

Title	Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
Approval authority	Board
Date 1 st approved	December 2021
Last review	May 2024
Next review	30th November 2025
Commissioned by	Faye Butler – Trustee safeguarding lead
Authored by	Jim Cokill, Trust Director



Durham
Wildlife Trust
 From Tees to Tyne

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Purpose and Scope

Durham Wildlife Trust (DWT) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people engaged in the breadth of its activities. DWT acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect.

This policy outlines Durham Wildlife Trust's commitment to Safeguarding Children and Young People from abuse, maltreatment and neglect.

Definition of a child:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) define a child as everyone under 18 unless, "under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier".

This policy and related documents apply to all staff, trustees, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of DWT.

The purposes of this policy is:

- to protect children and young people who access DWT's services;
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to protecting children and young people from abuse;
- to protect staff by having a clear framework, robust procedures and transparent reporting.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children and young people involved in our services is paramount;
- all children and young 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 and young people, their carers and other agencies is essential in ensuring their welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- supporting staff and volunteers by establishing a clear policy and procedural framework, transparent reporting and by promoting a culture of learning throughout the charity;
- encouraging staff and volunteers to discuss any concerns immediately or as soon as practically possible with their line manager/supervisor or designated safeguarding lead;
- listening to and hearing the voice of children, young people and adults at risk and respecting their views;
- recruiting our staff and volunteers safely including references, disclosure and barring checks as appropriate;
- recording and storing information safely and in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation;
- recognising the position of trust in which staff and volunteers are regularly placed and use our procedures and work with our local authorities to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately;
- adhering to Durham Wildlife Trusts Online Safety guidelines to keep children, young people, adults at risk and staff safe when using any device over the internet;
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children and young people, staff and volunteers by adhering to health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- working in partnership with the statutory agencies responsible for the Safeguarding of children and young people;
- ensuring that any third-party individual or organisation involved in delivering activities on behalf of The Wildlife Trusts has appropriate experience, qualifications and/or accreditation and insurance.

This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with key legislation updates or changes and will be promoted through induction, training and ongoing supervision and support.

Legal Framework

In England where Durham Wildlife Trust operates there are child protection systems, laws and guidance to help keep children safe. These are the Children Act of 1989, 2004 and subsequent Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2018.

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

Documents relating to this Policy -

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer – info for staff and volunteers.
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Safer Recruitment DBS.

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Guidance for Staff and Volunteers.
- Online Safety Guidance.
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedures.
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Role of DSO and role specific procedures.
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct.
- Guidance on Working with Children and Young People.
- Safeguarding Reporting Form.
- Children and Young People Risk Assessment Checklist.

This policy operates in conjunction with our policies and procedures on:

- Recruitment
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Complaints
- GDPR and Data Protection
- Privacy and Data Retention
- Discipline and Grievance
- Health and Safety
- Social Media
- Whistle Blowing

Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

It is important to be alert to the signs of abuse and maltreatment. If you feel something isn't right, question the behaviour of children, staff, volunteers, trustees or parents/carers – don't be afraid to speak up and discuss concerns with your Safeguarding lead or line manager. You may become aware of a safeguarding issue through noticing a change in the behaviour of a child or young person or perhaps observing bruising or another sign of physical abuse. A child or young person could tell you about a situation that is happening in their life, this is called a disclosure.

Abuse and maltreatment can take many different forms, as well as the examples below, question anything that doesn't feel right or causes concern. Consideration should also be given to staff conduct when interacting with children and young people - such as not taking part in physical games, trying to avoid being alone with a child or young person (staying within sight and hearing of others whenever possible) and maintaining professional boundaries including any contact over digital devices.

There are four main categories of types and indicators of abuse for children and young people. You should be aware of the warning indicators for each of these.

Category of abuse	Description	Indicators and what to look out for in Children
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.	Children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe; • are left hungry or dirty;

	This can occur during pregnancy through substance abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat or warm clothes; • are often angry, aggressive or self-harm; • fail to receive basic health care; and • parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.
Physical Abuse	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.	Children with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent injuries; • unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones; and • unexplained: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bruises or cuts - bruising in non-mobile babies - burns or scalds; or - bite marks.
Emotional abuse	Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong. • Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'. • Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child. • Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.
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,	Children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age; • use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have; • ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and • have physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas,

	<p>rubbing and touching outside of clothing.</p> <p>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.</p>	sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.
--	--	--

Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.

Parents and carers have little influence over these 'contexts', and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

The following examples are all types of Contextual Safeguarding Risks.

Sexual Exploitation (often referred to as Child Sexual Exploitation or CSE)	<p>This 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</p>	<p>Children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions • associate with other young people involved in exploitation • have older boyfriends or girlfriends • suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant • suffer from changes in emotional well-being • misuse drugs and alcohol • go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and • regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.
--	--	--

	also occur using technology.	
Harmful sexual behaviour	Is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children and young people and which may be harmful or abusive.	<p>There are no formal indicators for this area, however research has shown that children may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • display attachment disorders • have previous sexual victimization – a younger age at the onset of the abuse is more likely to lead to sexualized behaviour • have poor empathy skills.
Child criminal exploitation	Is typified by a power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation and usually involves some form of exchange (e.g. carrying drugs in return for something). The exchange can include both tangible (such as money, drugs or clothes) and intangible rewards (such as status, protection or perceived friendship or affection). Young people who are criminally exploited are at a high risk of experiencing violence and intimidation and threats to family members may also be made.	<p>Signs that a child or young person is being groomed or exploited into criminal activity or county lines include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persistently going missing from school or home and/or being found out-of-area • unexplained acquisition of money, clothes, jewellery, or mobile phones • excessive receipt of texts or phone calls • spending more time online or on their devices • using more than one phone • suddenly acquiring expensive gifts such as mobile phones, jewellery – even drugs – and not being able to explain how they came by them • having hotel cards or keys to unknown places • being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going • relationships with controlling older individuals or groups
Serious youth violence	Young people involved in crime, whether exploitatively or not, may be at risk of being seriously harmed or of causing	<p>Signs to be aware of may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child seems to withdraw from family life • sudden loss of interest in school or change in

	<p>serious physical injury to another.</p> <p>This could be a weapon-enabled violence (stabbing, shooting or hit and run type incidents) or through aggravated assault. The risk of serious youth violence may increase when the young person is gang-affiliated.</p>	<p>behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decline in attendance or academic achievement • being emotionally 'switched off', but also containing frustration / rage • starting to use new or unknown slang words • holding unexplained money or possessions • sudden change in appearance – dressing in a particular style or 'uniform' similar to that of other young people they hang around with, including a particular colour
--	---	---

Radicalisation

The Prevent Duty was created under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and requires certain organisations *'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'*. The aim of this is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, and in particular to prevent people being exposed to extremist ideology and being radicalised in the first place.

Whilst DWT are not bound by the 'Prevent duty', our partner agencies such as Local Authorities and Health and Social Care agencies will carry this responsibility and we must be in a position to recognise warning signs and notify the appropriate agencies if we have concerns regarding terrorism or extremism.

The Charity Commission specifies that it requires all charities to prevent abuse for extremist purposes and refer any instances of concern to the Local Authority.

Radicalisation	<p>Is defined as the process by which people come to support an extreme ideology which advocates violence. This ideology may be religious or political in nature but can also include a fascination with a person (such as someone who has been involved in murders or torture) or a social movement, for example animal rights activism.</p>	<p>There are no standard indicators for radicalisation, but issues that may make a child vulnerable to radicalisation can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identity crisis - distance from cultural / religious heritage and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them personal Crisis - family tensions; sense of isolation; adolescence; low self-esteem; disassociating from existing friendship group and
-----------------------	---	--

	<p>The Governments Prevent strategy/intervention programme aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. While it remains rare for children and young people to become involved in terrorist activity, young people from an early age can be exposed to terrorist & extremist influences or prejudiced views. Referrals for Prevent can be made via your DSL.</p> <p>The Charity Commission requires all charities to prevent abuse for extremist purposes and refer any instances of concern to the Local Authority.</p>	<p>becoming involved with a new and different group of friends; searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.</p>
--	--	---

Bullying

Bullying can occur between children, adults or between adults and children. Bullying can take many different forms and be physical, verbal or non-verbal. Mobile phones, social media and digital platforms such as online communities can be used to bully.

Durham Wildlife Trust will not tolerate any form of bullying between children and young people who are part of our organisation or access our sites to take part in groups or activities.

Bullying can become serious enough to be a child protection issue and, if so, it should be dealt with under the Durham Wildlife Trusts Safeguarding procedures. Durham Wildlife Trust will endeavor to intervene at the earliest point, working with schools, leaders and parents/carers.

Online Abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that takes place on a digital platform via the internet. This could include social media and online communities, online gaming or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. It can take place anywhere and anytime.

Perpetrators of online abuse might be those known to the child or young person as well strangers. Online abuse may be linked to situations happening in a child or young person's life or it may be something that is only happening online. It can feel there is no escape from online abuse as it can happen in safe places such as a child's home or bedroom and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people for the purpose of distressing another individual.

Online abuse is no different to any other type of abuse and DWT's Online Safety Guidance should be followed at all times and DWT's Safeguarding Procedure used to raise any concerns.

Roles and Responsibilities for Safeguarding within DWT

The table below outlines roles and responsibilities:

Role	Responsibilities
Trustee lead for Safeguarding	Taking an overall lead in this area on behalf of the board of trustees. Challenging any strategic decisions which adversely affect anyone's wellbeing. With the Trust Director, reporting serious incidents as necessary to the Charity Commission.
All Trustees	Support the lead trustee in creating a positive Safeguarding culture that works to protect children and adults at risk within DWT Approve Safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that Safeguarding is considered at within decision making.
Trust Director	The Trust Director will ensure that Safeguarding is embedded within all decisions made by senior management by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining a clear strategic and operational focus on Safeguarding children and adults at risk; • ensuring DWT meet the required legislative standards; • making sure everyone in the organisation is aware of their Safeguarding responsibilities and knows how to respond to concerns; and • reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission as necessary.
Designated Safeguarding Officer – Children and Young People	The point of contact for concerns and making referrals if necessary and able to offer support and advice regarding Safeguarding
All DWT staff and trustees	Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff and trustees have a duty to act upon any concerns.

Duty to Refer

All UK legislation states that professionals or organisations with contact with children and members of their families must make a referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care if there are signs that a child (or unborn baby) has suffered significant harm through abuse or maltreatment or is likely to suffer significant harm in the future.

A referral is when there are serious concerns about a child or young person and Durham Wildlife Trust contact and share information with other agencies such as Children's Social Care or the Police in order for them to establish what is happening in the child's life and whether services need to take further steps to help keep them safe or support the family.

Reporting Guidance for Staff and Volunteers

DWT believes that everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children at risk from harm and report any concerns they may have. Information on how to report safeguarding concerns is provided in the *Safeguarding Children and Young People Reporting Guidance for Staff and Volunteers*.

Serious Incidents and Charity Regulators

A serious incident amounts to a situation whereby harm has occurred to DWT beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, or others who encounter DWT through our work.

In England and Wales, the Charity Commission requires charities to report serious incidents. The responsibility for this lies with the Trustees, however operationally this is delegated to Trust Director and the Designated Safeguarding Officer must also be notified before any incident is reported. In all circumstances DWT must be notified of any member of staff or trustee reporting a serious incident to a charity regulator.

If a member of staff or volunteer is found guilty by a court of law of perpetrating abuse Durham Wildlife Trust has the responsibility to inform DBS within one month of their conviction. This will be carried out by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Taking, Storing and Using Images

It is Trust policy to not take photographs of individuals or groups participating in Trust activities to avoid any safeguarding concerns. When images are required for promotional purposes, the Trust will organise specific events or activities where photographs can be taken and safeguarding issues carefully managed.

Where organisations or groups participating in Trust activities have their own consent processes for photos, we will ensure that these are followed in relation to any images DWT subsequently uses for promotional purposes. The organisation or group will be made aware that images may be used by the Trust for promotional purposes and could be published in print and digital media and used on line and in social media and any consent given is on that basis.