

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to protect children and at-risk adults from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with WNS. This includes harm arising from:

The conduct of trustees and volunteers that work on behalf of WNS. The design and implementation of WNS programmes and activities

WNS commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of **Prevention, Reporting, Response**

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1. **Scope**

This Safeguarding Policy applies to the following people

- Trustees and volunteers that work on behalf of WNS.
- Associated personnel while they are engaged with WNS in delivering its program of activities.
- Members of WNS.
- Individuals who are not members who volunteer at WNS activities particularly work parties
- Non-members attending activities as guests.
- Members of the public who are the same locations as to where an WNS event is being held eg Hall, Nature Reserve, Site of a visit/walk.

2. **Prevention of Harm/Abuse**

To prevent harm/abuse, WNS will:

- Require that parents/guardians of all Child members (under 18) give written permission for their child to join WNS and thereby participate at any events.

- That parents/guardians of all Child members (under 18) will attend activities with their child or nominate another adult that's known to the child to be responsible for them.
- Ensure all trustees, volunteers and associated personnel are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy.
- Ensure members are aware that we have safeguarding policies and make them accessible.
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects children and at-risk adults from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with WNS.
- Conduct a risk assessment prior to all activities and implement safeguarding procedures when delivering its program of activities.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

3. Recognition of Harm/Abuse

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human or civil rights by any other person or persons”

Anyone can experience abuse. Anyone may be a perpetrator of abuse. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts. Abuse may be behaviour that deliberately or unknowingly causes harm, or endangers life or rights. Abuse may be perpetrated by an individual, a group or an organisation.

The most common types of abuse are:

Physical abuse: this is usually the force to cause pain and injury and may include hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions. Signs may include burns, bruising, burns, scolds’ scratches or accidents that cannot be explained. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health, to a child whom they are looking after.

Adult Sexual abuse: includes rape, sexual assault, sexual innuendos, sexual activities or viewing explicit materials to which the person has not given consent to, or was pressurised or manipulated into. Signs can include changes in behaviour, becoming withdrawn or displaying physical discomfort.

Child Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The sexual activities may involve: Physical contact including penetrative acts (i.e. rape or buggery). Physical contact including non-penetrative acts (i.e. fondling). Non-contact activities such as involving a child in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or in watching sexual activities. Encouraging or forcing a child to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or speaking to them in a sexually inappropriate manner.

Sexual exploitation the term ‘sexual exploitation’ means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting

monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Domestic violence: includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse

Psychological abuse: includes threats of harm or abandonment, isolation, deprivation of contact, humiliation, intimidation, constant criticism, belittling coercion, harassment, hate crime, mate crime, anti-social behaviour, verbal abuse, or withdrawal.

Signs can include fear, confusion or disturbed sleep. humiliating and degrading

Child Emotional Abuse: is the ongoing emotional neglect or maltreatment of a child and it can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development. Emotional abuse of a child may involve: Conveying to the child that they are worthless, inadequate, unlovable or unloved. Bullying, belittling, humiliating, isolating or ignoring the child. The imposition of age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on a child. Causing a child to frequently feel frightened or in danger. The exploitation or corruption of a child.

Adult Neglect or acts of omission: this can include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services and withdrawing the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Signs may include deteriorating health, appearance or mood.

Child Neglect: this is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/ or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve: A parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing. A parent or carer failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger. The failure of a parent or carer to ensure that a child has access to appropriate medical care or treatment. A parent or carers neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs (e.g. nurturing, emotional security, reassurance, encouragement)

Financial / material abuse: this includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills or property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. Signs may include valuables going missing or there may be a change in financial circumstances that is unauthorised and cannot be explained.

Modern day slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, forced marriage and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

4. Good Practice

WNS trustees, volunteers and associated personnel are obliged to:

Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy

Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by WNS volunteers and associated personnel to the Safeguarding Trustee.

Follow safe guarding good practice when *working* with children

- Never be alone with a child or young person whilst they are participating in WNS activities.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child in contact with WNS.
- Remember that children regard adults as role models and ensure your behaviour, language, gestures etc. are appropriate and above reproach.
- Respect the wishes of a child as you would an adult, you must not impose yourself on them
- Work to prevent any member of WNS or associated personnel from putting any child in a situation in which there is a significant risk to their health and safety, or where a child's safety might be questioned.
- Take appropriate action if you become aware of anyone physically, emotionally or sexually abusing a child.

Report any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child has been physically, emotionally, sexually abused, or put at risk at all whether by an adult or another child, by immediately following the reporting procedures outlined below in this policy

5. Reporting

WNS will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to our members and associated personnel.

WNS will ensure that there is a trustee responsible for Safeguarding "The Safeguarding Trustee "

WNS will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern for an at-risk adult

The person reporting their concerns may have:

Received a disclosure from a person experiencing abuse, been contacted by a relative, friend or carer, a member of WNS or associated personnel, observed abuse or suspected abuse

They must take any immediate action needed to safeguard the health or safety of the person for whom there is concern. If they are in immediate danger, the police or other emergency services should be contacted straight away.

They should make sure that the person disclosing information understands that abuse is not their fault and must only ask sufficient questions to establish what has happened.

They must explain to the person disclosing information that this information will have to be passed on to Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding. However, if they do not agree to pass on the information and the reporter believes the person to be at significant risk, it is then their responsibility of to report the disclosure regardless of the at-risk adult's wishes,

The reporter must note details about the person who is, or may be, at risk from abuse, as well as details concerning the nature of the abuse, recording time, date and location. Detailed notes should be made as soon as possible. Documentation is vital and may be needed as evidence for criminal proceedings at a later date.

Members or associated personnel who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to The Safeguarding Trustee.

Allegation of child abuse

There are four likely scenarios, which you should be aware of and be prepared to deal with if necessary:

- There is suspicion, or evidence, that a child is being abused by a member of WNS or associated personnel.
- A child accuses a member of WNS or associated personnel of abusing them.
- Abuse takes place, or abuse is suspected, at a WNS activity by an individual unrelated to WNS
- A child discloses abuse happening elsewhere (eg: at home).

In all cases you must act straight away:

- Do not let anything stop you from protecting a child. You might be the only one to act to stop the abuse.
- When in doubt, act straight away. Be calm, assured and professional.
- You should try to show that you are listening to concerns but do not agree to things you cannot deliver (e.g. to keep things secret or that you can stop any abuse etc.)
- Whilst you may need to clarify things, try not to ask too many questions. (Child abuse cases can be dismissed if the child appears to have been led, or words and ideas suggested to them.)

Contact details:

If the person does not feel comfortable reporting to the Safeguarding Trustee (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern), they may report to it to any of the Trustees.

The Trustee will then report the disclosures to the relevant agency (or agencies) from the following list, with a written report to follow:

Bradford District Adult Protection Unit: 01274 431077 www.bradford.gov.uk report a safeguarding adults concern

Bradford Council's Safeguarding Children Team:

During office hours call the Children's Social Care Initial Contact Point – 01274 435600.

Out of office hours contact the Social Services Emergency Duty Team – 01274 431010

West Yorkshire Police – non emergency calls: (101)

If you have reason to believe that anyone is at immediate risk of harm contact the police on 999

6. Response

WNS will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

WNS will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to volunteers or associated personnel found in breach of policy.

WNS will offer support to survivors of harm caused by volunteers or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

Confidentiality does not apply when there are real and immediate concerns about the safety of a child or young person.

Documentation of allegations and action taken:

The person dealing with the disclosure / making the allegation must provide written details concerning the nature of the abuse, recording time(s), date(s) and location(s). Detailed notes should be made as soon as possible. Documentation is vital and may be needed as evidence for criminal proceedings at a later date.

7. Glossary of Terms

WNS - Wharfedale Naturalists Society

WNS Members - Members of Wharfedale Naturalists Society

Trustees - Elected members of the Society who manage the societies activities.

Volunteers - Members of WNS who help to deliver its programme of activities

Associated Personnel - Individuals or representatives of WNS partner organisations who work with WNS to deliver its programme of activities

Programme of Activities -Not limited to but including talks, meetings, walks, visits, online talks and meetings, work groups, coach trips and car shares to events, workgroups, promoting the society using stalls at events and social media Compiling and reporting wildlife records, publishing printed and online publications. Granting monies and seeking funding from other organisations. Engaging guest speakers. Purchasing equipment and services to deliver our programmes.

Child /Young Person A person below the age of 18

At-risk adult Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation 'An individual is at risk when, as a result of their needs, they are unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect or the risk of it.' (Care Act 2014, section 42)

This policy was agreed at a Trustees' meeting held on _____

and will be reviewed on an annual basis or at other times deemed necessary.