



# SBBOT Education – Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding is about ensuring every aspect of a child's and a vulnerable and protected adult's welfare is safeguarded. It means protecting them from abuse and neglect but stretches much further to include all that we can do to support their development and enrich their life experiences.

This policy and following procedures are based on the principle of empowering children and vulnerable and protected adults. It is the duty of everyone who has contact with children and vulnerable and protected adults, whatever their role in Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Trust (SBBOT), to protect them from harm as well as to create a positive environment in which they can connect with nature. Based on best practice, the Policy provides information about abuse, advice on identifying problems, as well as policies and approaches for use by those involved in delivering our work.

## Definitions

### Definition of child

Anyone under the age of 18 years old.

### Definition of Vulnerable Adult

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who needs care and support regardless of whether they are receiving it, and because of those needs are unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect.

### Definition of Abuse

Abuse is the violation of an individual's rights. It can be physical, sexual or emotional. It also includes acts of neglect or an omission to act. Examples of abuse include physical harm, threats, humiliation and harassment. No abuse is acceptable, and some may be a criminal offence and must be reported to the police.

**NB** *From now on, 'child/children' refers to both children and vulnerable adults and 'staff' refers to any staff member, trustee or volunteer working on behalf of SBBOT.*

## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 'as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances Charities which work with vulnerable groups, including children, must always act in their best interests and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to them.

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of our Safeguarding Policy is:

- To provide protection for the children who undertake activities with SBBOT
- To provide staff with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm

The policy applies to all staff, council of trustees, employees, volunteers, students, or anyone working on behalf of SBBOT.

### **Implementation**

What Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory does to implement this policy:

- We have a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead who reports to the Council of Trustees
- We promote the safety and well-being of children and adults at risk and do not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or sexually or exploitative acts by either employees or volunteers

- We ensure everyone working with children and adults at risk understands their role and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are able to recognize and respond to signs of abuse and be appropriately trained
- We ensure action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns
- We keep confidential records of safeguarding concerns
- We work with partner organizations such as rspb and Mencap to ensure consistent good practice
- We DBS check all volunteers and employees who have unsupervised access to children, young people and adults at risk
- All members of Education Team and Trustees should have Level 2 Safeguarding Training that will be renewed every 3 years.
- We ensure all unaccompanied work experience students are 18 years old or over
- We revise the policy and procedures on a regular basis

### **Types of abuse**

There are a number of different forms of abuse, the main ones being:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Online
- Grooming
- Financial
- Bullying and cyber bullying
- Radicalisation
- Domestic
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Child sexual exploitation and abuse
- Forced marriage

An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly or may be responsible for abuse by failing to prevent another person harming that child.

**Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

**Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child 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 photographic or online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

**Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far 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 the 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 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.

**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 their health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

### **Online abuse**

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children may experience cyber bullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – \_abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

### **Grooming**

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Children can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers can be any age or gender.

Many children don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

### **Financial abuse**

Financial abuse is another name for stealing or defrauding someone of goods and/or property. It is always a crime but is not always prosecuted. Examples include: theft, fraud, exploitation, and pressure in connections with wills, property, possessions or benefits.

Fundraising that knowingly targets a person known to be vulnerable or in vulnerable circumstance.

## **Bullying and cyber bullying**

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else - it can take many forms, but the three main types are:

- Physical - hitting, kicking, theft etc
- Verbal - racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling etc
- Emotional - isolating an individual from the activities or social acceptance of their peer group

Ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied, rather than the intention of the bully. It can happen anywhere – \_at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

Bullying that happens online, using social networks and mobile phones, is often called cyber bullying. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night. Bullying should not be ignored, and the victim should be supported through what can be a traumatic experience. Bullying will not just go away. Bullies can be very cunning and develop strategies to avoid it being seen by anyone but the victim.

## **Radicalisation**

The government defines radicalisation as 'the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. 'Young and vulnerable students are susceptible towards radicalisation by malicious individuals who attempt to lead the young/vulnerable students astray and to commit violent extremism.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs and the calls for death of members of our armed forces, whether in the UK or overseas. During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent children being radicalised.

Radicalisation 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 the answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

## **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. But it isn't just physical violence – domestic abuse includes any emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological abuse. It can happen in any relationship, and even after the relationship has ended. Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision, cutting or sunna.

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence.

There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them.

Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed and exploited online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs. Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime.

Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening.

It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, including oral and anal rape. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online.

## **Forced Marriage**

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning difficulties or who are under-age, cannot) consent to the marriage and where duress is used to enforce the marriage. 'Duress' includes psychological, sexual, financial or emotional pressure and physical violence.

Forced marriage is a violation of human rights and is seen in the UK as a form of domestic violence and/or child abuse. It may affect any gender from any community or background. However, existing statistics show that greater numbers of women are affected.

Forcing someone to marry without their consent is a criminal offence. The maximum penalty is seven years imprisonment. It is also illegal to take someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place) or to marry someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they are pressured to or not).

## **Signs of harm or abuse**

Harm is an action or behaviour which has a detrimental effect on a child's physical or emotional health or wellbeing. Harm is often referred to as neglect, abuse or bullying. Harm may start as poor practice, which might include: shouting, ignoring health and safety guidelines, failing to adhere to our Safeguarding Policy etc. Neither poor practice nor suspicions of harm should be ignored - they should always be reported, and victims supported throughout.

It is important to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse and to be aware of how it should be dealt with.

A child may be being abused or bullied if they:

- Change their usual routine
- Begin to be disruptive during sessions
- Being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- Have possessions going missing
- Become aggressive or unreasonable
- Start to stammer or stop communicating
- Have unexplained cuts or bruises
- Start to bully other children
- Are frequently dirty, smelly, hungry or inadequately dressed



- Display sexual behaviour or using sexual language inappropriate for their age
- Seem afraid of parents or carers
- Takes risks
- Obsessive behaviour
- Misses school
- Stop eating/eating disorders/changes in eating habits
- Self-harms
- Thoughts about suicide
- Are frightened to say what is wrong
- Do not want to attend or take part in activities

### **Physical abuse signs**

Note: Some ageing processes can cause changes which are hard to distinguish from some aspects of physical assault e.g. skin bruising can occur very easily due to blood vessels becoming fragile.

- Bruises
- Finger marks
- Burns of unusual location or type
- Injuries found at different states of healing
- Injury shape similar to an object
- Injuries to head/face/scalp
- Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence
- Drowsiness due to too much medication, or lack of medication

### **Sexual abuse signs**

- Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as “It’s a secret”)
- Medical problems, e.g. Genital infections, pregnancy, difficulty walking or sitting
- Disturbed behaviour e.g. depression, sudden withdrawal from activities, loss of previous skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self-injury showing fear or aggression to one particular person, repeated or excessive masturbation, inappropriately seductive behaviour, loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down – \_
- Behaviour of others towards the vulnerable adult

- Circumstances – e.g. two service users found in a toilet area, one in a distressed state

### **Psychological/emotional signs**

- Unkempt, unwashed, smell
- Over meticulous
- Inappropriately dressed
- Withdrawn, agitated, anxious not wanting to be touched
- Change in appetite
- Insomnia, or need for excessive sleep
- Tearfulness
- Unexplained paranoia, or excessive fears
- Low self-esteem
- Confusion
- Signs of personal activities and choices being controlled by another

### **Neglect signs**

- Physical condition poor
- Clothing in poor condition
- Inadequate diet
- Untreated injuries or medical problems
- Failure to be given prescribed medication
- Poor personal hygiene

### **Financial or material signs**

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts
- Disparity between assets and satisfactory living conditions

- Extraordinary interest by family members and other people in the vulnerable person's assets

### **Discriminatory signs**

- Lack of respect shown to an individual
- Signs of substandard service offered to an individual
- Exclusion from rights afforded to others, such as health, education, criminal justice

One of these signs on its own is very unlikely to be an indicator of abuse. However, cumulatively they should be taken seriously (except signs of self-harm and thoughts on suicide, these should be reported). Members of staff need to be aware of these possible signs and always report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

There may be a number of reasons why a child displays concerning behaviour or their behaviour changes. It is advisable to discuss concerns with parents, carers or the school (if it is a school group) in the first instance, except where this may place a child at increased risk.

An individual who becomes aware of any suspicions or concerns about the safety or welfare of a child must pass these on to the DSL as soon as possible. If they feel the child is in immediate risk of abuse then a statutory agency (local authority children's services or the police) should be contacted immediately.

### **If abuse is suspected**

If you suspect that a child may be suffering abuse but have no evidence, you should first contact your DSL who can discuss the situation and guide you. You should not attempt to carry out your own investigations but must be able to discuss the subject and should pass on any concerns you may have. Write down any suspicions as soon as possible outlining what you have witnessed, heard or were told. Staff members may go to a senior member of staff to voice their concerns, and together they should contact the DSL.

### **If abuse is disclosed**

If a child suffering abuse is attending your activities regularly, they may see you as someone they can trust.

Should a child disclose abuse to you, you should:

- Listen carefully and stay calm
- Use reflective listening, i.e., listen more than talk, and respond with affirmative statements such as: "that must have been very difficult for you." Avoid advice giving or problem solving
- Allow them to speak without interruption and accept what they say
- Be understanding and reassuring but do not give your opinion
- Reassure them that they are not to blame, and you believe them
- Avoid making promises of confidentiality or outcome (you have a duty to pass on the accusation to the authorities and if you promise not to tell you will betray the trust of the child)
- Do tell them you will help and that it is OK to tell
- Keep questions to a minimum. Any questions you ask should be open ended, "tell me about..." or a repeat of what the child has said as a means of confirming the information: "what you are telling me is..."
- Do not interrogate. Don't ask the child a lot of questions, especially leading questions. A question in which you provide a possible answer - Did this or that happen? Were you at home? Did your dad hit you on the leg? Avoid using the word 'why?'
- Avoid being judgemental about the information supplied
- Make brief, accurate notes at the earliest opportunity. Use the actual words used wherever possible
- Tell the DSL urgently (see next section)

### **How to report abuse**

- Any suspicion, allegation or incident must be reported to the DSL, as soon as possible. Use the report form at the end of this document to help.
- If it is an emergency and there is immediate harm, contact the police.
- Remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged harm or abuse is not responsible for deciding whether harm or abuse has occurred.
- Staff can bring their concerns to a senior member of staff (unless the allegation involves them) who will then immediately report the incident to the DSL using the report form, and the Chair or Warden must also be informed (unless the allegation involves them).
- The DSL will refer any safeguarding issue to the relevant authorities.

If you're worried that a child or young person is at risk or is being abused, contact the children's social care team at your local council. Your local authority will have a Children's Emergency Duty Team. The Children's Emergency Duty Team (EDT) is a small team of

qualified, specially trained and experienced senior social workers who provide an emergency response outside of office hours. EDT work 365 days a year and will consider a response for any child or young person (up to the age of 18) who is at risk of significant harm.

The NSPCC operates a 24-hour helpline staffed by childcare professionals for anyone concerned about a child. It is primarily for use by adults and can be used anonymously: 0808 800 5000.

### **One of you or another staff member is accused of abuse or inappropriate behaviour**

Whether the accusation refers to activities outside of SBBOT or while working for us, you should report it immediately to an appropriate senior member of staff and the DSL. Whilst a staff member is under investigation, they may be temporarily suspended from their role subject to the outcome of that investigation. If a staff member is under investigation for activities outside their role with SBBOT which might breach SBBOT's Safeguarding Policy, SBBOT reserves the right to suspend the staff member. Following the outcome of the investigation SBBOT itself may take disciplinary action in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

### **If a child refuses to go home because of abuse**

There is a very remote possibility that a child may suddenly announce that they do not want to go home after an event/activity because they are afraid of abuse. This may happen five minutes before the event/activity is due to finish and will put you in a difficult position.

A child should be encouraged to go home unless you feel they are in real danger by doing so. You cannot legally keep a child from going home with their parents. You can, however, insist on calling the police, who may ask you to stay with the child until they arrive. If the child does go home after disclosing abuse to you, you should contact the local Child Protection Team via the police and tell them of your concerns. Do not disclose to the parents what the child has said. The police will act in a professional manner as they would for any other potential reported crime. Report incident to the DSL immediately.

## **Our Safeguarding Statement**

The following safeguarding statement must be displayed at all events/activities:

***SBBOT is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable and protected adults. We ensure our safeguarding practice reflects***

***statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and regulatory requirements wherever we operate as a charity. Everyone has the right to take part in activities with us in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment.***

### **Code of conduct for the Education Team**

The Education Team is the team of people involved with any outreach and education activities to schools, youth groups, young people, children and vulnerable adults. All members will be DBS checked and Safeguarding trained to Level 1.

All members of the Education Team need to be aware of the impact that their behaviour has on the children they come into contact with. The trust required between an adult and a child is fundamental and should never be jeopardised.

As a member of the Education Team you are expected to act and behave in the following manner:

- Respect everyone as an individual
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour
- Respect everyone's right to privacy
- Make your communications open, friendly, clear and positive
- Be available as a listening ear and, if necessary, refer for more appropriate help
- Be sensitive to other people's likes and dislikes
- Try to ensure that their actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence and are acceptable within a relationship of trust
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues
- Plan to have more than one adult present during activities
- Adhere to SBBOT policies laid out in The Safeguarding Policy
- Be aware that they are accountable to the children, their parents or carers and SBBOT

As a member of the Education Team you may not act or behave in the following manner:

- Permit abusive behaviour such as bullying, ridiculing or taunting
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others

- Touch a child in a way that could be misunderstood or without their express consent
- Jump to conclusions or make assumptions about others without checking facts
- Encourage inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour such as ‘crushes’
- Show favouritism to anyone
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest
- Resort to corporal punishment
- Deliberately place themselves or others in a compromising situation
- Believe “It could never happen to me”

### **Language**

Care should be taken about what is said and the way it is said. Swearing is unacceptable, but children’s inappropriate language must be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

### **Smoking/Vaping**

Anyone above the legal age for smoking/vaping must ensure that they smoke in a discreet, safe manner and in an appropriate legal place away from the children.

### **Alcohol**

Adults at an event or residential experience involving children must not consume alcohol.

### **Drugs**

It is illegal to take non-prescribed drugs not sold over the counter, at any age, and SBBOT has an obligation to ensure that the law is upheld.

### **The use of touch**

SBBOT does not say that staff should never touch a child or vulnerable and protected adult, but the use of touch should never be open to misinterpretation.

For example, a comforting hug after a minor fall or handholding to cross a road may be entirely suitable, so long as it is initiated by the child and is not part of a 1:1 situation.

It is important that staff are open with each other so that it is clearly understood that the way you interact with children is a legitimate issue to discuss. Be aware, however, that some children may develop crushes or other inappropriate attachments to SBBOT adults. In such cases touch is rarely appropriate.

### **Infatuation**

You should discourage children from becoming infatuated with you and other staff. Situations where an individual develops a 'crush' on an adult need to be handled sensitively. While it is important not to encourage a participant with a crush, the adult should be aware of the damage caused by rejection. If an adult thinks a child is developing a crush, she/he should mention it to their line manager or their DSL, so she/he does not have to deal with the situation alone.

### **Favouritism**

Staff should avoid showing favouritism. There are times when an adult finds it easier to relate to one child. However, singling them out can create a feeling of resentment from others in the group, or they can become the object of their teasing. Similarly, unrealistic expectations can be created, and the motive misunderstood.

### **Bullying and discrimination**

Bullying is a form of persistent abuse. It may be physical, verbal, or digital. Be aware that staff could be accused of bullying as a result of an overbearing or authoritarian manner. Take care with adult banter and sarcasm – this is often perceived negatively by children. Bullying behaviour is not appropriate in any SBBOT context, and you should look out for it and prevent. This is best done by bringing it into the open and discussing it, and perhaps by involving the children in setting ground rules for behaviour.

Bullying often results from discrimination, which can have many triggers including race, creed (beliefs), sexuality, hair colour, given name or physical characteristics. Discrimination usually targets qualities that are outside an individual's control. Whatever individual views people hold discrimination is not acceptable.

### **Supervision**

To provide a safe environment, we will ensure that staff when working with children avoid working in isolation out of the sight of parents or other volunteers. Whilst staff are awaiting their DBS disclosure check they must be supervised by someone who does have these checks. Contingency planning should ensure that wherever possible levels of supervision can be maintained by suitably checked adults.

However, in an emergency, this may not always be possible and if there are insufficient suitably vetted adults available, clearly other responsible adults will need to be asked to step in.



## Procedures

### Our approach to running events/activities

Planning events for children, families and vulnerable and protected adults

- Risk assess activities and sites to take account of the specific risks to children and vulnerable and protected adults by thinking about their characteristics
- Ensure that all people in supervisory roles, as well as other helpers, have had appropriate checks and training and that they know when they may be acting in loco parentis
- Plan to avoid any situation in which an individual is alone (1:1) with a child or vulnerable and protected adult
- Ensure you have the required adult:child ratio for your audience and the activity you are undertaking. Some activities will require a higher adult:child ratio – pond dipping or working with under 8s for example
- Always know how many unaccompanied children there are throughout the activity and where they all are. Consider using a buddy system if unaccompanied children are present
- Know what to do in the event that a child goes missing, or if one is found
- Know what to do if there is an accident or if abuse is witnessed or reported to you, and how to get support
- Report any incident, including including 'near misses' using SBBOT's Incident Reporting System and inform a senior member of staff or the DSL as soon as possible.

### Adult: Child Ratios

For any activity SBBOT undertakes that has legally stated or recommended adult: child ratios (holiday clubs), we will ensure these ratios are in place.

For school visits to our sites the minimum ratio of SBBOT adults to children is:

1:30 for school groups (however SBBOT expects schools to provide adult/child ratios in accordance with the requirement of their Local Educational Agency (LEA) or similar)

For any events/activities planned for children/families the level of supervision needs to be appropriate to the capabilities of the children involved in the activity. This could vary depending on:

- age (see table below)
- behaviour
- abilities within your group
- nature and duration of activities – \_if you are working near water, ratios may need adjusting
- competence and experience of staff involved
- requirements of location or accommodation
- any special medical needs
- specialist equipment needed

As a minimum SBBOT will follow the adult:child ratios set out below for any events/activities planned for children/families:

Age	Adults	Children
0-2	1	3
2-3	1	4
4-8	1	6
9-12	1	8
13-18	1	10

These are based on Ofsted guidelines.

Where we are running events for unaccompanied children, there should always be at least one DBS checked adult in charge of any group of unaccompanied children, and a minimum of two other adults present.

Think of the rule of three - if there is an accident and help is needed:

1. someone must remain with the injured party
2. someone goes to get help
3. someone supervises the rest of the group

As for all activities at our sites, first aid provision and risk assessment also needs to be in place.

Lone SBBOT volunteers or staff interacting with the formal education system, such as during outreach visits to schools, should never plan to be alone with an individual child.

Plan activities so that individual SBBOT staff members are never alone with a child. If you need privacy or have to discuss issues with a child alone, make sure at least one other adult is within sight and preferably earshot and that someone else knows why you are taking the action before you do it.

### **Organiser 's responsibility**

Whether an employee or a volunteer, the organiser is in a position of authority, but should operate from a position of mutual respect. Good working relationships will help children to feel safe in expressing their feelings, fears and experiences openly.

Organisers will ensure:

- All unaccompanied children have written parental consent to be with SBBOT for the activities they are undertaking
- There are agreed procedures with parents for delivering and collecting unaccompanied children as appropriate for the activity
- Only staff who are approved to work with children in a supervisory capacity are involved. Non-approved staff can still be involved but should not be placed in a supervisory role, allowed access to personal data or left in a one-to-one situation with a child. People should not move into roles requiring approval without additional checks
- Photographic consent forms are completed and retained before any photographs are taken on SBBOT's behalf. Completed consent forms must be stored locally in a safe and secure location, and destroyed on the child's 18th birthday
- A risk assessment is in place and the controls implemented for the site and the activities being undertaken
- Where appropriate, the independent person information is made available
- Adequate supervision according to our minimum staff:child ratios. Note these are minima. Some activities, such as building nest boxes, may even require 1:1 supervision
- Plans for toileting have been made. If any children need a trip to the toilet, make sure that a one-to-one situation between any adult and a child is avoided. At least two

adults or two children should be present on a toilet run. When going to the toilet yourself, try to not be alone with a child.

- Have clearly advertised start and finish times for meetings, activities and events
- Know who the event/activity leaders will be in any given situation and what their roles and responsibilities will be on the day
- Avoid any staff being alone with a child in private. If this is not possible, for example when administering first aid, then ensure that other staff are aware of the situation and support the action being taken.
- Plan carefully around the known pinch points of arrivals, departures, toilet breaks and accidents
- Ensure all events have at least one person trained in basic first aid. An appropriate first aid kit must be available
- Ensure one person is responsible for overseeing the safety of the event, and that everyone knows what to do in the event of an emergency
- Keep a register - the activity should end with the same number of participants/ children it started with!
- Ensure that there are procedures for dealing with lost children
- The front and back rule. Ensure adults are at the front and back of a line of children heading to and from an activity

## **Helpers**

Offers of help in running activities are always welcome, but organisers must set out the ground rules at the start. If someone offers their services, say 'Great! but this is how we all work - as a team, looking out for one another and the children we are working with, never working alone with an individual child for their and our own safety and wellbeing, not being too familiar with children we are working with'.

If they won't accept the guidelines as you have done, then refuse their offer. It is carelessness that abusers are looking for and will exploit. Anyone with a genuine concern for the well-being of children or vulnerable and protected adults will readily accept the procedures and see the sense in following them.

## **Children, parents/carers/guardians and vulnerable and protected adults**

Your audience shares the responsibility for keeping themselves and everyone else safe. In itself that does not reduce our responsibilities, but it should help by having more people watching out for issues. We need to be clear when we are acting 'in loco parentis'. We are doing that when there are no accompanying parents or other responsible adults (e.g. teachers, grandparent, child minder, babysitter) and where parental or individual consent

forms have been signed. In these circumstances other non-approved adults or children (including 13-17 year olds) cannot take responsibility for others. One role for all SBBOT staff working with these groups is to foster an open, safe and trusting atmosphere at all times. Relevant techniques include agreeing ground rules for behaviour, encouraging active listening skills and discussing safeguarding arrangements regularly.

### **Children going home**

A nominated person should know how each child is expected to go home after the activity (the parental consent form asks for this information). This can be a chaotic time and you will find it helpful to have at least one person responsible for this with someone else close by to answer any questions that may distract them from their duty. Another way to account for everyone is to adopt a procedure whereby each child reports to this person and tells them when they are going home and with whom. This is less important for casual events when children attend with parents or guardians.

Where this is not practical, such as when part of a wider event, the leaders should make sure they are the last to leave.

You should not offer to take children home yourself unless their parents have consented to do so, and you have arranged for another adult to accompany you. Your vehicle must be suitable for carrying children.

### **Head count**

The leader or nominated approved person should check numbers regularly so that you know where everyone is at any given time.

### **Procedures - Things to think about for indoor events**

Everyone should be aware of fire and other emergency exits at any venue where an event/activity is taking place. Anyone who is not leading the event/activity should check with the event organisers to find out:

- Where the fire exits are
- Who has the register and the emergency contact details?
- Who the first aider is
- Where the first aid kit is stored
- If any of the participants have a special need
- Any other information needed to help ensure the environment is safe for the activity to take place

## Procedures - Things to think about for outdoor events

Always observe the following before leading an activity or event outside:

- Go through the risk assessment with another person just to check that you have not missed anything
- Follow the adult-to-child ratios, it is advisable to invite an extra adult in case one drops out
- Visit the venue if it is unfamiliar and work out where to meet the children, where to cross roads if necessary and where the nearest available toilets are
- Check if there is a working telephone nearby or if you can get a signal for a mobile phone. Alternatively you might consider using a set of walkie talkies
- Inform the parents of the details of the event, including what children should wear and bring
- Consider weather necessities such as sunscreen and hats or waterproofs.
- Always have a wet weather plan
- Stay with the group and keep it reasonably close together – \_make sure you do not lose anyone – \_do a regular head count
- Be flexible – \_be prepared to adapt to what your audience finds exciting

## Procedures - Lost and found children

All events will establish procedures for responding to a lost or found child incident and brief staff on them. There is an established collection point **for lost children at the Observatory (the front porch of the Observatory)**. Each event may have different procedures depending on local circumstances and site, but you should base your actions on the following best practice advice:

### If a child is reported lost

- Remain calm. Get as much information from the parents/guardians as possible; at the least, name, address, description, colour of clothes, where the child was last seen and a photo if they have one
- Reassure the parents and ask them to stay put at the lost child point (if there are two people, one could accompany you on the search)
- Explain that you know the area well and can organise a systematic search
- Ask the parents what they would have expected the child to do on their own (e.g. phone you, go to the car or shop)

- Should the search prove unsuccessful after no longer than 30 minutes – \_call the police.
- Write up detailed notes of what happened, when and who was involved in SBBOT's Incident Reporting System, and tell a senior member of staff about the incident. If the police were called, you must also inform the DSL

### **If you find a lost child**

- Get down to the child's height. Show the youngster your name badge and tell them you work there. Ask them their name or check a jacket for a nametag.
- Carry out a brief search of the immediate area with the child. Usually 'lost' children are near their family.
- Take the child to the lost child point if near the Observatory, or somewhere obvious and well populated. Notify other staff on the reserve that you have found them, stay with them in an open area and use calming words.
- If possible, seek help from another adult (that way you do not break the finding yourself in a 1-1 situation rule).
- Confirm the identity of anyone claiming the child and make sure the child can identify them. Do not release the child to anyone under 16. If in doubt call the police.
- If the child is not collected or claimed within 30 minutes, inform the police giving them as much detail as possible.

### **Safeguarding disabled children**

Disabled children and their families may need additional information, help and support. For specific events staff may require training and advice to ensure they include and safeguard them. Some children may be more susceptible to harm than other participants because they may:

- Lack the mutual support and protection of a peer group
- Require higher degrees of physical care and support
- Have limited communication skills
- Find it difficult to resist inappropriate interventions
- Have several carers making it difficult to identify an abuser
- Have a history of having limited or no choice or have a degree of dependency on a carer conflicting with the need to report harm or raise concerns

It is also important to be aware of the additional vulnerability some children experience as a result of a wide spectrum of additional support needs, for example autism or attention deficit disorder.

### **Children causing nuisance or anti-social behaviour on SBBOT sites**

Occasionally children can interfere with our operations, either deliberately or by accident. Accidental or incidental issues include unwanted access to our sites or excessive noise. Deliberate interference includes vandalism and unauthorised use of bicycles and motorbikes. You are probably most likely to come across these situations when you are on your own.

Children may not always realise that what they are doing is wrong, or why we object, so stay calm and non-aggressive while you assess the situation. First, ask them politely to stop whatever it is they are doing, and then try to engage them more positively. If that works, fine – treat it as an opportunity to educate and entertain a new audience. If they refuse, or you deem it unsafe even to ask, call for back up from a colleague or even the Police. Record the incident properly in SBBOT's Incident Reporting System and report it to your line manager.

### **Disruptive behaviour and discipline**

Dealing with disruptive children is not an easy task and there are no set rules that will work with every child. We seldom get to know the children well enough to know if they are suffering other problems that are contributing to their disruptive behaviour, but some action is necessary if the other young people are not to suffer.

You have control and can deliver ultimatums to parents if you feel the activity is suffering because of their child's behaviour. We should be aiming for calm and relaxed supervision where children have fun in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Disruptive children often tend to be accompanied by parents. Disruptive behaviour may have many causes including boredom (activities not pitched at the right level), hormones, attention seeking, troubles at home, and medical and learning/social factors (e.g. dyslexia, diabetes, autism spectrum disorder etc).

Having plenty of assistance will help as you will be able to provide better supervision of the disruptive child and keep their attention without ignoring the rest of the group. While we don't want to reward disruptive behaviour, it can help enormously if you can keep them busy. Set clear ground rules at the beginning and try giving them responsibility, giving praise, rewarding good behaviour rather than punishing disruptive, remembering to use their name, and using games as a distraction or to change pace. Speaking with teachers in advance of learning events to find out about previous learning as well as any additional support needs will help you to plan and pitch your session more appropriately.



It is not unreasonable to insist that a parent of a regularly disruptive child attends and takes responsibility for their child's behaviour.

### **Physical intervention**

The welfare of the child is paramount. In a situation where individuals have to consider whether to intervene to protect a child being injured, injuring themselves or others, physical intervention as a first step should always be avoided unless absolutely necessary. In these situations it is imperative to try and resolve the issue by talking to the child to de-escalate the situation unless it is impractical to do so or if lack of immediate action puts the child at further immediate risk of harm.

In these circumstances, it is imperative to:

- Consider your safety and that of others
- If possible, consult a colleague to assess the best course of action and to see if they are able to support you
- Talk to the child if possible first and give them instructions about what you want them to do, rather than what you want them to stop doing: For example 'I want you to sit down rather than 'don't do that'
- Try to de-escalate the situation if possible. Remain calm, with neutral facial expressions and keep your voice low with an even tone
- Allow the child time and space to react to that you are asking them to do unless it is impractical to do so or if lack of immediate action puts the child at further immediate risk of harm
- Consider distracting or diverting the child unless it is impractical to do so or if lack of immediate action puts the child at further immediate risk of harm
- If you need to physically intervene, use no more than minimum force and no more than is necessary to resolve the incident to prevent the child being injured. injuring themselves or others
- Do not strike blows, act with unnecessary or unreasonable force or retaliate
- Avoid contact with the intimate parts of the body and the head and neck. Using force towards these areas could cause serious harm to the child
- Stay in control of your actions and record what has happened
- Notify the DSL, senior member of staff, or an Officer of the Trust as soon as possible

The DLS should be notified at the earliest opportunity of an incident of physical intervention which involves possible dispute as a complaint might be lodged with SBBOT or the Police by

a parent whose child has been physically restrained. The incident should be recorded in SBBOT's Incident Reporting System.

Physical intervention, often referred to in education as 'Positive Handling', should only be used to achieve an outcome in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern or other children involved and never as a form of punishment.

### **Photographic images**

SBBOT positively encourages parents to take photographs of their own children (only) involved in our activities as it helps to show we are connecting children with nature. However, there are circumstances where taking a photograph of a child will not be acceptable. Any photograph (digital or printed) which is produced and released into the public domain may be misused by anyone, as once this has been done control has been lost.

The key points are:

- Personal information which can lead to a child being identified should never be used. If it is necessary to name a child, ensure you have written parental consent and have informed the parents as to how the image will be used. This is particularly important when issuing press releases and match reports
- Photographic consent forms are completed and retained before any photographs are taken on SBBOT's behalf
- Completed consent forms must be stored locally in a safe and secure location, there is no need to contact the child when they turn 18 but we do need to enact their wishes and remove a photo of them if they contact us with an objection
- Children must be appropriately dressed when being photographed. Images should be neither sexual, of an exploitative nature nor open to misinterpretation or misuse
- It is not an offence to take photographs in a public place. On privately owned or leased land it is the owner who may regulate whether or not photographs may be taken
- Parents should be aware that they may be asked to register their intention to take photographs.

Photographing children at SBBOT led events on non-SBBOT sites:

There are no laws preventing photography of children in a public place, or in any place open to the public where photography is not expressively prohibited. Therefore you cannot restrict photography at these events. Make the parents aware that this is the case.

### **Data protection, parental consent and name gathering**

Only data (information) that is required for the running of an event/activity may be collected, and it must be collected in such a way that makes it clear what is to happen with the data. In practice, this means that explanations about how the data is to be used must be clear and appropriate to the age group.

If you ask a child to provide personal information, you need consent from a parent or guardian, unless it is reasonable to believe that the child clearly understands what is involved and they are capable of making an informed decision. The Data Protection Act does not state at what age a child can act in their own right, but has advised a minimum age of 12. Young people aged 16-18 are often more comfortable with Data Protection options than adults because of their experience in school and college.

Treat as confidential the names and addresses of children collected in any form. They must be kept secure and used only by approved adults. Do not copy names and addresses or use them for other purposes. Unwanted lists must be disposed of. No one should have their own private list.

### **Access to personal information and children's addresses**

Unaccompanied children attending activities must have a parental consent form or fill in a register with details of known relevant medical conditions, e.g. allergies.

Any forms that contain confidential information about children must be treated with care, stored safely, securely and shared with approved adults only on a 'need to know' basis, e.g. after an accident or before eating or preparing food.

Addresses of children, including email addresses, must not be available for casual perusal and are for use by approved adults only.

### **Data storage**

SBBOT has a duty to keep children's personal data safe and secure and in practice this means that these forms must be stored in a locked cabinet or desk when not in use. When they are being used, they must be kept by the main leader of the event/activity and not left for members of the public to see (e.g. not pinned on a notice board while a meeting is in progress).

Keep forms that relate to one-off events along with the rest of the paperwork for the event, but destroy after 18 months.

Keep forms that relate to ongoing activities, such as Parental Consent forms or a Volunteering form while there is still contact with the child and then dispose of by shredding. It is good practice to ask annually whether or not there have been any changes in consent. Where there are changes, a new form must be completed.

Photographic consent is granted in perpetuity, but the consent form is kept until the child's 18th birthday. For images that sit on SBBOT Images, the consent form is directly linked to the record of the image.

Digital data should be password protected.

### **Digital Safeguarding**

Due to COVID-19, some events for families and young people are still being held online.

### **Digital Communication**

This refers to under 18s (u18s) who you have met or work with through your paid or volunteer role at SBBOT.

- Avoid one to one communication with anyone under the age of 18, whatever the platform (social media, email, video call etc.) or device (mobile or computer). You must involve another employee in the communication.
- Direct messages on social media to u18s should only be sent via an official SBBOT account as the access is shared.
- Communication with anyone under the age of 14 must include the parent or guardian.
- If in doubt of the age act as if they are u18 or u14 as applicable.
- Please check and adhere to the age restrictions in the terms of use for any online platform. Lots have age restrictions of over 16s or over 18s only.
- If you are gathering young people's contact details you need to be clear and upfront about what you intend to do with that data and how it will be stored. You must have a reason for asking. U18s have special protection, and you must follow General Data Protection Regulations.

### **Youth Event Participation – \_online or in person**

An event is a broad term to describe a fixed time in which employees meet, either physically or online to partake in some type of activity, where the main target audience includes under

18s. Online and physical events are treated slightly differently due to the risk involved, a summary of physical events has been provided for comparison and clarity.

#### Physical youth events:

- If there are u18s attending, you will need the consent from a parent or guardian
- For these types of youth events, it's okay to have a mixed group of u18s and over 18s (e.g. up to 25 years of age)
- If it's a family style event, such as reserve events no consent forms are required

#### Online events:

- Choosing the right platform: For video conferencing only use Teams or Zoom.
  - Please note Zoom can only be used by participants 16 or over or for strictly educational purposes. The exception is when someone under 16 is speaking or presenting at the event, this is allowed provided they are working with a Level 2 trained Safeguarding lead
  - Please use SBBOT Zoom or Teams account, not your personal one
- Consent: You will need some Participant's parents or guardians to complete a consent form to take part:
  - Anyone 15 and under will need consent from their parent or guardian.
  - If they are 16-17 you do not need parental consent, unless it is a regular activity
  - If this will be a regular activity, we'd recommend all participants complete a parental consent form
- Planning & briefing:
  - Ensure you have a safeguarding representative at your event (Safeguarding Level 2 trained)
  - Consider in your planning what adjustments you can make to ensure it is accessible and inclusive as possible
  - Risk assess the event, considering safeguarding risks and mitigation.
  - Brief all facilitators on safeguarding protocols
  - Communicate to participants 1-3 days before the event so that participants can prepare and are well informed. Recommend that participants join from a communal space in their home

- Only send the video conferencing link when you have a completed consent form (if required)

#### During the Meeting:

- Only allow participants into the room who you have confirmed, remove anyone you do not recognise
  - Conduct a safe space briefing at the start of every meeting. This is a code of conduct phrased in a more empowering way
  - Respect their right to privacy, it's their choice if they wish to have the camera turned on or not. Appreciate that not all u18s will have access to a web camera or even digital devices to take part
  - If using breakout rooms, please ensure you manage the ratios of u18s and over 18s and safeguarding trained adults. You will need two trained adults per breakout group. One of these per group needs to be Level 2 Safeguarding trained
  - If you are sharing your screen or any content, make sure that you read, watch or listen to it beforehand to ensure there is no harmful or distressing content
  
- If joining someone else's event
  - Ask them if they have a safeguarding policy or what safeguarding protocols they have in place
  - You will still need to follow SBBOT Safeguarding policy. For medium to large organisations, it's likely they will have a similar policy. If anything within their policy contradicts ours, please talk to a senior member of Staff, Officer of the Trust or DSL

#### **Photography, film and personal statements**

- It is legal to film in any public place
- If you intend to photograph or film u18s at a digital event, you will need their consent and that of their parents. This is part of the event participation form so it's all in one place
- In addition to the consent it is good practice to let the participants know before and during that you are filming or using photography and how this content might be used. This includes screen grabs of virtual meetings
- Any content shared by u18s or of over18s on social media can be re-shared without a consent form

- When doing so please ensure that you have considered any risks this content might pose to the young person, this includes:
  - Ensuring that it does not give away too much information about the young person (exact name and where they live)
- It could make them a target of trolling & social media abuse (for example if it is a controversial topic known to spark trolling from certain individuals and organisations)
- Ensure we have a zero-tolerance policy on bullying and quick mechanisms in place to remove these types of posts
- All u18s are fully clothed
- Anything about it is disempowering to the young person
  
- If you are creating content featuring young people, please consider the above, and in addition:
  - Ensure the faces of young people are not obscured
  - Consider involving a young person in the creation

# Appendix 1

## People to contact

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

Name	Role	Email	Telephone
Fern	DSL	<a href="mailto:fern@moonreach.co.uk">fern@moonreach.co.uk</a>	07970 397169

Name	Role	Email	Telephone
Greg	Assistant Warden	<a href="mailto:assistantwarden@sbbot.org.uk">assistantwarden@sbbot.org.uk</a>	
Steffan Walton	Warden	<a href="mailto:info@sbbot.org.uk">info@sbbot.org.uk</a>	
Sharon Irvine	Team Lead Trustee	<a href="mailto:sharonirvine52@gmail.com">sharonirvine52@gmail.com</a>	

Name	Role	Email	Telephone
	SBBOT Chair		



## Appendix 2

# Safeguarding Report Form

If you suspect a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of abuse or neglect, you have received a disclosure of abuse from a child or adult, or you have heard an allegation of abuse or witnessed abuse, you must report it to the DSL as soon as possible.

Full name of individual you are concerned about
If you don't have details please give any useful information you have:
Date and time:
Why are you concerned?
What have you been told, heard, or observed and by who and when? Please give a detailed and clear description distinguishing fact from opinion and outlining the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anything you have personally witnessed</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information from a third-party that is relevant but as yet unsubstantiated</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anything you have been told by the child or vulnerable adult.</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be clear about who has said what</li> </ul>		
If an allegation has been made, please give details:		
Have you spoken to the child/vulnerable adult?	Yes	No
What did they say? Use their own words		
Have you spoken to anyone else about your concern?	Yes	No
If yes, who?		
Is this the first time you have been concerned about this individual?	Yes	No
Further details:		

Has any action already been taken in relation to this concern? (e.g. First Aid)
Name and position of the person this record was given to:
If this record has been given to anyone other than the DSL please state why
Date and time form was completed
Date and time form was given to DLS
Your details
Name:
Position:

Signature:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a signature. It occupies the upper portion of the page below the 'Signature:' label.