

WARKWORTH GREEN MATTERS CHILDPROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Warkworth Green Matters (WGM) recognises that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of everyone who participates in its activities, in particular those such as children who may be more vulnerable.

In order to do this, we will:

- appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer who will take lead responsibility on this issue;
- include safeguarding considerations in any risk assessment connected with the group's activities; and include safeguarding on all committee meeting agendas

The relevant guidance documents are referenced below and should be referred to when considering how to respond to any concerns.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is:

- To act as a central point to whom any safeguarding concern would be reported.
- To decide what action (if any) is required. If the DSO is unsure what action to take, they will take advice from the NSPCC Helpline or from the local authority.
- To keep an accurate record of the concerns and of any action taken, and to store records securely and confidentially.
- To ensure that this policy is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any changes in government guidelines and legislation, or in the nature of the group's activities.

While this policy is primarily concerned with safeguarding children and young people, the same principles would apply in the case of an adult who is deemed to be at risk of abuse. The principal differences relate to matters of mental capacity and consent, the different forms of abuse that could be involved and the different agencies who may be able to assist.

For the purposes of this policy a child is anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18.

WGM welcomes children of any age taking part in its activities, where appropriate. All children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or carer. [This is a condition of our insurance: any activity including unaccompanied children under 18 would require Enhanced DBS checks for all volunteers present.]

If the DSO is not present at a WGM event, then another person will be identified as the point of contact for any concerns, and the DSO informed as soon as possible.

Date of adoption: December 2023

Updated 30th July 2026

Safeguarding Procedures

What constitutes abuse – children and adults at risk

There are four major categories of abuse affecting children to be aware of. These are:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

However, it is important also to be aware of other specific risks such as bullying and cyber-bullying; criminal exploitation and gang-related activity; female genital mutilation; forced marriage; domestic abuse etc.

You can learn more about these risks and how to recognise them here -

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

Adults can also be affected by these forms of abuse but may other types of harm as well. The additional categories recognised for adults include:

- domestic violence
- modern day slavery
- discriminatory abuse
- financial or material abuse
- organisational or institutional abuse
- self-neglect

You can learn more about these issues and how to recognise them here –

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>

Safe working practice & Code of conduct

- Avoid working alone. Ensure that you are never in an enclosed or isolated space alone with children, young people or adults at risk. Work in pairs if possible or take your activity into a shared or public space.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries. Physical contact with young people should be of the kind that they can initiate or cease whenever they wish (high fives rather than hugs).
- Do not single out a young person for special treatment or individual attention.
- Do not give a young person gifts or money, even to access transport or buy food at your event.
- Do not arrange to meet a young person alone outside of the event or activity.
- Do not offer a young person a lift in a private car.
- Do not give out or accept personal contact details from someone under 18. This includes “friending” on social media through personal accounts.
- Especially if working with a group of people on more than one occasion, establish a clear code of conduct that will ensure a safe non-threatening environment and provides a basis for challenging unwanted behaviours or attitudes.

Risk assessment

In preparing for any activity, it is important to anticipate and take steps to mitigate any risks. From a safeguarding perspective the following questions should be considered.

1. What factors might make some participants more vulnerable (eg age, disability etc)?
2. Does the environment present any additional risks (e.g. physical hazards, opportunity for interactions with vulnerable participants to happen in private)?
3. How will participants know who they should speak to if they have any concerns?
4. If working with another organisation e.g. a school, are you aware of their safeguarding arrangements (eg who is their DSO or equivalent)

Reporting concerns

It is essential that any concerns about the safety or well-being of a child or young person are responded to promptly and reported to the DSO or other designated person for that event. The DSO must consider what action (if any) is required.

If the DSO has any doubt as to what action to take, they will seek advice from the NSPCC Helpline or from the local authority (contact details are included below).

Record keeping

When there are concerns about a child or young person's welfare or safety, it's vital all relevant details are recorded. This must be done regardless of whether the concerns are shared with the police or children's social care.

Keep an accurate record of:

1. the date and time of the incident/disclosure
2. the date and time of the report
3. the name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported and their contact details
4. the name and role of the person making the report (if this is different to the above) and their contact details
5. the names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses
6. the name, age and any other relevant information about the child who is the subject of the concern (including information about their parents or carers and any siblings)
7. what was said or done and by whom
8. any action taken to look into the matter
9. any further action taken (such as a referral being made)
10. the reasons why the organisation decided not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant).

All records will be kept securely and confidentially.

Photography

Sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation. In order to do so safely we will:

- always ask for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image, making it clear that if a child or their family subsequently withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- always explain what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- Not show the names of children whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
- never publish personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the name of their school or a school uniform with a logo)

Reference documents

The two main guidance documents issued by the government are 'Working together to safeguard children' and 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'. They are available here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

[What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Adults - It is difficult to identify a single guidance document relating to safeguarding adults as there are many possible reasons why an adult might be at risk. The Ann Craft Trust provides a helpful summary of the range of guidance available.

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/safeguarding-adults-legislation/>

Contact Details

The NSPCC Helpline can be contacted on 0808 800 5000

The Local Authority (safeguardingreferrals@northumberland.gov.uk) can be contacted on 01670 536400 at any time.