

THE GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

May 2019

'Safeguarding' is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable people, and protect them and anyone else who comes into contact with the Society from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

The Geological Society believes that no one should experience abuse of any kind. Abuse can take a number of forms, and may include:

- financial or material abuse
- physical abuse
- mental abuse
- neglect and failures to act
- sexual abuse
- threats of abuse or harm
- controlling or intimidating conduct
- self-neglect
- domestic abuse
- poor practices within an organisation providing care

The purpose of this policy is to protect children and vulnerable adults who take part in Geological Society activities and to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and vulnerable people in particular, and to keep them safe. We are committed to work in a way that protects them.

The policy applies to all staff, members of Council and all Committee members; Regional and constituted Specialist Group members; volunteers, workers, freelancers, contractors, training course leaders, leaders of educational events and activities, and at science fairs, careers events or festivals.

Equality statement:

- We recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 2004 (amended from 1989)
- All children and adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

1. Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Deputy Safeguarding Officer

2. Adopting safeguarding practices through our Guidelines (see below) for staff and volunteers who might have contact with children or vulnerable adults through educational or outreach activities
3. Maintaining an effective ICT Usage policy and related procedures in the employee handbook
4. Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
5. Recording and storing information professionally and securely, following the changes to the law (currently GDPR legislation May 2018)
6. Using our Safeguarding practices to share concerns and relevant information with agencies/authorities that need to know
7. Managing any allegations against staff or volunteers appropriately, and ensuring that we have a safe and effective complaints and whistle-blowing procedure
8. Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children, all other visitors, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory advice
9. Requiring all employees and volunteers to adhere to our safeguarding guidelines, and to report to the DSO/Deputy DSO if they have been added to the children and adults barred list by either the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales or Disclosure Scotland in Scotland.
10. Maintaining an atmosphere in which staff and volunteers feel able to report concerns and expect that concerns will be dealt with appropriately.

Safeguarding guidelines

The policy applies to all staff, members of Council and all Committee members; Regional and constituted Specialist Group members; volunteers, workers, freelancers, contractors, training course leaders, leaders of educational events and activities, and at science fairs, careers events or festivals.

All are required to read and adhere to this *Safeguarding Policy*. They must also follow the guidelines below to ensure participants have a safe and positive experience.

If you are organising an event through or in the name of the Geological Society:

- 1 Be sure to let leaders and participants know in advance if there will be any strenuous activity or possibly challenging physical aspects to the event.
- 2 Give teachers/parents the opportunity to make the Geological Society staff or volunteers aware of anyone in their party who has particular needs or issues that should be handled carefully (e.g. food allergies, significant phobias, other behavioural conditions)
- 3 Members of staff or those representing the Geological Society should make sure that they are never in a situation where they are on their own with a child or vulnerable adult e.g. when administering first aid or taking someone to the toilet.
- 4 Remember that it is everyone's responsibility to check that adequate Health and Safety and First Aiding procedures are followed.
- 5 Make sure that the leaders of events such as training courses or workshops maintain a respectful atmosphere through their attitude.
- 6 Be sure to report any incidents that concern you to the DSO/Deputy DSO (if present) *and* teachers or guardians in charge of a group of school students. In their absence, please contact the police.
- 7 Report any incidents of suspected abuse to the most appropriate organisation (e.g. at the highest level, the police)
- 8 Always follow this rule: 'If you see something, say something'.

What to do if a child makes a disclosure at a Geological Society event

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses to a member of staff or someone representing the Geological Society they should:

- Listen carefully and do not suggest words or phrases
- Keep calm
- Don't promise to keep it confidential
- Write everything down as soon as possible and tell the DSO/Deputy DSO

What to do if there is an allegation or incident

Make a report to the DSO/Deputy DSO in confidence. Use the Society's *Disclosure Reporting Form* on which to record the incident as soon as possible (and within 24 hrs). If you are not comfortable for any reason with contacting the DSO or the Deputy DSO then the police should be informed in the first instance. You should also inform the Executive Secretary and/or the President.

Where appropriate, incidents will be communicated to the teacher/school /parent involved. The DSO/Deputy DSO will immediately report serious incidents to the police.

Incidents involving staff will be investigated through existing disciplinary procedures.

DSO/Deputy DSO contact details:

The Geological Society Safeguarding Officer is: Judi Lakin (Head of Education)

Level 1 'Safeguarding' and Level 3 'Designated Safeguarding Officer' with High Speed Training

Tel: 020 7432 0972 e-mail: judi.lakin@geolsoc.org.uk

The Geological Society Deputy Safeguarding Officer is: Amy Ball (Education Officer)

Level 1 'Safeguarding' with High Speed Training

Tel: 020 7432 0956; e-mail: amy.ball@geolsoc.org.uk

This policy should be read alongside the Geological Society policies and procedures on:

- All relevant policies in the Employee Handbook e.g. Geological Disciplinary Policy 2011; ICT Usage policy Nov 2013; Code of Conduct for staff
 - The statement the Society agreed to through commitment to the Diversity and Progression Framework 2017 (Science Council)
 - Health and safety guidelines
 - Requirements for Council members and/or Committee members when accepting roles with the Society's governance structure
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