

JOHN INNES SOCIETY (copy)

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Revised January 2023

Safeguarding

The John Innes Society (hereafter referred to as The Society) recognises its legal duty of care to take the appropriate steps in safeguarding the welfare of children during the various events it organises.

It aims to ensure this by means of a Child Protection Policy and a set of Procedures for dealing with issues of concern or abuse.

This policy sets out good practice guidelines to all members involved in organising such events and the procedures indicate what steps should be taken if it is believed that a child is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or harm.

The Society believes that to have safeguards in place will give parents, members, and the general public confidence as to its reputation as a responsible organisation. The Society will work in conjunction with other local agencies to address any concerns.

Although Covid-19 cases are currently (January 2023) less widespread, the Society intends to follow the Charity Commission's decision that responding to any serious Safeguarding incident still overrides any data privacy constraints, until we hear to the contrary.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

This policy is endorsed and approved by the Trustees. It will be a standing committee agenda item every 6 months to incorporate relevant changes in legislation and best practice or when an incident has identified any failings. Such changes to this policy will be recorded in the minutes.

It applies to all Trustees, members of the committee, and volunteers at relevant events.

All members will be advised of the existence of this document, and a copy will be available in the Coach House (1A Melrose Road, Merton Park, London SW19 3HF), on the Society's website, or on application to the Secretary.

Principles

1. The welfare of the child is paramount and underpins the rationale behind the policy and procedures
2. The Society believes that all children have a right to equal protection from all possible acts of abuse and harm, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation or religious belief. This policy operates in conjunction with the Society's Constitution and any other policies that it may from time to time adopt.
3. The term "child abuse" is used to describe ways in which children or young people are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. This may include not only actual physical abuse or assault, but the use of offensive or inappropriate language: illegal or unsafe behaviour: discrimination against, or favouritism towards, certain individual children: attempts to humiliate or degrade children: and any perceived physical or exploitative relationship, even including possible intrusive touching.

Actions

1. Children attending Society events must at all times be accompanied by an adult who shall take responsibility for the care and supervision of the child during the time they are at an event. A notice to this effect will be displayed at the entrance to all Society events.
2. Awareness of good practice will help manage any situation which might present risks, including behaviour which might be misinterpreted, for example, adults making themselves vulnerable to allegations of abuse.
3. All concerns and allegations will be taken very seriously and dealt with promptly.
4. An atmosphere of openness and accountability will be encouraged to allow any concerns to be expressed, either by children or adults.
5. The names of children will never be published by The Society alongside their image without the express consent of their parent or legal guardian and the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018 will be recognised in this respect.
6. The Society recognises that some organised activities may require risk assessments to be produced as part of good practice and will incorporate within this, all factors such as health and safety, fire evacuation, and first aid.

Child Protection Co-ordinator

The present Co-Chair of The Society, Alison Cousins, is the person designated as having the main responsibility for any issues relating to the safeguarding of children, and the current Deputy Chair, Ingrid Holtz, will deputise. Both are DBS checked. The Child Protection Co-ordinator and Deputy will have The Society's authority to contact the relevant agencies as and when appropriate, and to co-ordinate any subsequent action needed. They will also be expected to keep up-to-date with legislation, best practice, and local changes concerned with child protection.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES - How to Deal with an Incident.

First – Listen and Reassure

In the event of a child approaching a member with any concerns, action should be taken to address the issue immediately, and the child's parent or carer sought. Do not panic, listen carefully, and do not betray a sense of shock to the child in case it results in further distress and a decision not to continue. Assure the child that you believe what is being said. Let the child relate the facts at his/her own speed and try not to ask questions unless for clarity. On no account ask leading questions.

Tell the child that you must report what has been said, but only to those who need to know and who can help. Assure him/her that they have been quite correct to tell an adult.

Second – Record

Write down what was said using the child's exact words and ensure there is only one such first hand report, as discrepancies may later lead to legal problems. Using the Child

Protection Incident Form, make a note of the child's name and date of birth, your observations, any specific names mentioned, the time of the incident and what action was taken. Sign and date your record.

Third – Inform Appropriate People

Advise the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator at the event as soon as possible. S/he will then advise the Chair and the appropriate authorities where relevant. It is not the role of The Society to investigate further at this stage.

The report should be filed irrespective of whether the incident was actual or alleged, even if made in confidence and whether or not it was deemed necessary to advise any of the statutory child protection agencies. Make a note of any subsequent action taken, who was involved and, if the authorities were not contacted, why this was so. If any action was taken against an individual, record who reported it, and to whom it was forwarded. Any personal opinions relating to the event should not be committed to paper. The report should be stored securely, and known only to key members involved. This must be kept for as long as is required by our insurers.

Under the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018, and UKDPR all named parties must be advised of their rights to confidentiality but above all, the appropriate sharing of information outweighs this when issues of safety, protection and prevention need to be addressed.

Documents Consulted :

Dept. for Education. Working Together to Safeguard Children. HM Govt., Updated July 2022
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Charity Commission. Safeguarding for Charities and Trustees. HM Govt., 2021
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-for-charities-and-trustees>

NCVO. Safeguarding for Trustees (<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/checklists-training-and-other-support/specialist-guides/safeguarding-for-trustees>)

NSPCC Safeguarding and Child Protection Standards for the Voluntary and Community Sector
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1079/safeguarding-standards-and-guidance.pdf>

HM Government. Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

Agreed by the Committee and Trustees on January 10th 2023

Archived copy signed by Dese Child and Alison Cousins

Co-Chairs

LOCAL CONTACT DETAILS
Children's Services, Police, and Social Services.

MERTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP mertonscp.org.uk/	020 8545 4866
POLICE	101 (non-urgent)
MERTON PARK WARD – Safer Neighbourhood Team NELSON MEDICAL PRACTICE (GPs and sameday)	020 3826 0826
NHS CHOICES	111 (111.nhs.uk)
URGENT CARE CENTRES St Helier Hospital (16 and over only) Kingston Hospital (all ages) (replacing St George's)	020 8296 2000 020 8546 7711

NATIONAL SERVICES

NSPCC Child Protection Help Line (Open currently only 10-4 M-F. check website)	0808 800 5000
Childline (18 or under)	0800 1111
CEOP Command (Child Exploitation Online – part of National crime Agency) Use more as a follow-up. www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/what-is-online-child-sexual-abuse/	