Safeguarding Children Policy (HR_P1)

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Policy owner:	Head of Business Support
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Signed:	
Print name:	Mike Master
Position:	Chairman
Reviewed:	March 2022
Amendments:	Reviewed – updated job titles – and put into new template

Introduction

The Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) is committed to enabling safe and supported access for a range of audiences to our sites and activities in a range of settings including: nature reserves, community areas and on private land.

This document is based upon the following principles:
- A child is someone under the age of 18.
- Safeguarding is the work we do to minimise and manage risk to children.
- Children have a right to be protected from abuse.
- Children are considered to be abused or at risk of abuse when their basic needs are not being met, which includes neglect, and physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
- Abuse can involve children of all ages of all abilities, cultures, religions and social backgrounds.

Policy Statement

Children have a right to be safely cared for, and parents and carers need to have confidence that the voluntary organisation to which they entrust their dependents will provide safe care. HMWT is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of everyone involved in its activities, regardless of age, disability, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion and cultural or socio-economic background. HMWT's activities include: work experience, volunteer placements, participation in volunteer groups, education and community activities.

Implementation of the Safeguarding Children policy will be achieved through:

- Providing clear accessible procedures for staff and volunteers to follow to protect children.

- Ensuring staff and volunteers in a lead role are properly informed, supported, managed and trained.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any children in contact with HMWT.
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent a staff member, volunteer or member of the public from putting a child in a situation where there is an unreasonable risk to their health and safety, or risk of physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
- Adhering to consistent and appropriate recruitment, ensuring staff and volunteers working frequently with children are carefully selected through safe recruitment and selection procedures.
- Monitoring and reviewing policies and procedures relating to children, keeping them up to date and accessible.
- Having designated members of staff for safeguarding. The Head of Business Support is the designated Safeguarding Officer for our work with children.
- Staff/volunteers will report to the Safeguarding Officers any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused**.**
- Accusations against a member of staff or volunteer will be directed to the Chief Executive.

Monitoring and Reviewing Policies and Procedures

The Safeguarding Children Policy will be reviewed every 12 months and updated where necessary. All staff and volunteers will be informed when it has been reviewed and updated. All other procedures and codes of practice relating to working with children will be reviewed annually, keeping them up to date and accessible. A review of this Policy may also be instigated following a change in regulations.

Disseminating information about this policy

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of the Safeguarding Children Policy and supporting Procedure. The Policy and Procedure will be included in all new staff inductions, and staff and volunteers who frequently work with children will receive adequate/relevant training.

Important documents staff and volunteers should refer to:

HMWT Safeguarding Children – Procedure

The Procedure covers:
- Code of conduct for all staff and volunteers
- Recruitment
- Training
- Communications with children
- Working with children
- What to do if abuse is suspected or reported