptonscb.proceduresonline.com> for more information.)

Wildlife Trust Staff & Volunteers

WTBBC staff and volunteers may be particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour and failure to develop because they may have regular contact with children, know them as individuals or may be one of a few adults children tell about their fears. Staff and volunteers also have **statutory duties**.

They should be aware of the important role the WTBBC has in the early recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and the appropriate referral process.

Our Approach

- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**
- We need to think 'it could happen here'
- All children have an **equal right** to protection
- Some children need additional consideration to keep them safe
- Any approach should be child centred
- We are an important partner in multi-agency working
- We should support our **volunteers** to keep our children safe
- **There is no threshold for reporting concerns**

N.B. Where it says 'child' in this policy the same procedure would apply for a 'vulnerable adult' unless stated otherwise. Where it reads 'staff', the same applies for 'volunteers' unless stated otherwise.

2. Statutory Framework

'Working together to safeguard children' (2015), places a legal duty on all adults who work with children to help safeguard them. This duty means that staff should promote the welfare of children, be able to spot signs of actual or potential abuse and take appropriate action with appropriate agencies.

The legislation requires all adults who work with children to ensure that they have appropriate procedures in place for responding to situations in which they believe that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse - these procedures should also cover circumstances in which a member of staff is accused of, or suspected of, abuse.

In order to protect children from harm, the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham & the Black Country acts in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

The Children Act 1989

The Children Act 2004

'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'. DfE (2015)

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' DfE (2015)

'Strategy for dealing with safeguarding vulnerable groups including children issues in charities'. Charity Commission (2013)

'Safeguarding children and young people'. Charity Commission (2014)

Local Safeguarding Children Boards' procedures for Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment, selection and appropriate vetting or checks for staff, volunteers and visitors are vital to help safeguard children. This information is covered in the separate policy 'Safer recruitment' and should be read in conjunction with this one.

3. Definitions

Child

Any young person under the **age of 18**

Vulnerable adult

Any person over 18 who is:

- receiving a service related to a mental health condition
- living in residential or sheltered housing
- neglecting him or herself
- receiving direct payments
- receiving any form of healthcare either hospital or domiciliary
- in need of assistance in the conduct of their own affairs
- a prisoner

Safeguarding

Preventing impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. **Tends to be pro-active.**

Child and Vulnerable Adult protection

A part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm. **Tends to be re-active.**

4. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (D.S.L.)

The 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' for Safeguarding and Child Protection in our Wildlife Trust is:

NAME: Mr Gareth Morgan

It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to:-

- Be responsible for maintaining child welfare and child protection records that are **central, secure and confidential**
- Be responsible for **sharing records** appropriately with relevant agencies and authorities
- Be responsible for **co-ordinating action** in child protection situations and attending meetings/conferences as required.
- Ensure that a Child Protection policy is in place and that staff are aware
- Review the policy annually with Trustees
- Attend refresher training every 2 years
- Ensure all staff/volunteers receive induction and an update at least every 2 years
- Offer support and advice to Trustees/staff/volunteers/students and parents
- Be aware of current legislation, guidelines & good practice relating to safeguarding and ensures that they are implemented and followed
- Ensure that the Chief Executive is kept fully informed of any concerns
- Develop effective working relationships with other agencies and services
- Ensure that the WTBBC effectively monitors children/vulnerable adults about whom there are concerns

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in our Wildlife Trust is:

NAME: Georgia Stokes

5. The Wildlife Trust, Birmingham & Black Country Procedures

If any member of staff is concerned about a child/vulnerable adult, he or she must inform the D.S.L. at the earliest opportunity and before they leave at the end of the day. In the absence of the D.S.L., or in an emergency situation, staff should consult with the most senior person available.

In a serious/emergency situation, anyone can phone the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (L.S.C.B.) or N.S.P.C.C. helpline for advice.

Do not delay contacting the emergency services where this is necessary. Staff must not delay getting medical treatment for a child when this is needed or phoning the Police when a crime is in the process of being committed or about to be committed.

The member of staff must record information regarding the concerns. The recording must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations ('Records of concern/disclosure form').

The D.S.L. will decide whether the concerns should be referred to children's social care or any other agency. Any referrals will be carried out with parental/carer consent, **unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.**

Children who are subject to a Child Protection plan, considered at risk, in need, or vulnerable will be closely monitored and a separate confidential file will be kept with access only by the D.S.L.

6. When to be concerned

All staff and volunteers should be concerned about a child/vulnerable adult if he or she:

- Has any injury which is not typical of the bumps and scrapes normally associated with accidental injury.
- Regularly has unexplained injuries.
- Frequently has injuries (even when apparently reasonable explanations are given).
- Gives confused or conflicting explanations about how injuries were sustained.
- Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude.
- Indulges in sexual behaviour which is unusually explicit and /or inappropriate to his or her age/stage of development.
- Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.
- Any other cause to believe that a child may be suffering harm.

3 indicators of abuse:

- 1) **Physical indicators** - things that can be seen from the child's appearance
- 2) **Behavioural indicators** - what the child does
- 3) **Parental indicators** – responses and behaviours exhibited by a parent/carer that may cause concern.

7. Types of abuse

There are four main types of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Physical abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It also includes when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse:

Emotional abuse is **persistent** emotional maltreatment such as to cause **severe and persistent** adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, for example when a child witnesses domestic violence.

Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse involves **forcing or enticing** a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is **aware** of what is happening.

Activities may involve **penetrative or non-penetrative** acts, or involve children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material, including child pornography on the internet.

Neglect:

Neglect is the **persistent** failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the **serious impairment** of the child's health or development. Neglect may include the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, medical treatment or response to emotional needs.

Fig 1. Possible signs of abuse

Neglect	Emotional	Physical	Sexual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tired/listless • Unkempt • Poor hygiene • Untreated medical conditions • Medical appointments missed • Constantly hungry or stealing food • Over eats when food is available • Poor growth • Poor/late attendance • Being regularly left alone or unsupervised • Dressed inappropriately for the weather condition • Having few friends and/or being withdrawn • Ill equipped for school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to thrive • Attention seeking • Over ready to relate to others • Low self esteem • Apathy • Depression/self harm • Drink/drug/solvent abuse • Persistently being over protective • Constantly shouting at, threatening or demeaning a child • Withholding love and affection • Regularly humiliating a child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained injuries • Injuries on certain parts of the body • Injuries in various stages of healing • Injuries that reflect an article used • Flinching when approached • Reluctant to change • Crying/ instability • Afraid of home • Behavioural extremes • Apathy/depression • Wanting arms and legs covered even in very hot weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age inappropriate sexual behaviour/knowledge/promiscuity • Wary of adults/ running away from home • Eating disorders/depression/ self harm • Unexplained gifts/ money • Stomach pains when walking or sitting • Bedwetting • Recurrent genital discharge • Sexually transmitted diseases

Trustees, staff and volunteers need to be aware of how damaging certain issues can be for children and also be vigilant for signs of specific issues relating to:

- bullying including cyberbullying
- children missing education
- child missing from home or care
- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- domestic violence
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate
- mental health
- missing children and adults strategy
- private fostering
- preventing radicalisation
- relationship abuse
- sexting
- trafficking

More detailed information about these emerging issues can be found on the L.S.C.B. or N.S.P.C.C websites.

Staff need to be aware of how damaging issues like domestic violence can be for children and also be vigilant for signs of specific issues relating to child sexual exploitation (CSE) and grooming, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM),

radicalisation, extremism and forced marriage. Specific advice is available on the LSCB websites and in *'Keeping children safe in education'* (2015).

Specific issues of concern include: bullying including cyberbullying children missing from education, child missing from home or care, child sexual exploitation (CSE), domestic violence, drugs, fabricated or induced illness, faith abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG), hate, mental health, missing children and adults strategy, private fostering, preventing radicalisation, relationship abuse, sexting, and trafficking.

8. Child sexual exploitation(CSE)

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse. *'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)*

9. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a girl may be at risk of FGM. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice guidelines.

If staff/volunteers have a concern they should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison

with police and children's social care. *'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)*

More information can be found in the *'Multi-agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation, HM Government (2014)'* at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-guidelines>

10. Preventing radicalisation

Key definitions

Radicalisation is the process of coming to support terrorism and forms of extremism.

Extremism is a vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values

The 5 main British values that organisations such as schools and Government organisations try to promote and embed are:

- Democracy
- Rule of Law
- Individual Liberty
- Mutual Respect
- Tolerance

Channel

A programme which provides support at an early stage for people identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation

Preventing radicalisation

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of our wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme. *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (2015).

If there are any concerns regarding extremism or radicalisation contact the Police. Please see 'Other contacts' at the end of this document for specific contact details.

11. Dealing with a disclosure

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff / volunteer should:

- Listen carefully to what is being said and take it seriously
- Accept what is being said; **assume they are telling the truth**
- Allow the child to talk freely; work at the child's pace, do not interrupt.
- **Never promise to keep a secret or keep confidentiality**
- Do not blame the child
- **Reassure** the child that they did the right thing by telling you
- Acknowledge that it took **courage** to tell someone
- Do not ask leading questions. Ask only **open questions**: 'who? what? where?'
- **Remain calm**; do not look shocked or angry
- Explain what you need to do next. Tell them you will have to **pass the information on** and who you will be telling and why.
- Make a written record (see Record Keeping)
- Inform the D.S.L. without delay and before you go home that day.

Do not investigate. Collect the minimum amount of facts necessary to pass on to the D.S.L. or relevant agency/authority.

Seek Support for yourself

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and a child protection case in general, is likely to be a stressful experience. The member of staff/volunteer should therefore consider seeking support for him/herself. It can be useful and helpful to discuss the event with the D.S.L.

The child's wishes

Staff/volunteers should ensure the child's wishes or feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide to protect individual children. This can be done by ensuring that there are systems in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Staff should ensure that no-one agrees confidentiality and always act in the interests of the child.

12. Confidentiality

Child Protection raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in our Wildlife Trust.

- All staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (L.S.C.B., Police).
- If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tells the child in a manner appropriate to their age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality. Instead, they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts. Sharing of confidential information must be appropriate and necessary to help safeguard the child. It must be **accurate, relevant and timely** and it is good practice to log the sharing of such information.

13. Record Keeping

Recording and reporting concerns/disclosure:

- **Record brief notes** at the time if the child is comfortable, or if not immediately after discussion with child
- Write using the **child's own words** where possible (verbatim), not your interpretation
- Record date, time and behaviour – record the context of the disclosure
- Keep all original notes and pass to D.S.L. – do not keep copies for yourself
- Record facts and **distinguish** fact from opinion
- Consult **immediately** with the D.S.L. and complete a concern form that **same day**
- Seek support for yourself from the D.S.L. or a member of the Safeguarding Team
- **Keep yourself safe**; make a record of any behaviour or incident that could compromise you
- Continue to support the child in the future if possible/appropriate
- You will get appropriate feedback in due course subject to confidentiality constraints

Injuries/physical signs of abuse

You may wish to **draw a diagram** to indicate the position of any bruising or other injury but do not go looking for any injury or ask the child to remove any clothes (unless this is necessary and by a qualified first aider, or in a medical emergency).

Never take photos of any injuries.

14. Allegations involving WTBBC Staff/Volunteers

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff/volunteer, the person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the D.S.L. and/or Chief Executive. Ideally advice should be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (L.A.D.O.) before any action is taken.

The concerned staff member or volunteer should make a record of the concerns including a note of anyone else who witnessed the incident/alleged incident.

If the concerns are about the Chief Executive, then the Chair of Trustees should be contacted.

The Chief Executive/Chair will not investigate the allegation itself, or take written or detailed statements, but he/she will assess whether it is necessary to refer to Social Care in consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (L.A.D.O.).

Under these circumstances, the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made should not be informed of said allegation until future action is agreed with the Social Work Team Manager. It may be necessary to discuss appropriate steps to ensure other children are not at risk.

If it is decided that it is not necessary to refer to Social Services or the Police, the Chief Executive and L.A.D.O. will consider whether there needs to be an internal investigation.

For more information, see the WTBBC's 'Whistle-blowing' policy.

If there are ever **any concerns** about unprofessional or inappropriate conduct from a staff member/volunteer then this must be reported to the Chief Executive so action can be taken or so it can be logged for future reference.

Other relevant policies

This policy forms part of a set of safeguarding-related policies including: Behaviour, Whistleblowing, Safer Recruitment, Restraint, Health & Safety, Staff code of conduct.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis

Written by C. Mulvey (consultant) **June 2016** and issued by Georgia Stokes, and Gareth Morgan Designated Safeguarding Leads Chief Executive.

Signed (Trustee)_____ Date: _____

Printed name (Trustee):_____

15. Useful contacts

Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0121 303 1888

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 0121 675 4806

Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board

Office hours

Brierley Hill Area Office: 01384 813000

Dudley, Sedgley and Coseley Area Office: 01384 813200

Halesowen and Stourbridge Area Office: 01384 815902

Out of office hours

Emergency Duty Team: 0300 555 8574

Sandwell Safeguarding Children's Board

Sandwell's Contact Centre: 0845 351 0131

Walsall Safeguarding Children's Board

The Multi Agency Screening Team (MAST): 01922 658170

Emergency Response Team (Out of hours): 0300 555 2922 or 0300 555 2836

Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children's Board

Duty & Assessment: 01902 555 392

Emergency out of hours: 01902 552 999

Other contacts:

Police: 101

NSPCC child protection helpline: 0808 800 5000

Childline: 0800 1111

C.E.O.P: (child sexual exploitation and e-safety issues) 0870 000 3344

StopItNow! (for child sexual abuse) 0808 1000 900

In an emergency, call 999

Extremism/radicalisation

If you have any concerns (non-emergency) regarding extremism or radicalisation contact the Police on **101** and ask to speak to your local Prevent Officer.

Or you can email **prevent@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk**

If you have information relating to terrorist activity call the Anti-Terrorist Hotline on **0800 789 321**.

In an emergency where there is threat to life and/or a terrorist attack may be imminent always dial 999.