



## **Child Protection Statement**

This policy applies to all staff (including volunteers), the board of trustees and anyone working on behalf of HOBY UK.

HOBY UK is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for the young people with whom we work. The purpose of this Policy is to protect young people and to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

HOBY UK believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. It is everyone's responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them and all our staff must maintain the attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

## **Legal framework**

This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2022)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2018)
- Children Act 2004
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 2004.
- All children, 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.

- A child or young person is defined in the law as anyone under the age of 18. Some of HOBY UK's younger volunteers are in this category and are therefore also protected under this policy.

## **Our Good Practice**

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Ensuring that our staff are recruited safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Providing effective management for staff through supervision, support and training.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and providing young people with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with young people, staff and volunteers and with parents, schools and youth organisations.
- Appointing a nominated Safeguarding Officer who will take specific responsibility for safeguarding, deal with safeguarding referrals.
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents, schools and youth organisations appropriately.
- Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted to the appropriate people.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection Policy annually.

## **Safeguarding Guidelines**

Staff should:-

- Accept responsibility to provide a duty of care for all delegates and young volunteers.
- Comply with all safeguarding training and guidelines.
- Take all reasonable steps to safeguard young people and protect them from harm, discrimination, exploitation, child-on-child abuse or degrading treatment.
- Respond to any safeguarding concerns or allegations swiftly by reporting the matter to the Safeguarding Officer.

Staff should not:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments.
- Spend time alone with young people away from others.
- Single out an individual young person for a gift (could be construed as 'grooming behaviour')
- Receive a gift from an individual young person (could encourage crushes). A thank-you gift is acceptable, but should be declared to the Seminar Chair.

## **E-safety**

If used appropriately, E-communication and social media are important in enabling HOBY UK to achieve its aims, especially given the wide geographical spread of its staff and volunteers and the organisation's international dimension. The same safeguarding guidelines apply to all on-line activity. In particular, the final point about 'spending time alone with a young person' should be stressed.

- Text messaging and on-line conversations can seem to be private, therefore staff should use these methods of communication only when necessary and should ensure they are kept purposeful, 'business-like' and 'to-the-point'.
- Young people should not be encouraged to give out personal details to anyone on-line that may help to identify or locate them or anyone else, for example home address, name of school or clubs attended.
- Young people should not be encouraged to upload personal photos of themselves or others onto sites other than the official HOBY Alumni Facebook page, which has restricted access and is regularly monitored.

## **How to spot abuse**

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any

- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour.

### **Actions to be taken if there is a child protection concern**

If there is a child protection concern, the following **'seven golden rules'** are what children have said is the way they want to be treated. These 'rules' should underpin all actions taken:

- Understanding and action: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- Stability: to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- Respect: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- Information and engagement: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- Explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- Support: to be provided with support in their own right, as well as to a member of their family
- Advocacy: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views

If a volunteer or member of staff is concerned about a child's welfare, they should report their concerns to the Safeguarding Officer. (In a school-based workshop, this will be the Workshop Chair, in a residential seminar this is Dave Critchley)

If a disclosure is made to a member of staff, the member of staff should:

1. Listen to what the child says
2. Report the matter to the Safeguarding Officer
3. Make an accurate record as soon as possible afterwards
4. Provide ongoing support as directed by the Safeguarding Officer

The Safeguarding Officer will report the matter to the appropriate authority. This may be the school (~~in the case of a child~~) or the local Children and Young People's Social Services (LADO), or the Police (if it is deemed potentially a criminal case). If the disclosure relates to the activities of HOBY UK, the CEO must report the matter to the

Charities Commission.

Examples of Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) contact details:

Warrington: 01925 442079

Liverpool: 0151 233 0493

### **Child protection allegations about a member of staff**

A child protection concern about a member of staff may occur at any time and may be raised by a child or an adult. In the case of a child protection allegation about a member of staff the Seminar Chair and CEO should be informed immediately. The Seminar Chair, on behalf of the CEO should take the following actions:

1. Suspend the member of staff from duties immediately (without prejudice) until a thorough investigation has been completed.
2. Notify the Board of Trustees that an allegation has been made.
3. Brief the Chair of Trustees and Safeguarding Link Trustee of the details of the allegation.
4. Supported by the Safeguarding Officer, Identify and notify the appropriate LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) about the allegation and also notify the police if the allegation is potentially of a criminal nature.
5. Carry out a confidential formal investigation into the allegation, ensuring that all interviews are accurately recorded and all files securely stored.
6. In conjunction with the CEO, present a report about the investigation to the Board of Trustees and make recommendations about the actions to be taken.

The CEO would then report the matter to the Charities Commission if it is deemed to be a serious incident.

The CEO should maintain regular contact with the suspended member of staff to ensure their well-being.

If the allegation is about the CEO, the matter must be referred to the Chair of Trustees (Stuart Jamieson 07847 567253) and Safeguarding Link Trustee (Sue Goodrum 07515 550470).

**Appendix to HOBY UK Safeguarding Policy**  
**Safeguarding in Remote Sessions and Meetings**  
**(added November 2020 and reviewed September 2022)**

The information in this document is based on best practice and government guidelines.

**Remote Sessions and Remote Meetings**

The use of remote learning tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams are being widely used to deliver remote sessions and facilitate meetings with young people.

The following points must be taken into consideration when using this technology:

- Hosts of sessions should undertake the session in a neutral area where nothing personal or inappropriate can be seen or heard in the background
- Ensure young people, parents and carers understand the benefits and risks of online sessions and gain consent from a parent or carer for the young person to be involved.
- **If anything is seen or heard which is of concern, or if a young person discloses anything which would be a safeguarding issue, the usual safeguarding procedures should be followed by informing the Safeguarding Officer without delay and making a written statement logging the concern/disclosure.**
- Hosts of remote sessions must be appropriately dressed and, if necessary, remind the young people that they need to be appropriately dressed
- When screen-sharing, Hosts must ensure that no unnecessary tabs are open in their browser
- Any documents shared must have been checked to ensure they are a) appropriate for sharing with young people and b) do not contain any confidential information
- Hosts must at all times use appropriate and professional language
- Safe and effective use of cameras must be observed
- The mute button is to be used as and when necessary to ensure the objectives of the session are met

## **Using Zoom and MS Teams**

- Meeting Ids and Passwords must be used and a new one generated for each meeting
- Personal meeting IDs should be avoided
- The link for a meeting must only be sent to the invitees
- A new meeting room must be used for each session
- Attendees must not be allowed into the meeting before the Host
- Muting attendees on joining until the session is ready to begin should be considered
- Screen sharing should be turned off until actually needed
- A waiting room should be set up so attendees can be admitted when the Host is ready
- When the session has begun the Meeting Room should be locked
- Meeting links must be very carefully and securely shared/publicised
- A second facilitator tasked with “managing the room” should always be present.
- A ‘Plan B’ must be shared at the outset (i.e. if the meeting has to be aborted, or is hacked, how will attendees re-join etc)

~~**We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually**~~

### **Monitoring and review**

- Safeguarding policy, practice, and any incidents will be discussed as a standing item on every trustee meeting.
- The seminar chair will include a report from the safeguarding officer in the seminar report.
- The safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually at the September meeting.

This policy was implemented on 29 September 2015

It was last reviewed on 27 September 2023

*Stuart J. Emerson*

Signed:

Chair of Trustees