



Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society

Charity No: 311116

Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Introduction

The NNAS recognises its responsibility to ensure that a safe environment is provided for all children and vulnerable adults taking part in its activities. This policy specifies how we will provide a safe environment and protect children and vulnerable adults when they are taking part in NNAS events, projects and other activities. This policy also aims to protect NNAS volunteers, from situations where they may feel threatened or open to suspicion or accusation.

In this policy 'children' are defined in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (ratified in the UK in 1991) as anyone under 18 years of age.

'Vulnerable adults' are defined as people over the age of 18 who are or who may be in need of community care because of age, illness, physical or learning disability or because the person is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation (including those for whom English is an additional language).

This policy covers the following activities:

- events where volunteers come into direct contact with children or vulnerable adults
- web projects and publication

Code of Conduct

This code of conduct is designed to avoid most situations in which volunteers may be compromised.

Volunteers should always:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every individual and treat everyone with equality.
- Ensure the safety and welfare of the child/vulnerable adult is the top priority.
- Act as a good role model and display high standards of behaviour when in the presence of children/vulnerable adults (e.g. do not swear or smoke), regardless of whether or not the children are in the care of others, or whether the staff member is on or off duty.
- Ensure that activities involving children are age appropriate
- Recognise that children and vulnerable adults may have complicated or traumatic backgrounds which may make them sensitive to certain issues.
- Remember that a child/vulnerable adult may misinterpret words and actions no matter how well intentioned.
- Make children and vulnerable adults feel welcome at the centre and encourage their contribution through positive and enthusiastic feedback
- Take disclosures seriously and report them in writing as fully as possible to the Trustees

Volunteers should not:

- Be alone with a child or vulnerable adult e.g. taking them to the toilet.

- Have physical contact with a child/ vulnerable adult unless absolutely essential for safety reasons
- Use actions or language which may cause a child/vulnerable adult to lose self-esteem or confidence.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child/vulnerable adult can do for themselves e.g. putting on coats.
- Allow allegations or suggestions of misconduct made against them to go unreported.
- Publish or display photos of children involved in NNAS activities without following the HMA Photography Policy (see below).

Responsible Adults

Responsible Adults are defined as people over the age of 18 who assume responsibility for children during NNAS activities.

Volunteers must not take direct responsibility for children, and a responsible adult must be present at all times during activities. Responsible adults must lead on any decisions regarding medical aid for the child. Responsible adults are ultimately responsible for the child's behaviour.

Any concern about the behaviour of a Responsible Adult should be reported immediately to the Trustees. Volunteers should only intervene without consultation in matters of immediate physical safety.

Events

NNAS is committed to supporting responsible adults in the completion of risk assessments and organisers will outline potential health and safety issues in advance.

NNAS recognises that not all children or vulnerable adults are the same and is committed to making provisions for children and vulnerable adults with special requirements wherever possible.

Outreach

NNAS does not take responsibility for the nature of venues where outreach activities may take place. All venues used will be risk assessed by a competent person, but Risk Assessments provided by hosts will not usually be further checked. The underlying principles of this policy will be adhered to at all times.

Web projects/ publication

Photography Policy

Photographs, videos or other images of children/vulnerable adults (as individuals or in groups) where people could be recognised must not be kept or published without obtaining written consent.

- In the case of schools and other formal groups NNAS volunteers should discuss the organisation's photographic policy in advance with the class teacher/leader and request suitable paperwork or supply HMA Photographic permission slips as appropriate.
- In the case of families, consent should be sought from parents/guardians on the day using HMA Photographic permission slips.
- Where the size of the group makes individual consent unfeasible an announcement should be made in advance of photography.
- All photographic consents, in whatever form, should be kept on file.

- Any photographs taken for which no permission exists, or can be obtained within a suitable time period, must be deleted and any prints treated as confidential waste.

NNAS volunteers are not responsible for policing photography taken by visitors, but if a Responsible Adult draws our attention to inappropriate photography we undertake to request that the visitor desists.

Identity Protection Policy

NNAS will not usually identify children/ vulnerable adults by their full names in any publication (an exception may be made in the case of competition winners – however, explicit permission must be obtained before anything is published.)

Material submitted by children to NNAS should be treated in the same way as photographs

Email/ phone numbers/personal website addresses of children/vulnerable adults should not be passed on to any third party or published without explicit written consent from the child and their Responsible Adult.

Physical Contact

Physical contact between volunteers and children/vulnerable adults is discouraged and must be kept to an absolute minimum. However, it is recognised that children/vulnerable adults may contact staff spontaneously. Circumstances where physical contact may be unavoidable are outlined below:

- to prevent children/vulnerable adults hurting themselves e.g. falling off a bench
- during workshops such as costume workshops or dance/drama sessions (in these cases the nature of contact should be explained and agreed with the child/vulnerable adult first.)
- providing assistance to responsible adults in providing mobility assistance to children/ vulnerable adults with a physical disability or assisting these children in an emergency.
- first aiders administering treatment
- if staff are physically attacked or threatened they may take reasonable measures to protect themselves or remove the threat.

Allegations

Should a child/vulnerable adult accuse a volunteer of any kind of inappropriate behaviour or abuse this should be referred immediately to the child's Responsible Adult or vulnerable adults carer. The incident should be recorded in writing by both parties, separately, as soon as possible and passed to the Hon Secretary.

Allegations will be dealt with by the Trustees. The volunteer or council member involved may be excused from duties until such time as allegations have been fully investigated, should this be considered necessary, in line with HMA Volunteering agreements.

Accusations against volunteers or council members are subject to the terms of the Data Protection Act.

Disclosure

If a child/vulnerable adult discloses any information to NNAS Volunteers suggesting they have been abused, volunteers must take the disclosure seriously and listen to what is being said. However, they should inform the child/vulnerable adult if asked that they will not be able to keep such information confidential.

Any disclosure should be recorded in writing in as much detail as possible straight after the incident and passed to the Trustees. The Trustees will then act on the disclosure – it is not the responsibility of volunteers to act on the disclosure themselves. The *only* exception to this is in any case where immediate danger of serious physical harm is apparent, and then the actions of the volunteer should be confined to calling the Police.

Any matter relating to a disclosure must be kept absolutely confidential, both whilst under investigation and afterwards.

Management of Information

NNAS complies with the principles of the Data Protection Act (1998) in the way it collects, holds and disposes of personal information (see Privacy Policy). The Data Protection Act stands on eight principles, which state data must be:

- secure
- not kept longer than necessary
- fairly and lawfully processed
- processed for limited processes
- adequate, relevant and not excessive
- processed in accordance with the individual's rights
- accurate and up to date
- not transferred to other countries

Edmund G. Perry
Hon.General Secretary NNAS
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