



The
Wildlife
Trusts

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

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Shropshire Wildlife Trust



Title:	Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
Approval authority:	Council
Date approved:	12th February 2025
Review due date:	February 2027
Authored by:	Ellie Leach
	This policy should read in conjunction with the following documents:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SWT Safeguarding Adults with Care and Support Needs and Children and Young People Procedure• SWT Whistleblowing Policy• SWT GDPR Policy• SWT Policy on photography and / or film of children and young people (under 18)• SWT Online Safety Guidance

Named safeguarding leads

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

Definition of a child

England

In England a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- living independently
- in further education
- a member of the armed forces
- in hospital; or
- in custody in the secure estate

they are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (Department for Education, 2018a).

Wales

Section 3 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 states that a child is a person who is aged under 18.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and the associated procedure is to provide clarity to all staff, trustees, volunteers, and members of the public on Shropshire Wildlife Trust's approach to safeguarding children and young people.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) is committed to the highest standards of charity governance for safeguarding and this policy is the foundation of a universal approach across the organisation that puts safeguarding at the heart of the Trust's engagement.

SWT has a duty of care to children and young people, their parents, carers and/or families that take part in our activities. We endeavour to provide a safe and friendly environment that celebrates all achievements. We will achieve this by ensuring that staff, volunteers and trustees comply with all legal, contractual and professional standards and responsibilities in their work with children – whether within a group situation or one to one.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of SWT. Where The Trust undertakes activities with third parties, staff shall have due regard to the safeguarding policies of the third-party provider.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or in line with key legislation updates or changes and forms a core part of our induction, training and ongoing supervision and support.

Context

In England/Wales where SWT operates there are child protection systems, laws and guidance to help keep children safe.

- In England: The Children Act of 1989, 2004 and subsequent Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2018
- In Wales: The Children Act 1989, 2004, Working Together to Safeguard People Guidance 2018 and Wales Safeguarding Procedures and Practise Guides 2019.

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

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

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

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.

This responsibility is two-fold. We will:

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

SWT engages with children and young people during school and nursery visits, Watch groups, young rangers, work placements/ work experience, youth forums, community / family events and holiday clubs.

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

Many of these activities are supported by school staff or children attend with their parents. Those activities whereby SWT has direct supervision of a child or young person, parent / guardian consent is required ahead of the activity taking place as well as completion of thorough risk assessments. All activity should follow guidance found in SWTs Safeguarding Procedure.

Shropshire Wildlife Trust's Safeguarding Commitment

Ensuring that all who visit our sites and engage with our organisation have an enjoyable and safe experience, is an absolute priority for SWT. This includes our visitors, members, volunteers, staff and trustees. We recognise that there are some people who may need additional help and support, including children and young people. We are committed to our Safeguarding responsibilities as well as ensuring safety and wellbeing is at the heart of our engagement with all people. We want to inspire and encourage everyone to spend time outdoors, develop a connection with nature and play their part in nature's recovery in our local communities.

We will:

- Take all reasonable steps to protect all who visit our sites, take part in our activities or engage with us online
- Give equal priority to keeping all safe from harm, regardless of their age, disability, gender, race, beliefs, sex, or sexual orientation
- Provide our staff, volunteers and trustees with the knowledge and tools to guide them in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect
- Not tolerate any form of abuse or neglect within SWT.

We will achieve this by:

- Supporting staff and volunteers by establishing a clear Safeguarding policy and procedural framework, transparent reporting and by promoting a culture of learning throughout the organisation
- 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 those who use our sites and respecting their views
- Recruiting our staff and volunteers safely by following the principles of safer recruitment guidance
- Recording and storing information safely and in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation
- Recognising the position of trust in which staff, trustees and volunteers are regularly placed and use our procedures and work with our local authorities to manage any allegations against them appropriately

- Establishing online safety guidelines to everyone interacting online with SWT as safe as possible
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for all by adhering to health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Working in partnership and establishing a clear system of referring or reporting to 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 SWT has appropriate safeguarding arrangements.

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 SWT shares information with other agencies such as Children’s Social Care or the Police 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.

Further details on making a referral and the information required can be found in SWT’s Safeguarding Procedure.

Roles and Responsibilities for Safeguarding within The Trust

Role	Responsibilities
Trustee lead for Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 CEO, reporting serious incidents as necessary to the Charity Commission
All Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the lead trustee in creating a positive safeguarding culture that works to protect children within SWT • approve safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that safeguarding is considered at every stage of decision making
CEO of The Trust	<p>Ensure that safeguarding is embedded within all decisions made by the Senior Management Team by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining a clear strategic and operational focus on safeguarding children • ensure SWT meets the required legislative standards • making sure everyone in the organisation is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and knows how to respond to concerns • reporting serious incidents as necessary to the Charity Commission
Designated Safeguarding Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safeguarding subject expert and the point of advice throughout the Trust • responsible for developing policy, procedure, training and reporting mechanisms as well as being a support for the safeguarding point of contacts • responsible for ensuring that staff complete regular training appropriate to their roles • responsible for making referrals and overall safeguarding case management
All Trust staff, volunteers and trustees	<p>Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.</p> <p>All staff and trustees have a duty to understand and act upon any concerns they may have regarding children and young people</p>