

DSWF Safeguarding for Children & Young People Policy

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1. Introduction

All organisations that work with or come into contact with children should have safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that every child, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, has a right to equal protection from harm.

The NSPCC define safeguarding as the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and young people and protect them from harm. Children and young people means anyone under the age of 18.

For the purpose of this policy, other definitions of Safeguarding include:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes

This policy describes how David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF) will ensure the safeguarding of children and young people during the course of its work.

To report an issue please see Section 6 in this document.

Policy Statement:

At DSWF we believe that the whole organisation has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all young people, to keep them safe, and to conduct all practices in a way that protects them from harm. DSWF recognises that some young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

The Foundation is working to build a culture of safeguarding, where all employees, trustees, contractors and volunteers understand what to look out for, understand that 'it could happen here' and know what do if an issue arises. Concerns should be reported immediately and in accordance with this policy. This policy is designed to safeguard all children under the age of 18, even if they do not live with their parents or guardians.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Designated Safeguarding Officer – Chief Operating Officer	<p>Day to day management of safeguarding at DSWF</p> <p>First response for any serious issues flagged</p> <p>Ongoing review and management of the safeguarding policy document</p> <p>Ensure a safeguarding risk assessment has been carried out for any events that include children and young people and appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead</p> <p>Ensure appropriate annual safeguarding training is completed by relevant personnel and significant changes to policy are disseminated to staff</p> <p>Implement safer recruitment policy when appointing staff</p>
Education Manager and education staff (employed, freelance or voluntary)	<p>In a majority of instances, will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead</p> <p>Manage any disclosure or incident in line with this safeguarding policy</p> <p>For those regularly delivering sessions to children and young people an Enhanced DBS Check will be required</p> <p>Annual safeguarding training from NSPCC</p> <p>Feed into the annual review of the safeguarding policy</p> <p>Ensure schools and libraries receive the latest version of this policy in advance of delivery</p>
All staff	<p>Flag any event or activity that includes children and young people to the designated safeguarding officer in advance who will appoint a safeguarding lead for the activity</p> <p>Manage any disclosure in line with this policy and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead with the appropriate details</p> <p>For any serious incident, call the police without delay</p> <p>Receive safeguarding policy training during the induction process and sign to say this has been completed</p> <p>Receive a 30-minute update on the safeguarding policy annually</p>
DSWF Office Manager	<p>Manage the risk assessment process and disclosure register</p> <p>Diarise the annual review and update of the safeguarding policy</p> <p>Deliver basic safeguarding training during new starter inductions</p>
Trustee Board	<p>Strategic overview of the safeguarding policy.</p> <p>To ensure DSWF has an effective policy and ensuring that it is implemented correctly.</p> <p>Annual review of any serious incidents</p>

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Foster a culture of safeguarding in DSWF
- Safeguard young people (U18's) at all DSWF activities that they are included in, such as the Education Programme school talks and workshops, events (inc virtual), when visiting the DSWF office, competitions and online
- Follow our legal and moral obligation to safeguard young people
- Identify key risks to young people, and to continually assess all organisational vulnerabilities, ensuring appropriate risk assessments are completed and kept up to date
- Ensure all staff understand their role in keeping young people safe, and know what to do and who to contact should they have a concern

4. Risks

Safeguarding risks to DSWF include but are not limited to the following:

- During the course of delivery of education workshops and talks in schools and libraries – all direct contact with young people
- During the management of competitions such as Global Canvas, where young people's details and images are submitted through an online form creates a data protection and safeguarding responsibility. DSWF will only capture and process/store data from young people for the purposes of administering childrens events and competitions. Please see our privacy policy [here](#).
- Young people accessing DSWF social media channels and potentially viewing distressing material or age inappropriate material without warning, or becoming the subject of online bullying
- Online grooming through social media channels
- Any DSWF event where the general public will mix with unsupervised children
- When young people visit the DSWF office
- Peer-on-peer abuse in unsupervised areas
- Recruiting staff with a history of child abuse into responsible positions
- Work experience placements in any location where children are under our care

5. What to look out for

There are numerous types of abuse. The signs can be subtle and hard to spot if you don't know the child very well. If you have suspicions, be vigilant - it can happen anywhere at any time. The NSPCC suggests some things to look out for are:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

None of these things mean a child has definitely been abused, but use common sense and report anything that concerns you so that it can at least be considered.

Neglect is also an issue which presents in many ways. Physical neglect is sometimes easier to spot than emotional neglect. The NSPCC has a useful summary [here](#).

6. Reporting & Recording

1. If a child discloses abuse to you:

- Listen to the child and allow them to talk freely
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises that you might not be able to keep
- Do not promise confidentiality but reassure them that you will speak to the Designated Safeguarding Officer / their teacher etc. who will be able to help
- Do not interrogate or ask leading questions
- Reassure them it is not their fault and that talking to you is the right thing to do
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Record statements and observe. What happened, when, and who was involved?
- Ensure when recording the incident exact words of the child are used where possible
- Report your concerns as soon as possible to the appropriate person
- Remember confidentiality is essential

2. If you suspect abuse or abuse is disclosed to you, report it immediately.

If staff suspects a safeguarding issue, this should be reported immediately or at least as soon as practically possible to the DSWF Designated Safeguarding Lead for the activity, the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the host organisation if relevant and in turn the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) which is the COO of DSWF. If you are unsure what to do and need immediate help, contact the NSPCC helpline on help@nspcc.org.uk or 0808 800 5000. If you think a child is at immediate risk of harm, please dial 999 to contact the police.

Reports of the incident can be made verbally and then followed up in writing via email to the COO. DSWF have a secure incident register which will need to be updated by the DSO. In the absence of the DSO, reports should be made to the CEO or CFO. Reports should be dated and a follow-up time designated. This should be reviewed regularly to ensure incidents are followed to conclusion.

Please follow up on any incident you have reported to check that something has been done.

A non-detailed anonymized account of this report should be included on the DSWF Serious Incident Register, which is reviewed by Trustees three times a year.

3. Should an incident be within a school, library or external organisation, the incident should also be reported to the Designated Safeguarding lead within that organisation who will record the incident on CPOMS or similar. Their procedures should also be followed, and you should check back with the organisation in due course to ensure that action has been taken.

Failure to act responsibly and appropriately may amount to misconduct as per the DSWF Employee Handbook.

4. You must also report immediately to the DSO if you or you know of someone working with children is the subject of any criminal investigation.

7. **Safer recruitment**

This will be covered extensively in the DSWF recruitment policy, but the main points are:

- Ensure that job descriptions include any safeguarding responsibilities attached to the role
- Actively seek a minimum of two independent professional references for a new member of staff
- Ensure new staff members, where appropriate, are DBS checked at the appropriate level if delivering session to young people
- Checks to confirm any new staff member's identity and right to work in the UK
- Identifying and rejecting applicants who are unsuitable to work regularly in unsupervised roles with children and young people by checking the Children's Barred list
- Respond promptly to concerns about the suitability of any new staff member once they have commenced their role
- Ensuring all new staff participate in a safeguarding induction session which includes this policy