

Safeguarding Children Policy

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Application	Trustees, staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of NWT.

1. Introduction

Northumberland Wildlife Trust (NWT) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people engaged in the breadth of its activities.

The policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students, or anyone working on behalf of NWT.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people and their parents, carers and other agencies, is essential in promoting young people's welfare

The purpose of this policy is:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who receive NWT's services, including the children of adult members or users
- to provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm
- NWT believes that a child should be valued and never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them
- to protect NWT staff and volunteers by having a clear framework, robust procedures and transparent reporting

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child safeguarding guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers

- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing efficient management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

NWT are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at the minimum on an annual basis.

Glossary of terms

Appropriate staff – refers to all staff who either work face to face with children or manage/support this work as defined by their job description

Appropriate volunteers – refers to all volunteers who supervise or undertake activity face to face with children on behalf of the Trust or support this work as defined by their role description

All staff – refers to everyone in paid employment/receiving remuneration for work with NWT, including sessional and agency workers. They may or may not have contact with children and young people as part of their job description.

Children – refers to all persons under the age of 18

Supervised activity – where NWT personnel act as loco parentis for children. Signed consent forms must be held for children at these activities

Accompanied activity – where parents/carers remain with children – ie NWT personnel are not acting loco parentis

Safeguarding procedure

Northumberland Wildlife Trust endeavours to encourage vigilance and awareness of the issues surrounding the protection and safety of children and young people, within which suspicions or allegations can be made in good faith without fear of reprisal.

The Trust includes a commitment to the welfare and safety of children in our policies and procedures. We will monitor emerging legislation and evolving best practice to ensure necessary policies and procedural guidelines are appropriate, up to date and accessible.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with several NWT procedures – Recruitment, Complaints, Data Protection, Whistleblowing, Disciplinary, Social Media and Health and Safety. Equally NWT is aware that all policies should reflect the Safeguarding Children guidance. Appropriate risk management processes will be applied to all contact with children.

To deliver the policy we will:

Keep policy and procedural guidelines appropriate, up to date and accessible

- NWTs Designated Safeguarding Officer is the Director of Finance, who can be contacted on 0191 284 6884. In their absence, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead is the Wild City Manager, also contactable on 0191 284 6884 (see **Appendix A** for their role)
- the Safeguarding policy and procedure will be reviewed and updated where necessary every year
- the Safeguarding policy and procedure will be made available for all staff and volunteers on the central IT system and in the Safeguarding Folder kept in each office location

Ensure all staff and volunteers are properly informed, supported, managed and trained

- all appropriate staff and volunteers will be carefully selected and vetted,
- all appropriate staff and volunteers will be considered for a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check, as defined by **Appendix B**.
- all appropriate staff and volunteers will receive the 'Reporting guidance for staff & volunteers' (**Appendix C**) and 'Code of conduct' (**Appendix D**) on successful appointment and must sign the 'Code of conduct' Updates and refreshers will be provided through the department meeting structures

- all appropriate staff and volunteers will receive 'Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse' (**Appendix E**)
- all appropriate staff and volunteers will complete suitable training from an accredited source, such as [Introduction to Safeguarding Children \(Level 1\)](#) and [Advanced Safeguarding Children \(level 2\)](#).

Have clear processes for reporting and addressing any concerns or allegations relating to safeguarding children

- NWT has clear, written processes for reporting, recording and addressing concerns or allegations relating to safeguarding children (**Appendix C**)
- any information given to users about NWT activities will include information about the safeguarding policy and procedure. We have a code of conduct for adults attending our sessions, and parents and carers of children using supervised activities will be given specific information about the Safeguarding policy and procedure (**Appendices F and G**)
- there is a written procedure for processing complaints (See **Complaints Policy**)
- there is a clear system for reporting and processing allegations against staff and volunteers (**Appendix H**)

Run safe activities for children and young people

- we will strive to maintain a safe environment for our activities by following the guidance on running safe activities for children (**Appendix I**)
- all staff and volunteers involved in running an activity will have clear roles and responsibilities, this applies equally to 'external' staff or assistants attending with school or other visiting groups
- risk management for activities targeting children will recognise the specific needs of each group
- all appropriate staff and volunteers will be made aware of any relevant issues of particular vulnerability of children, eg those facing barriers in communication or who are dependent on others for personal care

- all staff and volunteers will be suitably qualified and/or experienced to supervise and deliver the activities they undertake and will have up to date competency records
- any third party individual or organisation involved in delivering activities as part of an NWT event will have appropriate experience and where relevant hold the appropriate qualifications and/or accreditation and insurance. If they are operating with any degree of autonomy, ie not under the close supervision of NWT staff or volunteers, they should have safeguarding procedures at least equivalent to ours
- all staff and volunteers that commission third parties/contractors to work with children should have appropriate experience and this should be recorded on their competency form

Store children's data and digital images appropriately

- NWT have a standard set of forms for use when collecting children's data
- all staff and appropriate volunteers to be aware of the guidelines on storage and removal of digital images (**Appendix J**)
- parents and carers will be made aware of how we use children's data and images
- NWT has systems in place for the deletion of old records or images (see **GDPR Handbook**)

APPENDIX A

Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy

NWT has a designated member of staff and a deputy to take responsibility for safeguarding children matters.

The designated member of staff will usually hold the Manager's position responsible for our children and youth engagement work. In the absence of this role the position is held by another appropriate member of staff.

Current Safeguarding Lead: Director of Finance and Central Services

Current Safeguarding Deputy: Wild City Manager

Both staff must have undertaken recognised safeguarding training.

Their role is to:

- ensure the Safeguarding policy and procedures are followed
- ensure they know how to follow procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues,
- act within the appropriate local authority Safeguarding Children guidance if a referral is to be made and in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time
- act as a source of advice on all safeguarding children matters and seek further advice and guidance from local statutory agencies as needed
- ensure that a confidential record is kept of any concerns about a child and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies
- report to the Management Team any action taken, concerns recorded or incidents. Also report when any 'new' situations may arise, such as undertaking a new type of work where safeguarding may need to be reviewed
- maintain and regularly update their knowledge of child safeguarding through relevant training, including refreshing their Level 2 Safeguarding training every three years
- conduct regular audit activity to ensure NWT is working in line with current practice

APPENDIX B

Guidance on DBS checks

Whether a job role is eligible for a DBS check depends on the type of activities that the job entails and whether they are classified as a regulated activity or not.

A regulated activity is a job role, or part of a job role, that involves working with vulnerable adults or children. This can mean direct contact or indirectly working in the vicinity of those vulnerable groups.

A regulated activity is used to determine whether an enhanced DBS check is required. If the activity is deemed to be regulated, then an enhanced check is required, if not then a standard or basic DBS check may be acceptable instead.

Enhanced DBS checks are the highest level of background check (criminal record search) in the UK. An enhanced check reveals whether the individual has any spent or unspent convictions on their criminal record, as well as details of cautions, reprimands, and warnings.

Any job applicants, employees, or volunteers that will be involved in a regulated activity should also be subject to a barred list check, alongside the enhanced DBS check. The barred list check makes sure that the individual is not listed on the DBS barred list which bans certain individuals from working with vulnerable adults and children.

Regulated Activity With Children:

- Activities that involve working directly with children
 - Activities that involve regular contact with children
- If the role requires that you will be working in an environment where children are present, potentially in an unsupervised capacity.

(Source September 2021)

[Guide To Enhanced DBS Eligibility - What Is A Regulated Activity - DBS Checks](#)

APPENDIX C

Reporting guidance for staff and volunteers

NWT believes that everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children from harm. All staff and volunteers are expected to follow this guidance and attend any training and activity planning meetings they are invited to.

The Safeguarding designated staff for Northumberland Wildlife Trust are listed in **Appendix A**. These staff should be contacted with any queries or concerns around the welfare of any child

All staff and volunteers must inform the Safeguarding Lead if they are:

- charged with a criminal offence involving a child, violence, breach of trust or a criminal offence relevant to their duties, for example driving offence if they are driving as part of their duties
- investigated by any authority due to concerns of involvement in causing harm to a child
- diagnosed with any medical condition that may affect their ability to carry out their role with children safely, for example psychotic illness

Safeguarding Appendix C Flowchart

We have prepared a simplified decision flow chart to aid staff with decision making and knowing what to do in a situation. [The flowchart is available electronically here](#) and a printed copy should be available and visible in all office locations and fleet vehicles.

How to respond to a child telling you about abuse

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

NWT Safeguarding Incident-Reporting Form

You should use the Safeguarding Incident-Reporting Form to record any safeguarding concerns. [The form is available electronically here.](#)

You must treat all information as confidential and report the facts as soon as possible to the NWT Safeguarding mailbox staysafe@northwt.org.uk, within one working day or the next working day if it is a weekend. The NWT Safeguarding Team will review and respond as soon as possible.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff must initially record:

- the child's name
- the child's address
- the age of the child
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible
- any injuries or bruises
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time
- the names of any other person present at the time
- discussions with parents/carers, if applicable

The following information is requested as part of a referral and staff should make a record of as much of the following information as possible:

- full names, dates of birth and gender of the child(ren) and any siblings and their current whereabouts
- family address
- full names, dates of birth and addresses of the child's parents/primary carer
- identity of those with parental responsibility
- names and dates of birth of all household members
- name and address of child's GP
- name and address of child's school
- ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers
- any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid
- any special needs of child(ren) and their parents/carers
- any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in child or family's life
- cause for concern including details of any allegations (in the child's own words as much as possible), their sources, timing and location
- child's current location and emotional and physical condition
- referrer's relationship and knowledge of child and parents/carers
- known current or previous agencies/professionals

- information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral
- full details of the reason for the referral

Key points are:

Members of staff should not

- carry out their own investigation by talking to parents or carers etc
- put words in any child's mouth by asking direct questions such as "Did your dad do it?"
- feel that they must inform parents/carers if they think it may put the child at risk of further harm or cause them to be silenced
- ignore their worry
- promise the child anything, especially that it will be kept secret

Members of staff should

- ask open-ended questions to clarify their concern e.g. "What happened to your arm?"
- listen to the child / their gut feelings
- take action
- keep a record of any conversations, incidents or concerns using the Incident form (stored on the central IT system)
- inform the Safeguarding Lead, or if unavailable the deputy, of their concerns. If neither is available, assess the situation themselves and take appropriate action

If there continues to be a concern, actions to take are:

- 1 If a child has a serious injury (for example involving pain and bleeding) or is in immediate danger (for example parent has arrived to collect a child and is unfit to care for them, such as being drunk and intending to drive, or a child left alone at home) dial **999** and request assistance from the ambulance service and/or police. If it is known or suspected that the child has come to harm through the actions of another make sure that the professional staff the child is handed over to understands this and record their name. It will generally be appropriate to inform the child's parent or carers what has happened once the child is safe with an appropriate professional.
- 2 If it seems that a child has been abused in any way including sexual abuse (but is not in immediate danger) report this immediately to the service for the area where they live. The details are:

For Newcastle:

Newcastle City Council Children at risk Initial Response Service
Emergency Duty Team
Tel: 0191 277 2500 or 0191 278 7878 (out of hours)

Email: edt@newcastle.gov.uk

For North Tyneside:

Front Door Service

Tel: 0345 2000 109 or 0191 200 6800 (out of hours)

Email masct@northtyneside.gov.uk

For Northumberland:

Onecall

Tel: 01670 536 400

- 3 If the concern is long term rather than immediate, for example a child who is often dirty, smelly or who has disruptive behaviour, or you have reason to believe the child is self-harming, discuss this with the Safeguarding Lead who will decide whether to make a referral.
- 4 If you an emergency referral is made, inform the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. They will follow up with the relevant local authority body and take further advice as required.

In situations where the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead cannot be contacted and immediate action may be required, the staff member should contact the Initial Response Service as above and:

- never delay emergency action to protect a child from harm
- always record in writing concerns about a child's welfare, including decision, actions and reasons whether or not further action is taken

APPENDIX D

Code of conduct for all staff and appropriate volunteers

Not all staff or volunteers will have regular contact with children, however all staff and appropriate volunteers should be aware of what is expected of them in the case of face to face work with children. They should be able to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to keep children safe and to protect themselves from allegations of misconduct.

- always remember that while you are caring for other people's children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times
- do make sure you have read the Safeguarding policy and Procedure and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns
- you must act upon concerns about a child's welfare or the inappropriate behaviour of any adults at your activities
- do work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree roles and responsibilities when delivering sessions and agree with them what behaviour you expect from young people and be consistent in enforcing it
- always aim to work in an open environment and exercise caution about being alone with a child or young person. In situations where this may be needed (for example where a young person wants to speak in private) think about ways of making this seem less secret - for example by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are, leaving a door ajar, being in earshot of others and lastly note the conversation in the log
- physical contact should be open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset. Always prompt children to carry out personal care (such as applying suncream, adjusting clothing) themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help
- if you have to speak to a child/young person about their behaviour remember you are challenging 'what they did' not 'who they are'
- do listen to children and young people and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem
- do talk explicitly to children and young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- do treat all children equally, and with respect and dignity, challenge discriminating comments and behaviour and promote positive attitudes towards differences
- generally you should not give children presents or personal items. The exceptions to this would be a custom such as buying children a small birthday token or leaving present or help to a family in need such as equipment to enable them to participate in an activity. Both types of gift

should come from the organisation and be agreed with the named person for child protection and the child or young person's parent. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the activity leader and/or your Line Manager as appropriate

- always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- always be easily identifiable: wear your NWT clothing and Identification badge at all times during activities with children
- always secure parental consent in writing using NWT standard forms
- always question any unknown adult who enters the NWT premises and/or who attempts to engage with the children

You must NEVER:

- use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting, or use physical force against a child or young person
- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, or use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language - children's inappropriate use of language and/or behaviour should always be challenged
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child or young person
- invite a young person to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times or off-site
- smoke, take unprescribed drugs or drink alcohol in the company of/whilst responsible for children
- use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to/ befriend children / young people (see Social media policy)
- give your personal contact details / personal website details to children or young people
- take photos of children without the written consent of parents/guardians (see Social media policy for guidance on using cameras and mobile phones)

I, the undersigned, declare that I have read and will adhere to the above Code of Conduct in the event that I work in a face to face role with children on behalf of NWT

APPENDIX E

Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

Staff who have frequent face to face contact with children should be aware of the definitions, signs and symptoms of child abuse as listed below.

The DfE document “Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)” highlights high risk areas staff should be alert to where a child:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child

The document also includes a useful glossary of key terms, including the following:

Item	Definition
Children	Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
Abuse	A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
Physical abuse	A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or

	otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
Sexual abuse	Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
Child sexual exploitation	Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
Neglect	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 occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: (a) provide adequate food, clothing and shelter

	(including exclusion from home or abandonment) (b) protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger (c) ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) (d) ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
Extremism	Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for the death of members of our armed forces as extremist.
Young carer	A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work).
Education, Health and Care Plan	A single plan, which covers the education, health and social care needs of a child or young person with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND). See the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy 0-25 (2014).
Child criminal exploitation	As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Indicators to look out for are:

Physical signs of abuse

- bruise marks consistent with either straps or slaps
- undue fear of adults - fear of going home to parents or carers
- aggression towards others
- unexplained injuries or burns – particularly if they are recurrent and especially in non-mobile babies
- any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc

- reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming
- bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental/satisfactory explanation
- cuts/scratches/substance abuse
- hitting (with the hand or implement) smacking, punching, kicking, slapping, twisting/pulling ear, hair or fingers, holding/squeezing with a tight grip, biting, and burning
- fabricated illness

Signs of neglect

- exposure to danger/lack of supervision
- under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care etc.
- injuries that have not received medical attention
- inadequate/inappropriate clothing
- constant hunger
- poor standards of hygiene
- untreated illnesses
- persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise

Emotional signs of abuse

- changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/ aggression, extreme anxiety
- nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- obsessions or phobias
- sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- attention-seeking behavior
- persistent tiredness
- running away/stealing/lying
- humiliating, taunting or threatening a child whether in front of others or alone
- persistent lack of attention, warmth or praise
- shouting/yelling at a child
- radicalisation – use of inappropriate language, possession of violent extremist literature, behavioural changes, the expression of extremist views, advocating violent actions and means, association with known extremists, seeking to recruit others

Signs of sexual abuse

- language and drawing inappropriate for age
- child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play
- sexual knowledge inappropriate for their age
- wariness on being approached
- soreness in the genital area or unexplained rashes or marks in the genital areas
- pain on urination
- difficulty in walking or sitting
- stained or bloody underclothes
- recurrent tummy pains or headaches
- bruises on inner thigh or buttock
- any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia
- unaccounted sources of money
- telling you about being asked to 'keep a secret' or dropping hints or clues about abuse

Signs and symptoms often appear in a cluster, but also many of the indicators above may be caused by other factors- if in doubt check it out.

APPENDIX F

Information for Parents

We want Northumberland Wildlife Trust to be a safe place for children. We have a Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures. You can ask for a full copy of this. Below is a brief summary of the key points.

We aim to keep children safe by:

- having a Designated Safeguarding Officer: 0191 284 6884. Please contact them if you have any concerns about any child or the behaviour of anyone using the project
- ensuring all appropriate staff and volunteers are properly checked and vetted
- making proper arrangements for all activities
- having a code of conduct for staff/volunteers and making sure that all staff and volunteers know what to do if they have concerns about a child
- having a code of conduct for parents and carers using our services (**Appendix G**)
- following national and local child protection procedures and particularly do this by reporting any serious concerns to First Response or the Police as appropriate

We would ask you to support us in keeping children safe by:

- following the code of conduct and treating people with respect
- supervising your child at all times unless they are in an organised activity, in which case we would ask you to provide basic details about your child and make sure that we can contact you if there is an emergency
- talking to the designated person for child protection if you have concerns about any child using the organisation or the behaviour of any adult in the organisation

APPENDIX G

Code of conduct for adults attending our children's activities

We hope you and your children enjoy your experience with Northumberland Wildlife Trust. In order to make this a safe and enjoyable place for all, please familiarise yourself with this code of conduct for adults attending our activities.

Please do:

- share information on your child's health and wellbeing on any day they attend our activities
- collect your child on time and have pre-agreed collection or going home procedure. If someone else is collecting your child please make staff aware and think about using a password for your child
- feedback any worries, concerns or positives about how your child has felt during their time with us
- ensure your child is adequately dressed for the weather, we always try to go outside so waterproofs/warm hat/scarves/wellies/boots/sun-hats/sun screen/sunglasses etc
- provide your child with a drinking bottle that can be refilled – we are happy to provide water and occasionally squash to ensure your child stays hydrated

Please refrain from:

- using inappropriate language or displaying aggressive or threatening behaviour to staff, children or other parents or carers in writing, over the phone or in person
- shouting at, smacking or physically punishing your child(ren) or any other children at our sessions
- taking videos or photos of children other than your own
- consuming alcohol, drugs or any other substance that impairs your judgement or responses while attending sessions or collecting your children from sessions
- discussing sensitive issues about your children within earshot of other children or adults

Appendix H

How to respond to allegations of abuse by a member of staff, trustee or volunteer

- NWT ensures that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action, which may include an allegation of abuse
- NWT will follow the guidance of the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child
- NWT will respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken place, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident
- NWT will refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social service department to investigate
- NWT will co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police
- NWT's policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation; this is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process

The Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy must not investigate the matter by interviewing the accused person, the child or potential witnesses. They must:

- obtain written details of the allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving the complaint, or allegation
- record any other information in relation to time, dates and location of incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses
- record discussions about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions
- countersign and date the written record

If the allegation meets any of the criteria in **Appendix E**, the Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy must report it to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.

If a concern or an allegation requiring immediate attention is received outside normal office hours the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy must consult immediately with the Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team or local Police and also ensure that the LADO is informed the next working day.

APPENDIX I

Guidance on running safe activities when working with children

This is intended as guidance only and should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Health and Safety Policy. All staff and volunteers should receive training and competency forms should reflect this before attempting to prepare their own risk assessments when working with children.

Personal (and group) competencies can in some circumstances negate the need for written risk assessments to be prepared. Line managers should provide guidance to staff and volunteers in this respect. Residential events, whether a repeat event or not, should be viewed as new activities and a new and complete risk assessment carried out for each one and discussed with the designated safeguarding person

Undertaking a risk assessment

Site visits should be undertaken several days before using a site for first time to ensure it is appropriate for the session and user group. This will allow time for action to be taken to rectify any problems and help to minimise the likelihood of unforeseen risks during the visit. (For work on school sites and at other educational establishments a site visit is recommended, but it is accepted that teachers will be able to give assurances about site safety)

Consider:

- the type of visit/activity and the numbers and ages of those involved
- the location, routes and modes of transport
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- the ratios of supervisory staff to participants
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity
- the special needs (educational, medical or mobility for example) of participants
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- emergency procedures
- how to cope when a participant becomes unable or unwilling to continue
- going home procedures

Suggested working ratios and age limits with regard to specific activities

At least two 'registered/recognised' adults and ideally a third should be present at all your activities. This is because should an accident occur you need one person to go for help, one to look after the injured person and one to supervise the rest of the group. Try to have both male and female leaders present if possible.

The adult to child ratio will vary according to the activity you are doing, the site you are using and the type of group you have. Aim at an adult to child ratio of 1:10, but in higher risk situations the adult to child ratio must be higher.

Below are a few examples of tasks and suggested appropriate ratios:

- a ratio of 1:4 for under 5's
- a ratio of 1:8 for 5 to 8 year olds
- for pond dipping a ratio of at least 1:8 is recommended
- practical conservation work with children 5 to 8 years old a 1:3 ratio is recommended
- practical conservation work with children 8 to 14 years old a 1:6 ratio is recommended
- practical conservation work with children 14 years old and over 1:8 ratio is recommended

Parental Consent

Parental consent should be gathered for events where children are attending without parents. Children must be over 8 years old in order to stay unaccompanied. Standard Parental Consent forms are located on the central IT system.

Length of sessions

There are many factors, not purely safeguarding, that will affect how long a session is; such as the weather, time of day, type of activity, access to facilities or the needs and requirements of your group. The Children's Act (2004) however, does place a limit of certain activities where we have unsupervised children.

If the duration of the visit is over two hours, takes place more than six days a year, and the children are below the age of 8 years, then registration under the Children Act is needed. As most of the visits made by under 8's are made by members of organisations or playgroups they should already be covered by their own regulations or registration.

Going Home Procedure

Where sessions are for unsupervised children, you must do all that is reasonable to ensure that your group is safe and goes home with the correct adult - 'going home time' can be when the children are at high risk.

- record on consent forms who is collecting each child
- use an attendance register
- ask children to come and tell you when they are going home, so you can tick them off the list
- leaders stand in a prominent place to observe the going home procedure
- try and have someone with you to intercept questions from adults. It is very easy to become distracted and you could easily miss something

Open access sessions

Some sessions are designed to be open access and so children can effectively 'drop in' without a parent or guardian. In this situation the following guidance should be followed:

- keep a register of children attending and try to have a signing in and out system
- by engaging with the children when they first arrive try to ascertain
 - (i) how close they live to the place you are delivering the session and
 - (ii) how they plan to get home
- ask children to come and tell you when they are going home, so you can tick them off the list

APPENDIX J

Storing children's data and digital images

Please refer to the Data Protection Policy for information on collecting personal data and the Social Media Policy for collection and use of digital images.

Children's data

NWT occasionally needs to collect and store children's data, to fulfil obligations to commissioners, to ensure relevant permissions and for grant funded projects. The following guidelines must be adhered to when storing this data. Children's data is defined by two or more of the following pieces of information being stored together: name, address, date of birth, school, phone number, disability or image.

- all template forms are stored in the safeguarding folder at each office location and on the central IT system. They can be adapted for project use, but any changes must be agreed by the Safeguarding Lead
- all computer files containing children's data must be password protected
- paper files containing children's data must be kept in locked drawers for a maximum of 12 months and accessible only by staff or volunteers with the appropriate level of DBS check

Digital Images

Internal use

- photos which are to be used for fulfilment of obligations to commissioners and grant funded projects may be stored for the length of our contract or project. Photos kept for this purpose are minimal
- any photos used for reporting may be kept for 12 months in a password protected Excel or Word document alongside a scanned image of the appropriate photo consent form. All others must be deleted upon the submission of report. You must use the standardised photo consent form (stored on the central IT system) to collect written consent
- written photo consent forms must be scanned and images of those forms then placed in a password-protected Excel or Word document along with any photographs they are linked to and saved on the server. Parents and carers may withdraw permission, in writing, at any time
- digital images must be uploaded onto the server (or PC for out-posted offices) within 7 working days. Images must then be deleted immediately from the capture device (phone, camera or video camera)

External use

Pre-arranged staff days will be used as an opportunity to hire a professional photographer and produce stock images that illustrate delivery. All participants at the events are to be made aware of how the photos will be used and this will be stated explicitly in the event invitation as its primary purpose.

- only these stock photos will be used for publicity purposes, i.e. website, leaflets, social media etc. and must be uploaded to RSWT Image Library via WildNet.
- live images uploaded to social media sites via mobiles should only ever be of an activity and not have children's faces visible. If a photo of a child or vulnerable person is required, it should always be taken from the WildNet Image Library
- staff, volunteers, and members of the public do occasionally gift photographs they have taken to us. It must be made clear at the time that these photos will be uploaded to WildNet.

Digital images of public events

As access to these public events in publicly accessible areas is not restricted, we consider that any person who is present at these events is considered to have given implied consent to appear in the background of any photograph or film (this is in line with the provisions of the DPA).

We will however make every effort to ensure the public is aware a photographer is on site taking photos for publicity purposes by:

- putting signs at the entrance to the venue to warn the public that photographs may be taken at the event
- including a notice in the programme or tickets where possible for example 'Please take note an official photographer is on site taking photographs/filming for publicity purposes'
- providing wristbands for children whose parents do not wish for them to appear in photographs

APPENDIX K

Missing children at Trust-run visitor centres

In the event of a child being reported missing at a Visitor Centre, please follow this guidance.

Whoever is the First Point of Contact (i.e. the member of staff who can coordinate the response – this should not be a volunteer) needs to get as much information as possible including:

- child's name
- age
- how long they have been missing
- where they were last seen
- where has been checked so far (if anywhere)?

At this point, the First Point of Contact is to make the decision about how to proceed. If they are uncertain about situation, they are to seek advice from the most senior member of staff in the building at that time or to phone the Safeguarding Lead in the event that they are lone working.

First Point of Contact must then stay on reception to coordinate the response, record actions as they happen and be contactable. You can use an incident report form for recording any action taken.

If the decision is to send members of staff out to search the site, a coordinated approach is required:

- send staff or volunteers in pairs, with a mobile phone
- if parents/carers joining the search, ensure you take their mobile number and ask them to report back if they find the child. Ideally one parent/carer would remain at reception
- send to specific locations and ask them to report back when area checked. Then phone in for next area to check
- record who going where and the mobile contact number
- in the event that the searching staff/volunteers locate the child, firstly the adults should assess if the child is injured or require immediate medical attention – in which case follow First Aid and H&S procedures. If the child does not require immediate medical attention either both adults should escort the child back to reception and into their parents care, or the parent escorted to the child's location*
- report incident to Safeguarding Lead by using the incident report forms. This is the case however 'minor' the incident seems and is best completed straight away to ensure the information is fresh and relevant
- incident report form to be kept in a secure (lockable) location until passed on to the Safeguarding Lead within 2 working days

Any phone call to the Police to report a missing person should be carried out by the parent or carer. Police may want to talk to the First Point of Contact to

discover what attempts have been made to find the child. If the police wish to carry out further searches of the site then a member of staff must stay behind, this does not necessarily have to be the First Point of Contact but they should be identified to Police and be in possession of centre keys and the ability to lock up.

* There may be occasions where the child does not want to return to the visitor centre or their parents care. This should be dealt with as a safeguarding issue and the Safeguarding Lead contacted immediately.

APPENDIX L

Guidance on responding to bullying at Trust-run events

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of children and young people so they can learn and have fun in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our sessions. If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be:

- emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- verbal- name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- cyber - all areas of internet such as; email & internet chat room misuse mobile threats by text messaging & calls misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts and no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. NWT have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- all staff and volunteers, children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- all staff and volunteers should know what the NWT procedure is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- all children and parents should know what the NWT procedure is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- as an organisation we take bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- bullying will not be tolerated

Signs and symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Many of these signs will not be evident during the sessions that we run however adults

should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home very hungry (money / lunch may have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber-message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Procedures

- 1 report bullying incidents to the staff running the event
- 2 in cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
- 3 in serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- 4 if necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- 5 the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- 6 an attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- 1 the bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place
- 2 in serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- 3 if possible, the pupils will be reconciled
- 4 after the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place

Prevention

We will use KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of group rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying

- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a group
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters