

REPORT OF PERSONNEL MANAGER AND DISCOVERY TEAM LEADER

SUBJECT: Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Purpose of Report

This report asks Members to approve the Safeguarding Statement (page 1 only of attached).

This statement and revised arrangements were considered by Employee Forum in March and referred to National Park Authority for approval.

Introduction/Background

The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within its work is a priority concern for the Authority. The introduction of new provisions within the Disclosure and Barring Scheme provided an ideal context to review and update the Authority's arrangements. This has been a cross-team project involving the Personnel, Discovery and Ranger Service teams.

Comparisons

WCVA (who process the Authority's DBS clearances) and Pembrokeshire County Council as a neighbouring public body with similar service provisions and in view of the frequency that the 2 bodies work together, have been consulted.

Options

The safeguarding arrangements aim to ensure that sound working practices are in place that put safeguarding as a priority and which are effective in managing risk for vulnerable groups, but which will also protect staff and volunteers against wrongful or malicious allegations. They also guide staff on handling incidents.

The proposed arrangements take account of available guidance and provisions and the Authority's recent experiences of safeguarding incidents and have been considered by Staff Representatives, Leadership Team and Employee Forum.

Financial considerations

There are minor budget implications arising from the disclosure and training arrangements proposed, to be met by existing budgets.

Risk considerations

These arrangements help the Authority to guard children/vulnerable adults from harm. Not to have effective arrangements in place would put vulnerable people at risk of harm and the Authority at legal and public perception risk.

Compliance

These arrangements help the Authority to meet its duty to safeguard vulnerable people, a duty both legally and morally.

Human Rights/Equality issues

These arrangements help the Authority to carry out its work with all groups within our communities safely, thereby promoting social inclusion and respecting people's rights to safety and dignity.

Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

The proposal has no impact either way environmentally; however, safeguarding arrangements contribute towards healthy and safe communities.

Welsh Language statement

No relevant requirements.

Conclusion

The proposed updated and revised arrangements provide a comprehensive and good practice approach to safeguarding that includes an increased level of training and general awareness.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the policy statement on page 1. The arrangements and guidance that follow in the document are operational issues that will be updated, revised, or added to by officers as needed.

Background Documents

Please see footnotes on document.

(For further information, please contact June Skilton or Graham Peake)

Author: June Skilton

*Consultees: Staff Representatives
Leadership team*

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT



Policy Statement

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers who work for the Pembroke Coast National Park Authority, but especially to those employees whose duties and roles bring them into regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Authority provides a range of activities and events for a wide range of audiences which include children¹, young people and vulnerable adults². The Authority employs staff and works with volunteers whose jobs involve work with these groups.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults are particularly defenceless to abuse or mistreatment. Abusers are often in positions of trust or power (most often the abuser is known to the child rather than a stranger). Vulnerable people do not expect adults to harm them and they can often be easily persuaded that there is nothing wrong and that they should not tell. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect.³

This policy aims to ensure that sound working practices are in place that put safeguarding as a priority and which are effective in managing risk for these vulnerable groups, but which will also protect staff and volunteers against wrongful or malicious allegations. To achieve this the Authority will:

- Ensure that staff have an awareness of the issues which may lead to children, young people and vulnerable adults being harmed.
- Ensure careful recruitment, selection and management procedures. These procedures will include regular support to, and supervision of, staff and volunteers.
- Keep safeguarding policies under regular review.
- Have safeguarding guidelines, and communicate them to staff, volunteers and members in appropriate ways.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are following good and safe working practices.
- Have procedures in place relating specifically to transport, work placements, use of photography, residential visits and E-safety.
- Be involved in training made available through various agencies and strengthen links with these agencies.
- Foster a culture of openness, which encourages individuals to share concerns or suspicions.
- Ensure that there is a process for managing complaints, grievances and disciplinary procedures.

Signed by the Chair of the Authority

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Safeguarding Policy: Supporting Materials

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The Discovery Team Leader, Graham Peake, is the Safeguarding Lead for the Authority and is the first point of contact in relation to incidents and issues. In his absence, contact either the Ranger Service Manager, Libby Taylor, or the Chief Executive Tegryn Jones.

1. Introduction

The Authority (PCNPA) provides a range of activities and events for a wide range of audiences which include children⁴, young people and vulnerable adults⁵. The Authority employs staff and works with volunteers whose jobs involve work with these groups.

This policy aims to ensure that sound working practices are in place that put safeguarding as a priority and which are effective in managing risk for these vulnerable groups, but which will also protect staff and volunteers against wrongful or malicious allegations.

The Authority wants children, young people and vulnerable adults to enjoy their involvement with us, and to inform and enthuse them about the National Park and what we do. Their lives can be enriched by participating in a variety of activities: they learn and have a good time. The Authority will take all reasonable steps to ensure that they do this safely. They have the right to be protected from harm.

This policy sets out how the Authority will recruit staff and volunteers, how it will ensure that those persons have the appropriate checks, and how it will train staff and volunteers in relation to safeguarding. It will set out how the Authority will monitor and support staff and volunteers.

This document gives guidance for staff who may suspect that a child they have contact with is being abused or mistreated. It outlines what will happen if there is an allegation involving a member of staff or a volunteer.

This policy applies across the Authority, although in practice, it has most relevance to ranger teams and centre-based staff together with volunteers involved in supporting this work.

2. Your Responsibilities

All individuals in contact with or working with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families; or with adults who may pose a risk to children; or responsible for arranging services for children and/or adults, should: ⁶

- Understand their role and responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- Know and follow their organisation's procedures and protocols for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and know who to contact in their organisation to express concerns about an individual's welfare;
- Be alert to indicators of abuse and neglect;
- Have received child protection training to a level commensurate with their role and responsibilities;
- Know when and how to refer any concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

As part of the Authority's procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults it may be necessary to carry out a check on an individual. These checks are part of the disclosure and barring service.

A Disclosure and Barring Service check provides information about an individual's criminal record. It can only be undertaken with the agreement of the individual, and the certificate issued is sent only to the individual and not the Authority.

There are clear guidelines about what roles are eligible for a check, and in most cases no check will be required.

A check can only be made for the purposes of safeguarding children, young people or vulnerable adults.

3. About abuse

A child is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan. The type of abuse is generally classified under the following four headings: ⁷

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or caregiver fabricates or induces illness in a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, for example by witnessing domestic abuse within the home or being bullied, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or caregiver failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs. In addition, neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

4. Employment Processes

4.1. Recruitment and Selection:

Careful recruitment and selection of staff reduces the opportunity for people who present a risk of harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults from using a post with the Authority to access children.

Careful recruitment will include all applicants, including volunteers;

- 1. Completing an application form**
- 2. Providing two references**
- 3. Having an interview**
- 4. Having a DBS check where eligible**

An application form must be completed by anyone applying for a post within the Authority. It may also apply to volunteers where the role applied for involves working with children; young people and vulnerable adults (see the Volunteering Strategy for more information). The application form must include a full employment history.

Two referees must be supplied as part of the application process. Where the post holder may be in regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults the Authority will try to ensure that at least one of these referees can provide information about the applicant's experiences working or volunteering with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults

At the interview at least one member of the selection panel will have specialist understanding of effective recruitment within this safeguarding policy.

A Disclosure and Barring Check will take place if the role applied for fulfils the criteria for such checks as shown below. This includes where appropriate, a check for criminal records in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processes and code of practice.⁸

Posts identified as requiring 'disclosure' include ranger teams, both Discovery Rangers and Delivery Rangers, and other staff whose role involves regular unsupervised activity with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. This includes staff involved in Your Park and those at National Park Centres, who carry out similar duties and also volunteers carrying out similar duties. Until all relevant checks have been carried out staff will not work in an unsupervised capacity and it is the manager's responsibility to monitor this.⁹

However, a police check will not necessarily reveal an offender as not all people who abuse children are known to the police. Therefore the recruitment and selection procedures must be followed and must be robust.

The Authority is committed to equality of opportunity and therefore having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from working with us. An objective assessment of risk will be undertaken by the relevant Team Leader, the Safeguarding Lead and the Personnel Manager (refer to the Authority's policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders for more detail).

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority – roles of staff/volunteers in relation to safeguarding

Role 1 - Discovery/Area Rangers/education leaders

As part of their work Rangers/leaders deliver a programme of activities and events with a view to engaging with a range of audiences:

Education programme:

Focus on working with primary & secondary school children and teachers, delivering half-day and full-day sessions in the National Park, undertaking a range of 'hands-on' practical activity. Rangers plan and lead sessions for whole classes and sometimes have responsibility for smaller groups as and when an activity demands (these could sometimes be undertaken out of visual contact with teachers). Various locations, including NP run centres. Groups include Reception and KS1 through to 16+, including children and young people with a range of special needs. They may work with 3-4 schools a week and may work with the same group on more than one occasion.

Eligible for enhanced DBS check only

Social Inclusion programme:

Often working with vulnerable adults and young people on a range of practical/hands on activity. May take responsibility for small groups on specific activities. Can work with the same group on several occasions. On occasions rangers work with groups who are outside their normal 'care setting' e.g. on residential visits with youth clubs.

Regulated activity, enhanced DBS and barring lists checks

Activities and Events:

Delivering activities and events for families and other groups. Parents usually present, but group can spread out over a large area on a beach for example. Some activities involve leading groups of vulnerable adults on (for example) a guided walk, these groups can be accompanied or unaccompanied.

Not eligible for check

Youth Rangers/Duke of Edinburgh

Running sessions (usually practical work) for groups of young people (16+) on a regular basis – often the same individuals. No parents/guardians present

If frequency criteria met, regulated activity, enhanced DBS check and barring list check

Placements

Takes responsibility for individual placements at a specific location or series of locations. Placements agreed with school and can be under 16. A range of activity carried out over a single week/two weeks.

If intensity criteria met, regulated activity, enhanced DBS check and barring list check

Role 2 - Centre based education leaders

Education programme:

Centre based staff work with primary & secondary school children and teachers, delivering half-day and full-day sessions at their own centre, undertaking a range of 'hands-on' practical activity. Leaders deliver sessions for whole classes and sometimes have responsibility for smaller groups as and when an activity demands (these could sometimes be undertaken out of visual contact with teachers). Groups include Reception and KS1 through to 16+, including children and young people with a range of special needs. They may work with 3-4 schools a week and may work with the same group on more than one occasion.

Eligible for enhanced DBS check only

Social Inclusion programme:

Occasionally working with vulnerable adults and young people on a range of practical/hands on activity. May take responsibility for small groups on specific activities.

Eligible for enhanced DBS check only, if not meeting frequency criteria

Activities and Events:

Delivering activities and events for families and other groups. Parents usually present, but group can spread out over a large area.

Not eligible for check

Placements

Takes responsibility for individual placements at a specific location. Placements agreed with school and can be under 16. A range of activity carried out over a single week/two weeks.

If intensity criteria met, regulated activity, enhanced DBS check and barring list check

Role 3 - National Park staff responsible for placement students:

Takes responsibility for individual placements at a specific location. Placements agreed with school and can be under 16. A range of activity carried out over a single week/two weeks.

If intensity criteria met, regulated activity, enhanced DBS check and barring list check

Role 4 – Volunteer Walk Leader

Leading guided walks at various locations across the National Park for various groups. Groups are adults, but can include some vulnerable adults (with carers).

Not eligible for check

4.2. Renewing Checks¹⁰

There is no legal requirement for the Authority to carry out periodic Disclosure Barring Checks (DBS). Where checks take place they do so with the permission of the individual and the certificate issued is sent to the individual and not to the Authority. The Authority requires that appropriate staff and volunteers register with the Update Service; an instant online method that checks an individual's status. The service is updated weekly to show any changes to an individual's criminal convictions and barring service. The costs of joining the service will be met by the Authority. Checks for volunteers are free.

The Authority can ask staff and volunteers permission to apply for a new check whenever they think one might be necessary.

The decision to apply for a new check should be made by the Safeguarding Lead and Team Leader responsible for an individual staff member or volunteer in consultation with the Personnel Manager. The decision to check should be made if an individual's role or circumstances are believed to have changed and should be proportionate to risks.

Status Checks will confirm that the current certificate held by a member of staff or volunteer;

- Did not reveal any information and remains current
- Remains the same. No new information has been identified and the certificate remains current
- Is no longer current. Information has changed and a new certificate should be applied for that is up to date

Where a new certificate is needed the Authority must seek the permission of the individual before an application to the DBS is made.

New certificates will only be sent to the staff member or volunteer. The Authority requires the individual to present the new certificate to the Personnel Manager within the required timeframe. However, a new certificate may be obtained from the DBS if the individual refuses to show their certificate and if all criteria are met.

4.3 Induction, Training and Support

Induction:

Team Leaders will ensure that formal induction processes are followed for new staff and volunteers to include guidance relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults. Seasonal staff must be re-briefed at the start of each season.¹¹ If further training needs are identified these should be followed up.

Training:

All staff that work with or who manage staff who work with, vulnerable groups will undergo the Pembrokeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (PLSCB) Tier 1 Training.¹² Team leaders should keep records of which staff have undertaken training and when, and report this to the Personnel Manager.

The Safeguarding Lead and the Ranger Service Manager will undergo PSCB Tier 2 Training.

General briefings for all the Authority's managers, including Committee Members will be held as necessary.

All relevant staff must be made aware of this policy and guidance and of procedures for dealing with safeguarding incidents.¹³

Support and Monitoring:

Team Leaders should provide ongoing support to staff and volunteers; safeguarding should be kept as a visible priority issue and included in staff appraisals and other 1 to 1 meetings, team meetings etc

Staff and volunteers working directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults are part of a regular monitoring programme where staff are 'assessed' in the field measuring various elements of the work including safeguarding measures and health and safety

5. Working Safely

The Authority implements safeguarding across all activities by

- Ensuring that all activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults are subject to the appropriate risk assessment which aims to manage risk of all kinds. Risk assessment will be in line with current Authority guidance and health and safety policy and will be carried out by people with a good understanding of safeguarding issues appropriate to the activity and/or setting. This should ensure that staff and volunteers feel confident in their work and to have an opportunity to share any concerns about child protection.
- Providing adequate training and supervision in order to manage the risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that Team Leaders have a good understanding of safeguarding issues and ensure that job procedures within their services take account of this policy and include processes for dealing with relevant incidents

Many staff will not in their day to day roles, work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Even so, there may be occasions where their duties bring them into contact with these groups, albeit briefly, such as working with work experience placements or through support services.

The following sections on transport, photography and E-Safety therefore apply to all staff and volunteers working for the Authority.

5.1 Guidance on First Aid

Generally first aid treatment should be carried out by the staff from the organisation with which the Authority is working, e.g, a class teacher. However there are occasions when an Authority staff member or volunteer may be called upon to assist with or to give first aid treatment. This may be due to the severity of the injury or because the organisation's staff need to manage the rest of the group. When giving first aid treatment it is advised that staff and volunteers remember the following guidance.

- Try not to give first aid alone. Where possible have another member of staff with you.
- Consider where treatment is taking place. Think about your safety, but also about the patient, they may be embarrassed or distressed by what has happened.
- Consider where the injury is that you need to treat. Explain to the patient exactly what you are going to do and make sure that they understand and agree.
- If an injury requires treatment, where possible ask the patient to administer their own treatment under your guidance. This will depend on the age and understanding of the patient and also on the severity of the injury and potential distress of the patient.
- A record should be made via the Authority's incident reporting process as soon as possible after the event but not later than 24 hours, recording the details of the incident, any resulting injuries, and any treatment given or advised. It should also be noted if treatment is declined.

5.2 Guidance on transporting children, young people and vulnerable adults

While in most instances there will be no need for Authority staff to transport children, young people and vulnerable adults in their own or Authority vehicles, there are occasions when such a need occurs. When that happens, the following guidance should be followed:

- Journeys should be agreed between the Authority staff member and their line manager, and should be with the consent of the organisation, school or parent/guardian of the person being transported.
- The reason for the journey and length of journey should be clear.
- It is the responsibility of the driver to have the correct documentation (current MOT certificate, insurance, driving licence) to prove that the vehicle is roadworthy.
- Vehicles must have the correct restraints, appropriate to the age and size of the student.

- The child, young person or vulnerable adult must not be left unattended in the vehicle.
- Ideally journeys should not be made without an additional adult in the vehicle. This significantly reduces the risk of distraction, accident and injury and allegation of misconduct or abuse. If this is not practically possible the risks must be assessed and measures put in place to ensure that the risks are reduced to the lowest level.

5.3 Guidance on the taking of photographs and moving images for work purposes¹⁵

Photographs of children, young people and vulnerable adults help staff to demonstrate the breadth of their work, and are used for publicity purposes when promoting the work of the Authority:

- Photographs should only be taken with the consent of the organisation, school or parent/guardian and the purpose for which the pictures have been taken is understood. A consent form for taking photographs is available from the Discovery Team.
- Photographs should only be taken to demonstrate work in which the children, young people and vulnerable adults are involved or have completed. They should focus on the activity and not on individuals. Care should be taken that all participants are appropriately dressed.
- Care should be taken when supplying information with photographs. Do not supply full names or other personal information.
- Do not use images of children or young people who are considered vulnerable or whose identity may require protection.
- Images should be carefully stored with consent attached or cross referenced.
- Images should only be passed to third parties for their use where this has been agreed as part of the consent process.

Other than the provisions contained in the Child Trafficking and Pornography Acts 1998/2004n which contain specific provisions on the exploitation of children there is no specific legal constraint on taking photographs or recording visual material with children and young people. Photographs and visual images are regarded as personal data under the Data Protection Acts 1998/2003. Personal data is defined as data relating to a living individual who can be identified from the data or from the data in conjunction with other information in the possession of the data controller. It must be obtained fairly, accurate, kept up to date and should be kept and used only for one or more specified lawful purposes.

5.4 E-Safety¹⁶

E-Safety encompasses not only Internet technologies but also electronic communications via mobile phones, games consoles and wireless technology. It highlights the need to educate children and young people about the benefits, risks and responsibilities of using information technology. E-Safety concerns safeguarding children and young people in the digital world and supporting them to develop safer online behaviours both in and out of school. Authority staff should:

- Work within the boundaries of professional behaviour.

- Should not use NPA equipment for inappropriate reasons and be guided by the Authority's ICT policy.
- Be aware of safety concerns when preparing and include this in the risk assessment process.
- Where appropriate communicate with organisations, schools and parents about the purpose of e-communications.
- Should avoid exposing children and young adults to inappropriate and harmful material or harmful interaction with other users.

Remember:

Emails, tweets, facebook messages, texts. The Communications Act of 2003 (Section 127) describes what constitutes an offence. But it is worth being aware that an offence is complete as soon as the message has been sent: there is no need to prove any intent or purpose.

Researchers have found that pupils with special educational needs are 16 per cent more likely to be victims of online abuse.

5.5 Good practice cards are issued to staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults as prompts. See below:

Safeguarding Checklist – keeping you safe

- Ensure that you are familiar with the Activity Safety Checklist / Risk Assessment appropriate to the activity.
- Avoid physical contact with the students - it can be misinterpreted. It is the responsibility of school staff to intervene and manage behaviour.
- Avoid one-to-one situations particularly in an enclosed or isolated space. Should this happen inadvertently send the child to join the main group.
- Respect the wishes of a child.
- Do not take inappropriate photographs of children.
- Communicate with children in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Recognise that children see adults as role models and that your standard of behaviour is important at all times.
- Ensure that other adults attending a group, such as volunteers and parents recognise the need for appropriate behaviour at all times.
- Don't make salacious (sexual or lewd) remarks in the presence of young people.
- If you suspect that a young person is becoming inappropriately attracted to you ensure that you raise your concerns with your manager.
- If you feel that you are at risk of behaving unprofessionally (for instance because you are under stress or have inappropriate feelings towards a young person) you should discuss this with your manager or the Personnel Manager.

Remember

Know of and follow all procedures and instructions; do not rely on 'your good name' to protect you.

5.6 Residential Placements ¹⁷

There are a number of occasions where Authority staff are involved in residential or overnight stays with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Staff have a 'duty of care' to ensure all visits are conducted in a suitably supervised and safe environment for participants and so far as is "reasonably practicable" to minimise any risk which the activity may entail.

Staff should approach these activities in the same way that they would activities which take place over a shorter period. They should:

- Prepare a risk assessment relating to all aspects of the stay. This should include reference to instances that are unique to a residential visit. For example, if the participant is camping, what should they do if they need the toilet during the night? It is not enough to assume that participants will know. For many this will be their first experience of being away from home and family.
- Inform the organisation, school or parent/guardian responsible for the child, young person or vulnerable adult exactly what the residential involves; what they will do, where they will stay, what they will need etc.
- Ensure that the trip has appropriate ratios of staff to participants. Remember ratios change depending on the age and ability of the participants but also depending on where they are going and what they will be doing.
- Residential visits may include the following activities which have been categorised as high risk: camping, transport by minibus, mountain walking, swimming outdoors and other water based activities, cycling

5.7 Guidance on safe and effective intervention

The use of force should only be a last resort. The focus of any session should be on creating a calm, orderly and supportive climate where children, young people and vulnerable adults can discover the National Park safely and in a way that enables them to grow and mature.

Very rarely an incident will occur that requires the need for force of any kind. Before intervening in any situation remember;

- The Authority asks all schools and organisations bringing children, young people or vulnerable adults out to experience the National Park to sign terms and conditions. These state that organisational staff have responsibility for the behaviour and management of those in their care. Legally only individuals to whom the senior member of staff e.g., a head teacher has designated responsibility can intervene.
- It is better to distract than to intervene.
- If intervention becomes necessary staff need to be aware of sensitivities associated with any form of physical contact.

Authority staff should, where possible, allow those professionals accompanying children, young people and vulnerable adults to manage their groups. These people know those in their care better than Authority Staff. Intervention should only take place to prevent someone from

- Committing an offence

- Causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person including themselves.
- Prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline among any pupils receiving education.¹⁸

6. Volunteers

The Authority will treat volunteers in the same way that it treats employees in regard to safeguarding.

Volunteers whose role will bring them into regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults will follow similar checks to those put in place for recruiting staff. This will include an interview, the seeking of referees and such checks as are appropriate to their role.

However most volunteers currently do not work alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults and so DBS checks are inappropriate. Even so, good recruitment practice suggests that these volunteers should be assessed/recruited with their suitability for working with these groups in mind.

7. Work experience/placements involving children, young people and/or vulnerable adults

Work experience placements differ from other types of contact as they tend to involve single students working with a range of Authority staff over a period of time.

In line with good practice the Authority recognises that the duty of care for work placement students lies with the school, college or body that arranged the placement. As such it is their responsibility to ensure that all necessary risk assessments and checks have taken place.

However, as part of good practice the Authority will:

- Ensure that a risk assessment is in place for all work experience placements.
- Minimise as far as possible the time spent by the student working one to one with staff in isolated environments or travelling in Authority vehicles.
- Seek where appropriate from the school or parent/guardian, information relating to vulnerable students that may impact on Authority employees or volunteers.

No employee should agree a work placement without informing the Personnel Manager. This should form part of the risk assessment process.¹⁹

8. Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and Volunteers²⁰

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteer is dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child, young person or vulnerable adult and at the same time supports the person who is subject of the allegation.

An allegation may relate to a person who may have;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or may have harmed.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Behaved towards a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.

What will happen if an allegation is made?

Any allegation involving PCNPA staff or volunteers must be made or passed immediately to the Line Manager and Authority Safeguarding Lead.

The Team Leader must ensure that they have all appropriate details relating to the allegation. Details should include

- When and where the alleged incident took place
- The details of those involved
- The nature of the allegation
- How the allegation was followed up and resolved (This part of the record may be added at a later date and not when collecting initial details)

What is the process for dealing with an allegation?

The process for dealing with an allegation is not a linear one. The path taken will depend on the nature of the allegation and the agencies involved in any investigations.

Allegations may be dealt with in three ways

- Internally.
- Through a police investigation
- Through an investigation by social services

The Authority Safeguarding Lead should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the police and/or social services designated officer.

If the matter is serious and if the advice from the police and social services indicates that we should do so, then the employee will be suspended on pay pending the conclusion of the investigation. An employee will be suspended if there is a risk of further misconduct and the Authority needs to safeguard children or where the employee's presence at work compromises the investigation.

Suspension is not an indication that the Authority has concluded that the employee is guilty.

An employee will not be suspended if the allegation is not serious or where the employee can carry out a large part of their work whilst ensuring no further contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The Authority will carry out its own investigation under the Disciplinary Procedure, whilst ensuring that it does not jeopardise any social services or police investigation. **The Authority is entitled to treat the matter as a disciplinary matter regardless of the outcome of any external investigation.**

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

How long might an investigation last?

It is reasonable to expect that 80 per cent of cases should be resolved within one month, 90 per cent within three months, and all but the most exceptional cases should be completed within 12 months.

Any record relating to an allegation should be retained until the staff member has reached normal retirement age or for a period of ten years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

9. If you suspect abuse or mistreatment...

In general, your contact with children is over a relatively short period of time and it is unlikely that you will be in a position to suspect abuse. However if you do have concerns about the well-being of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, you should:²¹

- Show that you have heard what the child, young person or vulnerable adult is saying and that you take their allegations seriously;
- Encourage the individual to talk but do not prompt or ask leading questions; Don't interrupt when the individual is recalling significant events. Don't make them repeat their account;
- Explain what actions you must take in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- Do not promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential, as you have a responsibility to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust;
- Write down as soon as you can and no later than 24 hours after what you have been told, using the exact words if possible. Include details of the date, time, place and any other people who were present;
- Report your concerns to your Line Manager or Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, and not more than 24 hours after. Where appropriate you may wish to inform a member of staff from the school or organisation of what has been said.
- Do not confront the alleged abuser;
- Do not worry that you may be mistaken. You will always be taken seriously by social services. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment

In all cases, you should keep a written record of what was said and done.

10. What to do if you are concerned about a member of staff²²

It is often difficult to accept that a colleague may have harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Often suspicion may take the form of concerns rather than known facts. It is important that if the behaviour of an adult or colleague gives you cause for concern, **either in the work place or in their private life**, that you:

- **Do not dismiss or ignore your concerns**
- **Do not confront the person about whom you have concerns**
- **Raise your concern with your Line Manager or the Safeguarding Lead.**

Concerns may not trigger an investigation but they help to build up a picture along with concerns from other sources, of a person. Remember that The All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008 ensure that the adult is protected as well as the child.

When you raise a concern you will be asked:

- The nature of those concerns
- How and why those concerns have arisen
- Any relevant details relating to those concerns
- Any information affecting the safety of children, young people, and vulnerable adults or other members of staff

Just as when making a referral on behalf of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, the referral process cannot maintain the anonymity of the person making the referral.

Footnotes

¹ Children are defined as “persons aged under 18”.

² Vulnerable adults are defined as “persons aged 18 or over who has a “substantial learning or physical disability; a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs or a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity”. (Department of Health 2002)

³ Wales Interim Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults From Abuse (January 2013) provides a comprehensive list of behaviour that is categorised as abuse.

⁴ Children are defined as “persons aged under 18”.

⁵ Vulnerable adults are defined as “persons aged 18 or over who has a “substantial learning or physical disability; a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs or a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity”. (Department of Health 2002)

⁶ All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008

⁷ All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008

⁸ Guidance taken from the WCVA Criminal Records Unit and Safeguarding Service, January 2014. And From The Disclosure and Barring Service, November 2013

⁹ The information was prepared following consultation with the Wales Council for Voluntary Action in January 2014

¹⁰ Disclosure Barring Service October 2013, Updated January 2014

¹¹ **Re-briefing for all seasonal staff is included in Pre-Season briefing.**

¹² PSCB Tier raining currently provided by Pembrokeshire County Council.

¹³ **All staff working with children and vulnerable adults are issued with a safeguarding prompt card.**

¹⁴ Transporting Children and Young People Safely (use of staff/volunteer vehicles) Warwickshire County Council

¹⁵ Using photographs of children for publication (NSPCC)
Information and Advice: Taking Photographs in Schools (Information Commissioners Office)

¹⁶ Ofsted Guidance (January 3013)
E-Safety: A Practical Guide for Schools. RM Education 2013.

¹⁷ Planning and Leading Visits and Adventurous Activities. RoSPA. 2013

¹⁸ Education and Inspections Act 2006

¹⁹ Safeguarding Young People on Work-Related Learning including Work Experience (DFCS 2010)

²⁰ (Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education) HM Govt. 2007

²¹ All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008.
Child Protection Policy and Procedures for Schools, Pembrokeshire County Council, September 2012.

²² All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008
Child Protection Policy and Procedures for Schools, Pembrokeshire County Council, September 2012.