

GRESFORD TRUST

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy establishes how Gresford & District War Memorial Community Centre Trust (Gresford Trust) will seek to prevent the physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children, youth and vulnerable people by its employees and volunteers. Gresford Trust seeks to create a welcoming and nurturing environment and has zero tolerance for those whose actions may jeopardise the safety, health or innocence of a child/youth or vulnerable adult.

Gresford Trust is firmly committed to the belief that all children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and fully recognises its responsibility for child and adult protection. The safety and protection of all vulnerable people at Gresford Trust is paramount and has priority over all other interests, unless life is at imminent risk.

All employees and volunteers working on behalf of Gresford Trust have a responsibility for the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults that they work with in their role at the Trust. All Gresford Trust employees and volunteers have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child and vulnerable adult protection is reported. All Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the designated Safeguarding Officer.

DEFINITIONS

Abuse – Because it takes many forms, abuse can be broken down into the following subtypes, all of which are prohibited within the scope of this policy.

- *Physical abuse* – Injury inflicted on a child or youth
- *Sexual abuse* – Contact or activity of a sexual nature between an adult and a child or youth
- *Emotional abuse* – Mental or emotional injury inflicted on a child or youth by the actions of an adult
- *Neglect* – Failure to provide adequate care for a child or youth
- *Economic abuse* – Deliberate misuse of the money or belongings of a child or youth

Child/Youth – is defined as anyone under 18 years of age.

Vulnerable Adult – is defined as anyone 18 or older who is the victim of abuse.

Volunteers – are defined as Trustees of Gresford Trust.

User Groups – are those groups/clubs who have a User Agreement with Gresford Trust.

Hirers – are those who do not have a User Agreement with Gresford Trust and hire the Trust facilities on a regular or ad hoc basis. This could be for societies, clubs, commercial or personal use.

POLICY GUIDELINES

Personnel Screenings

Safeguards in the hiring process will be used to eliminate from consideration any candidates who display characteristics that could classify them at a high risk for violating this policy. The required screenings and background information will depend on the position and its level of involvement with children and youth.

For those who work with or around children or youth. Candidates for positions that involve regular interaction with children or youth will be screened and selected using the following:

- Standard Gresford Trust employment application that includes signed authorisation to perform necessary checks

- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks
- Driving records and any applicable certification if the position requires the transport of children
- In-person interview of the candidate
- If hired, periodic checks will be conducted every three years for those who regularly work with children or youth.

General Conduct

In an effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for both mind and body, the following guidelines are meant to guide Gresford Trust employees and volunteers during their interactions with children and youth. These guidelines do not and cannot outline every situation that may be encountered while working, therefore employees and volunteers must act with a certain degree of personal discretion. Because a certain action is not prohibited in this section does not mean it is acceptable behaviour. Gresford Trust reserves the right to take disciplinary action against employees and volunteers whose actions are found to be inappropriate regardless of whether they appear in this section.

- All children and youth will be treated with respect and consideration. Treatment must be fair and equal, and must not be based on sex, race, religion, sexual orientation or economic or social status. All effort must be made to avoid favouritism, or the appearance of favouritism.
- While representing Gresford Trust, employees and volunteers must not possess, distribute, use or allow others to use any alcohol or drugs.
- Employees and volunteers must not use harsh or inappropriate language, degrading punishment or any type of restraining device in the name of behaviour management.
- Employees and volunteers must not participate in or allow others to engage in any form of hazing.
- Employees and volunteers must not have sexual contact with children or youth.
- Employees and volunteers must not dress, undress, shower or bathe with or in the presence of children under 16 years.
- Employees and volunteers must not use physical punishment in any form. The only time physical force is allowed to be used against a child or youth is when their actions are placing others at an immediate risk of serious harm.
- Employees and volunteers must not discuss their own sexual history, preferences or fantasies nor their use of illicit or pornographic materials while in the company of children or youth.
- Employees and volunteers are not allowed to possess any sexually oriented materials (books, magazines, videos, clothing) when conducting business in the name of Gresford Trust.
- When one-on-one discussion or counselling is warranted, employee interaction with a child or youth will take place in an area that allows for private conversation while remaining in the view of others.

If, for any reason, an employee or volunteer feels there is a need to make an exception to these guidelines, they must submit to the designated Safeguarding Officer a written description of the incident and why their actions were necessary. Their report will be reviewed for wrongdoing.

Structural Guidelines for User Groups and Hirers

The safety of children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of all users of Gresford Trust. All User Groups and Hirers should ensure that they take all reasonable steps possible to ensure that the activity they operate, under their hiring agreement at Gresford Trust, is conducted in such a way that children and vulnerable adults are kept safe from emotional, physical, sexual and other abuse.

All programmes are designed to encourage safe interaction between employees and children or youth. The following guidelines are meant to keep established safeguards effective:

- Programmes for children and youth must have an established adult to child ratio.
- Employees and volunteers are restricted from being alone with a child or youth where they cannot be easily observed by others.
- Permission must be obtained from a parent or guardian before any employee or volunteer transports a child or youth.

- Children under the age of six attending programmes will only be released to a parent, legal guardian or a person designated by a parent or legal guardian.

User Groups and Hirers should ensure that their Safeguarding procedures and knowledge are up to date. Any club, society, organisation or individual undertaking activities at Gresford Trust involving children aged under 18 or vulnerable adults will be required to adhere to their own safeguarding policy or adopt the Gresford Trust safeguarding policy.

Any club, society, organisation or individual working with children or vulnerable adults who does not have their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and refuses to adopt the Gresford Trust Safeguarding Policy will be refused permission to hire Gresford Trust facilities.

Any club, society, organisation or individual working with children and vulnerable adults may be subject to random spot checks to ensure policies and procedures are in place and being implemented.

Further information about child safeguarding may be found on the NSPCC website.

Please see Appendix 1 for further guidance on photographing and recording children during events and activities.

Appendix 1

Guidance for photographing and recording children during events and activities.

This guidance is based on NSPCC advice and is not intended to supersede or contradict any information provided by National Governing Bodies of the organisations that use Gresford Trust facilities.

It's important that children and young people feel happy with their achievements and have photographs and films of their special moments. Family and friends also want to be able to share the successes of their children when they have been part of a special event or activity.

However, it's also important to be aware of child protection and safeguarding issues when people are taking photos or filming at events. The potential for misuse of images can be reduced if organisations are aware of the potential risks and dangers and put appropriate measures in place.

Risk factors

Some of the potential risks of photography and filming at events include:

- children may be identifiable when a photograph is shared with personal information
- direct and indirect risks to children and young people when photographs are shared on websites and in publications with personal information
- inappropriate photographs or recorded images of children
- inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images.
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Developing a photography policy

Clubs and organisations should develop a photography policy to use for images of children and young people that are going to be used in publications, websites and social networking sites. The policy can also be used to help children, parents, staff and volunteers understand how photographs can be shared more safely.

The policy should include the following:

- do not use children's names in photograph captions. If a child is named, avoid using the photograph.
- use a parental permission form to obtain consent for a child to be photographed and videoed. Opt out clauses can be used on membership forms.
- obtain the child's permission to use their image
- only use images of children in suitable clothing to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. Some activities, for example swimming and drama, present a much greater risk of potential misuse.
- address how images of children on an organisation's website can be misused. Images accompanied by personal information, such as the name of a child and their hobby, could be used to learn more about a child prior to grooming them for abuse.
- state written expectations of professional photographers or the press who are invited to an event. These should make clear the organisation's expectations of them in relation to child protection.
- do not allow photographers unsupervised access to children
- do not approve photography sessions outside the event or at a child's home.

The organisation or club will need to ensure that parents, carers, family members and others understand the policy. Many organisations and clubs also have an acceptable use policy for using photographs, which may include asking parents not to share photos on social media.

Seeking consent for children and young people

Children should always be consulted about the use of their photograph. This ensures they're aware that the image is being taken and understand what the picture is going to be used for. This could be recorded on a child's permission form.

For young people under 18 get parental consent to use an image. Make sure parents and carers are aware of your club or organisation's photography policy. Asking parents to sign a consent form for use of their child's images and keep a record is considered good practise.

Storing images securely

Images or video recordings of children must be kept securely. Hard copies of images should be kept in a locked drawer and electronic images should be in a protected folder with restricted access.

Images should not be stored on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones.

Avoid using any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children and use only cameras or devices belonging to the school or organisation.

Organisations who are storing and using photographs to identify children and adults for official purposes, such as identity cards, should ensure they are complying with the legal requirements for handling personal information. Further guidance on the Data Protection Act and other privacy regulations should be sought if required.

NSPCC website is a useful source of further guidance as is the advice provided by the National Governing bodies of member organisations.