

## Hampshire Ornithological Society's Safeguarding Policy

HOS recognises that children (and vulnerable and protected adults)<sup>1</sup> and the decisions they make in the future are vital to the sustainability of our environment. We want to encourage their interest in and understanding of bird conservation issues, and help them to connect to and take action for birds in the following ways:

- Through membership of HOS, individually or as families
- By participating in HOS activities for children and families

We want children to enjoy their involvement with HOS, and must operate safely, with safeguarding as the top priority. We also recognise that we may have incidental or targeted interaction with vulnerable and protected adults and their carers, and need to act and be seen to act appropriately at all times. We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable and protected adults. They are entitled to protection from physical, sexual and emotional harm and have the right to a safe, positive and enjoyable environment when involved with HOS.

This Safeguarding Policy is based on the following key principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children will have a positive, enjoyable and safe experience with HOS
- All allegations, suspicions of harm or abuse and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately
- Everyone will work in partnership to promote the welfare, health and development of children
- Our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and regulatory requirements wherever we operate as a charity
- We aim to ensure that all HOS volunteers<sup>2</sup>, partners, clients, contractors, members and the public are treated fairly. Unless it can be shown to be justified, this will be regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity, or national origin), disability, medical status, age, religion or belief, political opinion, social or economic status, or ex-offender status.

HOS acknowledges that some children, including those who are disabled can be particularly vulnerable to abuse, and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

All volunteers regardless of their role (or anyone working on behalf of the HOS) have a responsibility for understanding our policy and implementing our safeguarding approach.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, child/children is used generically and includes vulnerable and protected adults. <sup>2</sup> Throughout this document, volunteer is used generically and includes anyone working on behalf of HOS.

As part of our Safeguarding Policy HOS:

- Promotes and prioritises the safety and well-being of children
- Ensures everyone working with children clearly understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and vulnerable and protected adults
- Ensures appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support is provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensures that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevents the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals to roles involving working with children
- Ensures robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- Has a nominated Safeguarding Officer on the Management Committee whose role is to provide trustees and other volunteers with training and advice on all matters connected with safeguarding children
- Offers opportunities for children and parents/guardians to contact us with their concerns

The purpose of our Safeguarding Policy is:

- To provide protection for the children who undertake activities with HOS
- To provide volunteers 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 anyone working on behalf of HOS. The policy and procedures are mandatory for everyone involved with HOS. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

We seek to safeguard children by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people
- Adopting child protection and vulnerable and protected adult guidelines through appropriate procedures and a code of conduct for volunteers
- Recruiting volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, carers and staff
- Sharing information about concerns with appropriate agencies who need to know, and involving carers, parents and children appropriately
- Providing effective leadership and management for volunteers working with children through supervision, support and training
- Monitoring our approach to safeguarding
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against volunteers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

Our Safeguarding Policy is reviewed regularly by our Management Committee. Our Safeguarding Policy may also be reviewed in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the Disclosure & Barring Service or other appropriate regulatory bodies
- As a result of changes in policy or guidance issued for Charities by the Charity Commission
- As a result of any other significant change or event.

### **Contact details**

Designated safeguarding person (DSP): Janice Beck

Emergency duty team in Children's Social Care; 0300 555 1373 (in an emergency call 999)

Police: CEOP [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually and when there are significant changes in legislation or internal to our organisation.

This policy document was last reviewed on: 24/06/2020

Person responsible for overseeing review: Janice Beck, Designated Safeguarding Officer