

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) Child Protection Procedures

This document sets out what to do if you or someone else suspects abuse of a child or young person (under the age of 18). It also provides a way for a child to by-pass their leader and tell someone else about any problems. The aim is to ensure that there is a speedy and effective response for dealing with concerns about a child.

The procedures below should be followed by all Wiltshire Wildlife Trust staff and volunteers who come in contact with children as part of any activity organised by the Trust.

WWT is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children. This is achieved by:

- Recognising that all children have the right to freedom from abuse.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Procedures to ensure compliance with the Child Protection Act 2004.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, irrelevant of their role within Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. All of us have a responsibility for the protection of children and adults at risk from abuse and maltreatment or neglect.

Context

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust operates in England which has designated child protection systems, laws and guidance to help keep children safe: The Children Act of 1989, 2004 and subsequent Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2018

In their simplest forms the laws and guidance are there to:

- ensure children's voices are heard
- set out when a child can take part in various activities
- make sure children have access to education
- provide for children having a safe home
- provide support for children who need to leave home
- make sure children are safe if they decide to get a job
- make sure children's personal information is safe

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

All of the legislation and guidance across the UK is very clear that as a charity working with under 18-year-olds, we have a duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This responsibility is two-fold. We will:

- ensure our staff, volunteers and trustees can recognise the signs of abuse, neglect and maltreatment and understand when we need to share these concerns with professionals to help keep children safe
- through safer recruitment, training, and governance structures we will take all reasonable steps to have the appropriate and trained people in place to keep children and young people in our care safe from harm.

We engage with children and young people in the following situations:

- School visits and outreach – both going to schools and schools coming to WWT reserves
- Forest School both within schools and on our reserves
- Alternative education provision through our Care Farms and our Youth Education and Wellbeing Team.
- Wildlife Watch
- Volunteering
- Family days, events and community engagement activities.

In line with the purpose of this policy, we are committed to providing a safe and friendly environment that protects children and young people. Each activity is carefully planned and risk assessed to consider both the safety of our beneficiaries as well as our staff and volunteers.

Many of these activities are supported by school staff or children attend with their parents. For those activities where WWT has direct supervision of a child or young person, consent is required ahead of the activity or provision taking place and thorough risk assessments are undertaken, including the young person's suitability to the activity or provision, the numbers and suitability of staff and volunteers to support such activities and any health or safety concerns the activity may incur.

Child Protection in Practice

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust recognises that children may suffer:

- **Physical abuse** – includes hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing, withholding or misuse of medication.
- **Emotional abuse** – includes persistent maltreatment of a child, saying they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, making fun of them.
- **Sexual abuse** – includes sexual assault and rape, or sexual acts where the child has not given (or could not give) consent or was forced into consenting. This may include inappropriate physical contact, penetration and non-penetrative acts, looking at inappropriate images and grooming.
- **Neglect and Acts of Omission** – includes ignoring physical care and medical needs, withholding basic living requirements e.g. adequate nutrition, safe and warm environment, withholding necessary medication and failure to provide access to appropriate health and social care services and/or educational services.

Please note the following types of abuse are also associated with adult abuse:

- **Psychological / spiritual abuse** - includes threats of harm, emotional abuse, humiliation, verbal abuse, intimidation, coercion, harassment, withdrawal of support, isolation and deprivation (physical and sensory).
- **Financial / material abuse** – includes fraud, theft, exploitation, financial transactions, misappropriation e.g. willed inheritance, property, benefits and possessions.
- **Discrimination** – includes harassment and/or exclusion because of race, creed, culture, ability, age, gender and any slur deemed offensive and abusive.
- **Organisational abuse** – indicated by repeated instances of unsatisfactory professional practice, pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct indicating an abusive climate.

Emerging types of abuse include:

- **Abuse using social media** – cyber bullying, threats, offensive comments and obscene remarks, sexting and grooming
- **Child sexual exploitation** – sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status
- **Trafficking** – moving individuals from one place to another for exploitation
- **Modern slavery** – coercing services from a captive individual
- **Female Genital mutilation** – (be aware of cultural and religious beliefs. Male circumcision is not unlawful unless serious harm is caused)
- **Radicalisation** – refer to the Prevent programme – highlighted in induction training and Home Office eLearning modules at <https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/edu/screen1.html>

- **County Lines** – the practice of trafficking drugs into rural areas and smaller towns, away from major cities. "County lines" refers to the phone numbers dedicated to this activity.
- **Domestic Violence** - Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.
- **Self neglect** - neglecting to attend to personal basic needs, such as personal hygiene, appropriate clothing, feeding, or tending appropriately to any medical conditions.

If you suspect a child/young person is being abused:

1. Immediately inform one of the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) who will refer to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if appropriate. If out of hours please refer to the emergency duty team on 0300 456 0100. If an outside agency is involved consider advising their Safeguarding Officer if appropriate.
2. Record the facts as you know them using the Trust reporting form. Include the time and date and sign the report. Give the form to the DSO and discuss your concerns.
3. Following assessment of the situation (and discussion of the situation with the DSO if possible) try to ensure that no other situation arises which could cause any further harm, providing it is safe to do so.

If a child/young person tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. Allow the child/young person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said. Do not question.
2. Aim to reduce feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgment.
3. **Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you may need to pass the information on (a guarantee of confidentiality cannot be given to the child)**
4. Follow steps 1 – 3 as in "suspecting a child is being abused".

If you receive an allegation from a child about an adult:

1. Immediately tell one of the DSOs who will discuss the situation with you before considering whether to make a referral to local children's services.
2. Record the facts as you know them including time and date of the incident and sign the record before giving a copy to the DSO.
3. If appropriate try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.

If you receive an allegation about yourself concerning a child:

1. Immediately tell one of the Trust's DSOs who will discuss the situation with you and decide the most appropriate course of action to be taken.
2. Record the facts as you know them including time and date of the incident and sign the record before giving a copy to the DSO.
3. If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer the DSO will be required to advise the Chief Executive or, in their absence, the SLT Safeguarding Lead. The Trust's Disciplinary Procedure may be implemented if genuine concerns are raised.

Procedure following receipt of a report involving a child

1. The DSO will discuss the incident with the member of staff or volunteer completing the reporting form and together they will agree the course of action to be taken. This may include a DSO speaking to another DSO, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Senior Leadership Safeguarding Lead, police, schools or social worker.
2. Where appropriate the DSO will keep the member of staff informed of the outcome.
3. All incident reports, records and notes relating to subsequent actions will be securely held (double locked within a filing cabinet and password protected if held electronically).
4. All processes and procedures relating to MASH referrals will be reviewed internally by the Safeguarding Team post-referral.

NB – all these procedures refer to children. In the case of adults, they should be consulted on the course of action and procedure around this is included in our Adults at Risk procedures.

Internal Processes

1. Prior to the commencement of recruitment for all staff and volunteer roles the Exec Team safeguarding lead should be consulted to confirm whether the role requires a DBS check. All new roles will be added to the Role Specification DBS Register.
2. If a DBS check is a requirement of a role the individual will complete a DBS application form and provide a DSO with all the required identification documents. The individual will not be able to commence the role until they have shown the DBS certificate to their Line Manager.
3. During the recruitment of any post which works with children, young people or adults at risk, there will be at least one lead person on the interview panel who has current safer recruitment training.
4. If an offence is disclosed on the DBS certificate a DSO should be notified. The DSO will then consider the individual's suitability for the role in light of the nature of the offence. This will include a discussion with the individual regarding the circumstances of the offence. Once all evidence has been gathered the DSO and the Exec Safeguarding Lead will meet to discuss the situation and will make a joint decision regarding the suitability of the person for the role(s) they will undertake while with the Trust. This decision will be documented and this record will be kept with a copy of the DBS certificate. All disclosures will be treated on a case by case basis.
5. A DBS certificate will be renewed every 3 years or when there is a change to a role.
6. The DSO will update the Safeguarding team (NB – names and personal details will not be divulged) on a regular basis.
7. When appropriate information included on DBS certificates will be passed to the CEO or Director of Finance & Operations (head of HR) to assist with the approval of contracts.
8. The Safeguarding Team will review Safeguarding processes and procedures annually and meet quarterly to update as needed.
9. The DSOs will attend a review with an external, independent provider annually.
10. In the case of a serious incident the Trust will provide a free and independent counselling service to staff and volunteers.

ADDITIONAL PROCESSES FOR CARE FARM AND YEW TEAM PROVISION

1. YEW Team and Care Farm Senior staff will undertake Level 3 Safeguarding training with a recognised and accredited external provider.
2. The Care Farms will have 2 named and trained Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers attached to each site, in addition to the Care Farm Manager being the lead Designated Safeguarding Officer.

3. The Care Farm Manager and YEW Team Manager will act as the initial point of contact for all Safeguarding related matters within their teams. Ideally the managers will discuss a serious concern with another DSO but if appropriate the Manager may contact the MASH directly.
4. The Care Farm Manager and YEW Team Manager will liaise with a DSO in relation to all Safeguarding matters.
5. Clinical supervision and support (independent) will be available for Care Farm staff and YEW Team staff on a tri-annual basis. Additional supervision will be available on request.
6. A Single Central Record (SCR) will be held for both the Care Farms and the YEW Team. This record will be maintained and updated by the relevant manager and include records of DBS renewal dates, safeguarding training and update training, initial appointment date and relevant contact information. DSO's will have access to the SCR as required.
7. All records relating to Safeguarding matters that are generated by the Care Farm or YEW Team will be securely stored at the Trust Head Quarters.

You must refer – you must not investigate

Contact numbers:

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| Exec Safeguarding Lead: | Damian Haasjes | 01380 736096 / 07793251558 |
| Care Farm Head of Service: | Dean Sherwin | 01666 860699 / 07887758380 |
| YEW Team Head of Service: | Gail Grimes | 07736 457649 |
| F & E Safeguard Lead: | Becki McKinlay | 07597 589587 |
| Volunteer Safeguard Lead: | Ali Nott | 07849 089875 |
| Adult Wellbeing Team Leader | Imogen Jackson | 07702 802961 |

Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Safeguarding Phone: **07849 085423**

Child protection (MASH) **0300 456 0100**