



Wash Wader Research Group

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

This policy applies to all those who are involved in our activities either on a voluntary basis or people who are engaged to deliver work on the Group's behalf.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach and commitment to protecting children and vulnerable adults who engage with WWRG from harm and abuse. All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to protection from harm and abuse.

Background

Children and vulnerable adults are welcome at WWRG events and activities.

As a charity we have a duty to ensure we have suitable safeguarding policies and processes in place to keep children safe from adults and other children who might pose a risk. All children under the age of 18 are welcome to WWRG events and activities, and the group requires that an accompanying parent or carer takes responsibility for them at all times and [gives consent](#) for them to take part.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults means protecting their right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect. Some adults are considered to be at greater risks so are given more protection by law. An adult at risk is anyone aged 18 or over who:

- is a person with needs for care and support;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect;
- as a result of their care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect, or the risk of it.

It is requested that when applying to join a fieldwork trip, the enquiries officer (enquiries@wwrg.org.uk) is made aware of any specific requirement needed to support the needs of the group or the individual and this will be passed to the team

running the trip in confidence. If an individual brings a vulnerable adult or adults to an event, the WWRG team/trip leader will be guided by the vulnerable adult's needs.

This policy

This policy sets out our approach to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Whilst many of the principles are the same, we recognise there are important differences between the two:

- A child is always covered by safeguarding whereas whether an adult is at risk or not is something which changes with their circumstances.
- When safeguarding adults, it must be understood that everyone has the right to make decisions for themselves. Otherwise, it is possible to accidentally cause a different kind of harm by removing a person's freedom of choice.
- It is important to consider the individual vulnerable adult's needs in every situation. Whilst safety is the primary concern for children, it is still important to listen to their views.

We will seek to keep children safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing and training at least one designated safeguarding officer.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with volunteers, parents and children.
- Where appropriate responding to child protection concerns by taking advice from, sharing concerns with, or making a referral to agencies such as the NSPCC, the local authority children's social care or the police.
- Keeping our policy and procedures under review and reviewing this policy annually.

WWRG Members and trip attendees on trips that include under 18s must:

- Observe this policy, and any specific WWRG guidelines (see further guidance below)
- Ensure that any risk assessment for a trip takes children appropriately into account
- Ensure that any contact with children is appropriate for the activity
- Listen to and respect children, treating them fairly and avoiding favouritism
- Use language that is appropriate for children and not offensive or discriminatory
- Respect children's right to personal privacy
- Report all concerns or allegations of abuse to the WWRG's Safeguarding Lead. Safeguarding concerns can also be reported via our Safeguarding Reporting Form ([Link to Form](#)).

Any concerns by the leader or attendee of a WWRG event will be reported to the appropriate authorities via the Safeguarding Lead or via the safeguarding reporting form.

Applying the WWRG policy to under 18 attendees on trips

- All under 18s will not attend trips on their own and will only be able to attend when accompanied by a parent or carer who will sign the WWRG's Under 18 Parental/Carer Consent Form ([link here](#)) on, or before, arrival agreeing to the groups safeguarding policy and practices.
- Under 18s must be under supervision by their parent, carer or other adult designated by the parent/carers at all times by hearing or sight during the day whether at the Old School House, accommodation in Lincolnshire or on catching and resighting trips, and by hearing and sight at night, when in the field.
- Parents/carers must ensure that the child is not alone with any adult who is not designated by the parent/carers.
- The under 18 and their parent/carers will stay in a dorm room or tent on their own, or with others with the parent/carers' consent. If in a room, the parent/carers may choose who else will stay in the dorm room with them or not. If in Friskney Village Hall, they will be offered to stay in the separate room with doors with other families. No WWRG member will make a decision over who stays with them.
- The parent/carers and under 18 will either travel in their own car to catching/resighting locations, or the parent/carers may choose whose car they will travel in. The parent/carers will also choose who else might travel with them in their car - no WWRG member will make a decision over which car they are in or who travels in their spare car seats with them.
- If a parent/carers has an emergency and needs to be away from their under 18 year old (and can't take them with them) any arrangements they make with someone attending a WWRG trip is private to the parent/carers and that person.
- No photographs that are clearly identifiable of the child will be taken without the explicit consent of the parent/carers.
- When catching, the under 18 may be taught, trained or instructed by team leads, catch leads or other experienced team members. When under-18s are volunteering to take part in an activity and are being taught, trained or instructed by team members, an Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service, i.e. criminal record) check for team leaders may be required. DBS checks are required if 'regulated activity' is taking place. Regulated activity is defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA), which has been amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (PoFA). Regulated activities may be taking place if teaching, training, or instruction, care for, or supervision of children is taking place on more than 3 days in a 30-day period, or once overnight between 2am and 6am with the opportunity for face-to-face contact with children.
- In the context of WWRG activities, our interpretation is that under-18s may be being taught, trained or instructed by team members during catching operations and therefore regulated activity is likely to be taking place but, when staying at a base or resighting, the parent/carers is making the decisions regarding the child and therefore no such activity is being undertaken.

- At least one (but likely more) WWRG trip and catch leaders will hold an Enhanced DBS. This means that the 3-day rule will not apply to the longer summer trips and under-18s will be able to attend for the whole trip.

Parental/carers consent for volunteers under 18 years of age

Attendance on trips of an under 18 should only be booked by their parent/carers and they will be provided with a copy of the WWRG Parental/Carers Consent Form which must be signed before or upon arrival at the Old School House at the beginning of a trip and handed to the trip lead/organiser ([link here](#)).

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