

HRGB Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures

An important aspect of the ethos of a Society whose members value the social aspects of membership is that we are alert to the well-being of our fellow-members, particularly if they appear to be behaving differently, or stressed. If a fellow-member (child or adult) is in distress for any reason we should try to listen and support. We should aim to support others as we would wish to be supported. If any of us are worried about a fellow-member at any time please say something to their team leader, or to the organiser of the event we are attending.

If you are concerned about an adult

If the person you are concerned about is an adult, it will be important for another adult who knows them to be made aware of their distress. A telephone call to their *Emergency Contact* may be helpful or even necessary, though their *Team Leader* is likely to be the first person to talk to. Once you have listened to the person and told their team leader (or in her / his absence another team members or the *Event Organiser*) you have done what you need to do, though you may wish to make contact with the person again later, to see how they are.

NB: for descriptions of the roles written in italics, please see later in these guidelines.

Child Protection Procedures 1: Preparing for an event

Simple guide for event organisers

- Make sure you have names and contact details of participants.
- Make sure the name of the Event Safeguarding Lead is in the event information.

More detail

At HRGB-organised events where children and young people* are participating, a named *Event Safeguarding Lead* should be identified by the *Event Organiser*. Her / his name and information about how to contact her / him should be made available to participants, either in pre-event information or on the day or both.

The *Event Organiser* should have a record of who is responsible for each of the young people attending the event. This may be, for example, the *Team Leader* who has booked them into the event, or a teacher, parent or a Society member acting in loco parentis. The *Event Organiser* should also ensure that they have a list of participants' names and teams in case contact needs to be made with any participants after the event. This list should be kept for a year and then be destroyed. (N.B. This is will also be important in the case of fire or other emergency. Emergency Services attending a venue will ask for a complete list of occupants / participant.)

Consider having "HRGB Guest" lanyards for non-members attending an event. These would help to raise awareness that we are alert to safeguarding issues.

* Through the remainder of this document, the shorter form: "young people" will be used.

Child Protection Procedures 2: What might happen at an event and what should you do?

Simple guide for all members

- Most events will come and go without any issues at all, so don't feel that you have to be always on the look-out for issues.
- If you do see or hear something which makes you concerned that anyone, especially a young person, is unsafe in any way, you need to tell someone about it.
- Choose a person to tell who can do something constructive about the problem then, with them, and with the agreement of the young person if possible, decide what to do next (See section 3 below).
- Always act in the best interest of the young person.

Simple guide for event organisers and event safeguarding leads

- If someone at your event tells you that they are worried that a young person is not safe, listen, discuss with each other, discuss with the young person if possible, then decide what to do next (See section 3 below).
- Always act in the best interest of the young person.

More detail

Safeguarding and Child Protection issues at Society events are rare and it's very unlikely that a young person will feel unsafe because of the event itself. If a young person is presenting symptoms of stress or anxiety at an HRGB event this is probably because of other events happening in their lives.

There are several possible situations in which a Society member might feel that something is not appropriate, including:-

1. if they overhear any conversation or reported conversation which makes them concerned that a young person is unsafe in any way (see "indicators" on Page 1 above);
2. if they see or hear someone talking or behaving inappropriately towards a young person;
3. if a young person tells a Society member something that suggests that they are not safe. (See Appendix 3 – Listening to young people)

What to do in these situations

In all these cases, talk as soon as possible to the *Event Safeguarding Lead*, or the young person's *Team Leader*, or both, describing what you saw or heard and the reason you think it is worrying. Try to get a clear description of what happened in a single conversation with the young person. Together with the young person's *Team Leader*, or the *Event Safeguarding Lead*, or both, decide who to tell and what to do next – see the alternative courses of action below.

Child Protection Procedures 3: What happens next?

Situation	Courses of action include:-
The young person is in immediate danger	Dial 999 and ask for the police
Someone attending the event has spoken or acted inappropriately towards a young person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bearing in mind the young person’s reaction, as described by the observer, decide whether to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tell the adult responsible for the young person at the time then take no further action. ➤ Tell the adult responsible for the young person at the time and make a joint decision as to what to do next. ➤ Tell the adult responsible for the young person at the time, and the <i>Regional Safeguarding Officer</i>. If necessary, jointly make the decision to contact the NSPCC or the relevant Safeguarding and Child Protection authority, to ask for advice.
The young person is distressed by something or someone not connected with the event	Talk to the adult who is responsible for the young person, passing on the relevant information. At that point the matter should be out of the Society’s hands, though there may be follow-up from relevant authorities.

Advice and guidance

You can contact your Regional Safeguarding Officer or the National Safeguarding Officer (contact details in Reverberations).

The NSPCC offers a Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk. Trained staff will talk through your concerns with you and give you expert advice.

The relevant safeguarding and child protection authority will also give advice. If you are not sure how to contact them, make initial contact with the NSPCC.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Authorities

All Regional Committees should ensure that their Safeguarding Officers have access to details of the Safeguarding and Child Protection authorities in their Region. In different local authorities these may be the Police, the LA’s Social Services Team or the Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Hub (MASH).

Child Protection Procedures 4: Referring to the Child Protection Authorities

If a decision is made together (and possibly following advice from the NSPCC) to refer a situation to the Child Protection Authorities, please refer to the appropriate procedure below.

In England and Wales, options include:	In Scotland, options include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your local child protection services. Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in. • Contact the police. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your local children’s social work team. Their contact details can be found on the website for the local authority the child lives in. • Contact the local Children's Reporter. Local, independent officials can decide if any legal interventions need to be made to protect a child. Children’s Reporters offices can be found on the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration 2018. • Contact Police Scotland if you are concerned that a child is in immediate danger.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding and Child Protection Officers' roles

The main roles of *national and regional Safeguarding Officers* are

1. to promote this policy to HRGB members,
2. to be accessible to *Event Safeguarding Leads* in case they need support and advice,
3. to be involved in the decision to contact the ***relevant Safeguarding and Child Protection authority*** following an incident, if appropriate,
4. keep brief confidential records of safeguarding and child protection issues,
5. make contact after the event with those who have been affected by an incident to check that they are ok,
6. stay aware of relevant changes in legislation and in local (Council) arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and bring these to the notice of their Regional Committee and the NEC as they may require changes to our policy or procedures, and
7. in the case of *Regional Safeguarding Officers*, to ensure that they have up to date details of the appropriate Safeguarding and Child Protection authorities for their region

The *National Safeguarding Officer* should make sure that she / he or a deputy is accessible to *Event Safeguarding Leads* of national events (for example, national rallies, National Residential Ringing Week and UK Bronze). S/he will also support appropriate applications for DBS / PVG checks.

Regional Safeguarding Officers should make sure that they, or a deputy, are accessible to *Event Safeguarding Leads* of regional events (for example, rallies).

Deputies could be other *Safeguarding Officers*.

If a region does not have a *Safeguarding Officer*, the role should temporarily be undertaken by a member of the Regional Committee who has appropriate experience. If there is no such Committee Member, the role defaults to the *Regional Chair*.

A list of *Safeguarding Officers* will be found in the Guidance section of the HRGB website and *Regional Officers'* contact details will be found on regional websites.

Event Safeguarding Leads

The *Event Safeguarding Lead* should be present at the event they are responsible for (the *Safeguarding Lead* may be the *Event Organiser*, though this is not recommended). They should make themselves available to participants who have safeguarding and child protection concerns, though these are likely to be rare. They should make sure that their name and contact details are made available either before or during the event or both. They do not need to be "experts" in safeguarding and child protection matters, but should be approachable and able to listen with empathy to others' concerns. In case of concerns, they should follow the procedures on pages 5 to 8 of this document.

If the *Safeguarding Lead* needs another view on the incident, they should talk to the *Regional Safeguarding Officer* or a Committee Member and keep the discussion confidential.

The Use of HRGB Membership Cards and the promotion of a safe environment

Membership cards are very rarely used at regional or national events to prove that a participant is an HRGB member. This may be because we are a small Society and members know each other well, but it does not support the establishment of a safe environment for young people (who don't know other members well and operate on trust). For this reason, this policy is clear that at national and regional events, regular checks should be made (with prior warning). Different regions may operate these checks in different ways, and the policy does NOT state that every participant's card should be checked at every event. However, we should be mindful that we want HRBG events to be increasingly safe for young people.

Some regions run events which are open to non-members, as guests, in order to encourage them to join the Society. Organisers should ensure that these events are clearly identified so that team leaders of young people can decide whether it is appropriate for their team members to attend. Guests should sign the attendance register so that a complete register of attendees is made. As membership card checks become more common it will be helpful for guests to be given a "guest attendance" label in their "welcome" pack, so that they have something to show that they are entitled to attend the event.

Regional Committees should support Event Organisers by promoting the policy of membership card checks.

Safeguarding training and support from HRGB

HRGB will organise training for National and Regional Safeguarding Officers, Chairs and other members if there is a demand. The National Safeguarding Officer will support applications for DBS / PVG checks.

Support for people affected by an incident

Young people or adults who have been involved in an incident when a young person has been hurt, or felt unsafe, may be affected by the situation. Safeguarding and Child Protection Officers should make it a priority, in the weeks after the event, to contact those people who have been affected to check that they are ok.

Records:- The *Safeguarding Officers* should keep careful, accurate, records of reports and incidents, showing the action taken. Records should be kept on a personal computer with a good level of security and not shared electronically. Any printed copy must be shredded as soon as possible.

Once incidents are resolved and/or handed over to the relevant authority, the *safeguarding officer* should keep a summary statement about the event, including date, concerns, the name of the person causing concern and how the situation was resolved. At this point the records kept as the incident was being reported and passed on can be destroyed.

The summary statement should be retained by the *Regional Safeguarding Officer*. If that officer steps down from the role, the summary statements should be passed to the *Regional Chair* and to the *National Safeguarding Officer*. The purpose of keeping these statements is to be able to check over time on the behaviour of people causing concern.

Retention period:- Concerns about an adult's behaviour around children and adults at risk will be kept in a secure file until the member in question reaches retirement age or for 10 years – whichever is longer. Records will be kept regardless of whether the allegations are unfounded. However, if the allegations are malicious the record will be destroyed immediately. Information will be kept until the member stops their membership or stops volunteering for the organisation. Only information regarding safeguarding matters will be retained (*added 9/24*)

There is currently no consensus about how long charities should keep summary statements of safeguarding and child protection incidents. Good record keeping will:

- Show that we are complying with regulation.
- Provide evidence of how decisions have been made and demonstrate good governance and processes.
- Build trust with third parties as they know that we base decisions upon evidence and can be held accountable for our actions and decisions.

Apart from *Chairs*, and the *National and Regional Safeguarding Officers* no one else should have access to these records.

However, conversations about them between *Safeguarding Officer(s)* and *Chairs* will be helpful when planning how the Society will manage planned events involving young people. In the case of safeguarding and child protection incidents caused by Society members it may be necessary to share information between Regional Chairs or *Safeguarding Officers* of different regions, as Society members increasingly travel to attend events in other parts of the country.

Summary of other roles described above

Event Organisers should:-

- hold the names and phone contact details of the adults responsible for young people who take part in Society events;
- hold emergency contact details for participants and then destroy these, in line with HRGB's Data Protection Policy;
- hold the names and team affiliation of all participants. This can be destroyed after one year;
- allow the relevant *Safeguarding Officer* to see the list of participants, in order that they are aware of any person attending who is a potential safeguarding and child protection risk;
- identify the *Event Safeguarding Lead* in information sent out before the event and on the day.

Team Leaders should:-

- support others, especially *Event Safeguarding Leads*, if there is a concern about a member of their team;
- arrange for their team to have a safeguarding policy and procedures, which could be modelled on this document.

Regional Chairs should

- be their region's default *Safeguarding Officer*;

- support their region's members who are dealing with safeguarding and child protection issues;
- ensure lessons are learned from any situation;
- receive and keep summary statements of events from Regional Safeguarding Officers when these officers step down from their role.
- as appropriate, inform other regional chairs and the *National Safeguarding Officer* of incidents which might have an impact on other regions.

Regional Committees should:-

- support *Event Organisers* by promoting the policy of membership card checks.

Policy and Procedures Review

The safeguarding policy and the associated procedures will be reviewed and revised as necessary a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances: -

- ❖ Changes in legislation or government guidance
- ❖ As required by national and local government safeguarding and child protection policies
- ❖ As a result of any other significant change or event.

Appendix 1 Disclosure checks for voluntary sector organisations

DBS Checks in England and Wales

The checking service for adults working with children and young people and adults at risk is known as the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

There are three levels of DBS Check: Basic, Standard and Enhanced. Basic and Standard checks highlight convictions. Enhanced checks show whether a person has been barred from working with children, young people or adults at risk. HRGB members who are regularly supervising young people, sometimes without other adults present, need to apply for an Enhanced DBS Check.

Applications for basic DBS Checks can be made by individuals at www.gov.uk/dbscheck. Applications for enhanced checks need to be made through an umbrella organisation – in our case we can apply through Making Music.

PVG Checks in Scotland

The checking service for adults working with children and young people and adults at risk is known as the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) membership scheme and is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland. There are umbrella bodies providing disclosure check services.

Volunteer Scotland provide free disclosure check services for voluntary sector organisations, including PVG applications for volunteers. Volunteer Scotland also provide advice and guidance.

Appendix 2 Listening to young people

- If a young person tells you something worrying, it's likely to be true – it's unlikely that they will be creating a fiction, so do listen to them and don't dismiss what they say lightly.
- Try to clarify what happened in a single conversation by allowing them to describe the incident from beginning to end. Try to do this without asking questions, and certainly do not ask leading questions
- Don't promise the young person that you will not say anything to anyone, especially if there appears to be a potential child safety or even criminal issue being described. In these cases you must tell them that you will speak to someone else about what they have told you, otherwise you could be withholding evidence.

- Try to avoid being alone with the young person where no-one else can see you. Although it's unlikely, it is possible that they might later tell a fictional story about you.
- Talk to the *Event Safeguarding and Child Protection Lead* about what they have said as soon as you can, in order to get another view. This is particularly important if the young person feels unsafe.