

Code of Practice No. 18

Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults: Code of Practice

Introduction

This document sets out the procedures and conduct that all Butterfly Conservation (BC) staff, volunteers and contractors who have contact with children and/or vulnerable adults should follow in order to comply with our Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy. Even if that contact is rare or is irregular, it is essential that this guidance is followed to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults are safe and protected from harm. Furthermore, it is important that BC staff, volunteers and contractors are protected from allegations and potentially compromising situations. This Code of Practice Covers:

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1.0 Procedure for safe recruitment of staff, volunteers and contractors

All staff and contractor appointments to BC posts are conditional upon a satisfactory security check by the Human Resources team. An **enhanced disclosure via the Disclosure Barring Service** (DBS) will be required for roles which include regular contact with children and vulnerable adults. Some volunteer roles which include regular contact with children and vulnerable adults may also require an enhanced disclosure via the DBS. 'Regular' is defined for the purposes of this guidance as being **four or more times over the course of a month**.

A self-declaration form can provide additional information that a DBS check will not. It requires an individual to provide information to be used as part of a decision on their suitability for a particular role with children. HR will oversee this process for both staff and volunteers.

BC does not routinely carry out any work whereby our staff, volunteers or contractors have direct supervision of children under 16 or vulnerable adults. Except in the event of a lost child or in an emergency situation (see [6.0](#)), BC staff or contractors should not accept or assume responsibility for the welfare or conduct of children or vulnerable adults. This includes situations arising in a school or informal education setting. The only exception is the youth-focussed activities led by the Butterfly Conservation Engagement Team e.g. the Youth Rangers programme, for which specific arrangements are made and agreed with the Head of Engagement.

Children aged 16-17 years of age may be accepted unaccompanied onto a BC activity if parental/Guardian consent is given (see [5.0](#)).

An assessment is carried out for each post prior to appointment by the appropriate line manager to determine the level of security check/disclosure/self-declaration needed. This will be written into the job/role description and form part of the application process. Where they are necessary, disclosure checks via the Disclosure Barring Service will be handled by the Human Resources Officer.

In addition, all applicants will be required to:

- provide satisfactory employer/personal references.
- complete a satisfactory probationary period.
- account for any gaps in their employment history.

Line managers will provide and explain the content of this policy to all new staff in the course of their induction process. Any individual deemed to require more detailed guidance and training will be provided/facilitated by the Human Resources Team.

If you think that your staff member, volunteer or contractor requires an enhanced DBS check, please contact the Human Resources Officer.

2.0 Procedure for recognising and responding to abuse

Disclosure is the process by which children or vulnerable adults start to share their experiences of abuse with others. Abuse can take many forms, including negligent treatment and criminal exploitation (where children are manipulated or coerced into committing crimes). Staff, volunteers and contractors also need to be able to recognise signs of abuse in children and vulnerable adults as they may be unable to speak out themselves.

All BC Staff are required to complete online training modules in Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults, accessed via 'Improve'. These modules provide an overview of the definitions and signs of abuse. It is recommended that staff who are regularly in contact with children or vulnerable adults should retake this training on an annual basis.

All volunteers are required to complete our online Safeguarding training module: [Volunteer Training: Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults | Butterfly Conservation \(butterfly-conservation.org\)](https://www.butterfly-conservation.org). These web pages also provide links to key contacts and key documents.

In addition, there are some excellent resources from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) which includes information on the definitions and signs of child abuse and how to record a disclosure: [Recognising and responding to child abuse and neglect | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learn/recognising-and-responding-to-child-abuse-and-neglect/).

We have prepared some procedural guidance for all staff, volunteers and contractors who need to report a concern or a disclosure - see [Appendix 1](#).

3.0 Procedure for reporting allegations made against you, a staff member, volunteer or contractor

Any allegation or concern that a member of staff, contractor or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or vulnerable adult must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.

Allegations may be made against a staff member, contractor or volunteer who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or vulnerable adult
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

These must be passed immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**.

Make a detailed, accurate written record of the allegation and pass this to the DSO as soon as possible.

In reporting or making any allegations, all staff, volunteers and contractors should make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all parties. They should not discuss the incident or allegation with anyone else unless instructed to do so by the DSO.

4.0 Behaviour code

The behaviour code aims to help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made. It has been informed National Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) which in turn has been shaped by the views of children and young people. Butterfly Conservation is responsible for making sure all staff, volunteers and contractors coming in to contact with children as part of their work, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. This behaviour code must be applied in all instances where children or vulnerable adults are present e.g., work parties, public events, guided walks, online events and interactions.

BC staff, volunteers and contractors will:

- listen to and respect children and vulnerable adults at all times.
- Approach any child and/or vulnerable adult in apparent distress and offer help, but ensure that they and the child and or vulnerable adult are as visible as possible in a public space.
- Seek assistance from the responsible adult for the child or vulnerable adult (e.g. parent, carer, teacher) in any situation involving children and/or vulnerable adults so that you avoid finding yourself alone with a vulnerable adult or child.
- Only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible.
- Be aware of the possibility of danger from others and be curious about situations that seem odd or suspicious.
- Keep any lost children in a public area where they can be clearly seen.

In **addition**, where contact with children or vulnerable adults is **online** (webinars, video calls, social media interactions, email communications):

- Use a Butterfly Conservation owned device and Butterfly Conservation social media accounts/email addresses to communicate with young people (e.g. a work mobile phone or laptop, your work email address). Where this is not possible (e.g. you are a volunteer), you should seek authorisation from a Designated Safeguarding Officer who will agree a process with you.
- Ensure all communications are relevant to the work of Butterfly Conservation.
- Use age-appropriate language.

- Turn on relevant privacy settings on social media/digital accounts that are used specifically to interact with children and young people (e.g. YouTube content designed for children should be listed as 'made for children').
- Be aware of your digital footprint. Children, young people and families may look up the personal social media accounts of people who are working with them. If your social media accounts are 'public' (can be viewed by anyone) they should be free of inappropriate or harmful content.

BC staff, volunteers and contractors will not:

- Touch or in any way engage in unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult.
- Physically restrain a child or young person, or vulnerable adult, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. to prevent injury) and even then, be careful to use only the minimum restraint necessary.
- Make inappropriate or suggestive comments or gestures, or use foul, abusive or racist language.
- Patronise or belittle children or vulnerable adults.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
- Travel alone in an enclosed, private, vehicle with otherwise unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults.
- Unless in an emergency situation, treat any child or vulnerable adult for first aid without the presence and consent of the responsible adult.
- Let children or vulnerable adults have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account.
- Allow concerns or allegations to go unreported.

5.0 Procedure for safe events and activities

Any children under the age of 16 who are attending events must be accompanied at all times by a parent, guardian, teacher or other responsible adult (with the exception of the youth-focussed work delivered by the Engagement Team e.g., Youth Rangers – see [section 1.0](#)). Groups of children must have an adequate number of such adults to supervise properly, as set out in their own Safeguarding Policy. Vulnerable Adults should also be accompanied by their carer/supervising adult. When advertising events a statement saying that we are unable to accommodate unsupervised children must be included.

Children aged 16-17 years of age may be accepted unaccompanied onto a BC activity if parental/guardian consent is given. This would typically be for the purposes of gaining work experience or taking part in a Youth Award Scheme such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

The supervising staff member or volunteer may need to have had a DBS check if the placement can be defined as sufficiently frequent (four or more times over the course of a month). See [section 1.0](#) for further guidance on DBS checks.

In all cases, a Parent/Guardian consent form ([Appendix 2](#)), or written permission from the school or hosting body, must be completed and submitted before the young person is accepted onto the activity. Parents and guardians are responsible for dropping off and picking up of their children; staff and volunteers should never offer or provide lifts to children or young people.

Risk assessments for the event should be made to take account of any additional risks to the children, (e.g. road safety, stronger emphasis on hygiene such as cleaning hands before contact with mouth through food & drink). Any safety briefings given should highlight these additional risks, but it should also be made clear that all children and vulnerable adults are the responsibility of their accompanying responsible adult.

When children or vulnerable adults are taking part in activities (e.g., practical work during work parties, use of hand tools, activities at public events), work party leaders should exercise caution and common sense when explaining activities. A Risk Assessment should be used to identify levels of risk associated with different activities/tools and this should be clearly communicated, with demonstrations and Personal Protective Equipment given where necessary. Risk assessments should identify the increased risks of children being present in the presence of tools, particularly power tools, even when they are not operating them themselves.

All staff, contractors and volunteers must follow the behaviour code (see [4.0](#)) when in the presence of children and vulnerable adults. This includes online interactions (webinars, social media etc)

Event organisers must ensure that photography or filming of children is not permitted unless written consent has been given (see [7.0](#)).

If you're planning to use the internet to provide or host activities that involves direct interaction with children online, children aged under 16 should be 'accompanied' by an adult. The adult should be aware of, and present during the event. Children aged 16-17 can attend unaccompanied if a consent form has been signed and returned. Information to this effect should be made available when advertising and taking bookings for your online event. If you are planning on recording your event, you will need to seek permission from a responsible adult of any children attending and obtain a signed consent form (see section 7.0).

6.0 Procedure for found and lost children

If you are representing Butterfly Conservation as part of a stand/display at a public event, make sure that you familiarise yourself with the event's procedure for lost children. If you spot a child who is lost, or a child approaches you for help, follow the event procedure or make contact with an event organiser or steward if in any doubt. **Do not** try to locate the child's parent or carer yourself. If the event procedure advises that you need to accompany a child to the event's central point for lost children, do so in pairs. **Make every effort to avoid being alone with the child.**

Children attending Butterfly Conservation organised events (e.g. Member's Days, guided walks, work parties) need to be accompanied by a responsible adult who is responsible for supervising the child at all times. If an adult approaches you to inform you that their child is missing, you can support them in the following ways:

- Ask for a description of the child including what they are wearing
- Ask any available colleagues or volunteers to assist in searching the immediate area for the child, ideally in pairs
- If the child is not found within 15 minutes, encourage the responsible adult to report the missing child to the Police

Record the details of the occurrence and report these via the accident and incident reporting form which staff can find on SharePoint. Volunteers and contractors should contact dbell@butterfly-conservation.org.

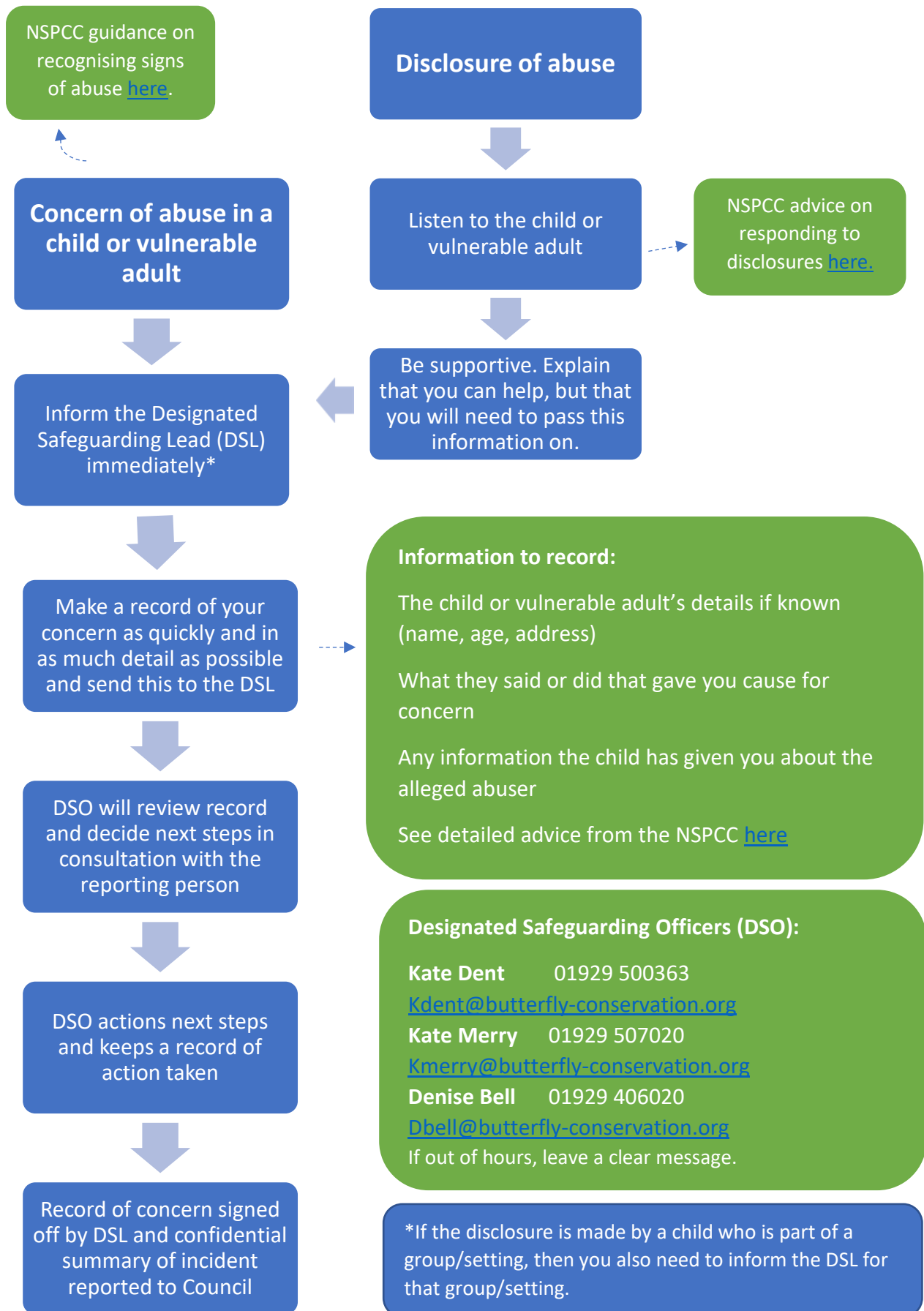
7.0 Procedure for taking and sharing photographs and images of children

Photographs or film of children and vulnerable adults can only be taken with the prior written consent of their accompanying responsible adult. See [Appendix 3](#) for Butterfly Conservation's Photography Consent Form.

Staff, volunteers and contractors should be aware that families or individuals may have a range of very justified reasons as to why they are not comfortable with consenting to photos of their children or vulnerable adults in their care.

When publishing images in print or online, avoid including information that can identify the child, such as their full name, parts of their address or the name of their school.

Appendix 1. Procedure for reporting concerns or a disclosure



Appendix 2. Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Name of event/activity:	
Location:	
Date/time:	
Name of event/activity leader:	

To comply with our Codes of Practice and for your child's safety, we require written consent from parents or guardians for unaccompanied children aged 16 and 17 taking part in this activity. If you consent to your child attending, please complete the remainder of this form.

If you have any questions in this regard, please contact the event leader named above.

Name of child:	
Age:	
Name of parent/guardian:	
Address:	
Contact telephone no. (please include a mobile number):	
Does your child suffer from any illness, disability or allergy that might effect them during the activity or event?	Yes/No (if yes, please provide details below)

I understand that in the event of illness or accident that the activity leader considers needs medical attention, medical aid will be sought and all attempts made to contact parents/guardians. In the event of no contact being possible, a doctor, following strict guidelines, will decide whether examination and subsequent treatment are necessary. If they are deemed to fully understand the situation then young people under the age of sixteen may give their own consent to examination or treatment.

I understand that it is my responsibility to provide transport arrangements for my child both to and from the activity and that I will arrive promptly for their collection at the agreed time.

I consent to the above-named child to participate in the activity described as indicated.

Signed (parent/guardian):	
Date:	

Appendix 3. Child photography consent form

Butterfly Conservation uses images to promote the conservation of butterflies and moths and their habitats and our organisation. We use images in our own publicity materials and also to send to the news media and other organisations, where the purpose is to promote the conservation of butterflies and moths.

We will take all reasonable measures to ensure that images are used solely for the purposes for which they are intended. However, we cannot guarantee this and take no responsibility for the way images are used by other websites or publishers, or for any consequences arising from publication.

If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform Butterfly Conservation immediately.

Butterfly Conservation recognises the need to ensure the safety and welfare of all children. In accordance with our Safeguarding Children Policy we will not permit photographs, video or other images of children (under the age of 18) to be taken without the consent of the parent/carer of the child.

To give your consent, please complete the form below:

I _____ (parent/carer) consent to Butterfly Conservation photographing or videoing _____ (name of child)
I hereby grant Butterfly Conservation the right to use the photograph(s) and video resulting from the photo shoot, and any reproductions or adaptations of the photograph(s). These images may be used for all general purposes in relation to Butterfly Conservation's work including, without limitation, the right to use them in any publicity materials, website, social media, e-newsletters, books, tv, newspapers and magazine articles whenever Butterfly Conservation chooses to do so. Yes / No (select)
I also grant Butterfly Conservation the right to send my child's images to the news media and partner organisations, which may use the images in printed and/or electronic form. Yes / No (select)
Parent/carer signature:
Date:
Parent/carer name:
Parent/carer email address:
Parent/carer telephone number:
Event and organiser:
Photographer:

Data Protection: Butterfly Conservation may need to contact you about your content. The information that you provide will be used solely to contact you about content.