

HHCOS Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Code of Good Practice for members, volunteers, parents, contractors, suppliers and others

It is the policy of HHCOS to ensure that all participants in HHCOS activities and events are protected from physical, sexual and emotional harm whilst taking part. In order to achieve these safeguards HHCOS requires that you follow the code of practice for protecting children (under 18 years) as set out below. This also applies to adults at risk of harm.

As an adult working with children and young people in HHCOS and Haddo Voices

You should:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of the child above the need to succeed or achieve goals. Give constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour (this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children).
- Avoid private or unobserved situations and ensure that other adults are within sight or hearing wherever possible. Plan activities that involve more than one person being present.
- Respect everyone's right to privacy.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children. Be aware that even caring physical contact with a child or young person can be misinterpreted.
- Be available to listen to the concerns of children and refer them to other sources of help where appropriate.
- Try to ensure that your actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence.
- Encourage young participants to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like.
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues and recognise that caution is required when discussing such issues.
- Report immediately to the nominated Designated Safeguarding Officer if:
 - you accidentally hurt a participant child or vulnerable adult
 - there is any need for first aid/intervention
 - he/she seems distressed in any manner

Founders: David Gordon CBE K.StJ and June Gordon CBE DL FRCM FRSAMD FRSE

Royal Patron: HRH The Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex KG GCVO ADC

Patrons: Joanna, the Marchioness of Aberdeen & Temair, Dr Neil Mackie CBE FRSAMD FRCM,

Patricia MacMahon D Mus(Hons) FRSAMD ARCM LRAM, Dr Lisa A Milne MBE

- o a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done
- o a child or vulnerable adult appears to be sexually aroused by your action.

You should not:

- Fail to act upon or record any allegations made by a child.
- Exaggerate or trivialise any child abuse issues.
- Permit abusive behaviour, eg bullying, taunting, racist behaviour.
- Have inappropriate physical, verbal or internet-based contact with children.
- Take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained or designated, or have full permission of the parent or individual adult, eg transporting children, wardrobe duties, or actions where there is physical contact, eg lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities.
- Deliberately place yourself or others in potentially compromising situations, eg being alone with a child, being alone with a child who is dressing or undressing, or going to the lavatory.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour such as crushes or tantrums.
- Show favouritism to an individual.
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest.
- Jump to conclusions about others without first checking facts.
- Believe it could never happen to me.

What to do

If you have any reason to suspect a child or young person involved in an HHCOS activity or event is being abused:

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy DSO or the other designated individuals. (see table below).
- Make a written record of all details of the facts known to you as soon as possible and give a copy to the HHCOS member to whom you have spoken.
- Maintain confidentiality after informing the DSO or other designated person.

If a young person tells you about abuse by someone else:

- Stay calm, do not be shocked and try to act normally.
- Allow the individual to speak freely, without interruption, but do not question them or attempt to investigate it by yourself.
- Offer support and reassurance; assure them that you believe what they say

- Explain that you cannot keep it a secret and that you will speak to the responsible person (see below) about it. Never promise a child that you will keep it a secret
- Report the matter as detailed.

If you receive an allegation of abuse about any other HHCOS member, volunteer, supplier, contractor, or about yourself:

- Immediately inform the DSO or other designated person (as above) and keep a written record of all the facts as you know them
- Try to ensure that no one is placed in a position which could lead to further compromise

Who do I report to?

Do not try to deal with any possible cases of abuse on your own. All concerns should be reported confidentially to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. If not present, please report to the next level down in order of priority.

1. Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Toto Coxe
2. Deputy DSO: Andy Clubb
3. Lead Safeguarding Officer: Jenny Greener (Chairman)
4. Member of Management Committee: Andy Clubb, Jackie Ellington, Janet Hoper, Tricia Liddell, Sheila Robertson, Toto Coxe

The matter will then be referred in the strictest confidence directly to the DSO, who will follow the HHCOS Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures, (full details on our website www.hhcos.org.uk).

We are committed to reviewing our policies, procedures and good practice annually.

This policy was reviewed on: November 2020

Signed: Chairman,
HHCOS