



## **ANSTRUTHER IMPROVEMENTS ASSOCIATION**

### **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Committee of the Anstruther Improvements Association (AIA) organises community events, some of which may be attended by children and vulnerable adults. The AIA may well run ongoing projects or programmes that involve participation by children, young people or vulnerable adults. The Committee wishes to ensure that all children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe and protected from harm whilst attending activities and events run by us, whether at Dreel Halls or elsewhere.

The AIA may also work closely with young volunteers in the future and we wish therefore to ensure that all younger volunteers are safe and protected from harm whilst working with us.

In preparing this policy and procedure, the AIA has consulted the Safe Network, an information and resource bank jointly provided by the NSPCC, Children England and Child Accident Prevention Trust. We have also drawn on the current policy of the Anstruther Fisheries Museum.

The *Children in Scotland Act (1995)* covers legal measures to protect children, with the dominant principle that 'the paramount consideration is the welfare of the child'. The age of the child is determined in Scottish legislation in relation to child protection to be 0 - 16 years of age (though there are some exceptions to this whereby an individual is considered to be a child up to the age of 18). The principles contained in our Policy and Procedures also applies to vulnerable adults.

#### **2. Child Protection Policy**

The AIA believes that it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

##### **We recognise that:**

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and their agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

##### **The purpose of the policy:**

- To provide protection for children who receive the AIA's services or attend our events or activities, including the children of adult members or users.
- To provide any staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

- This policy applies to all volunteers, including the committee, and any future paid staff working on behalf of the AIA.

**We will seek to safeguard children by:**

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for any staff and volunteers
- recruiting any staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for any staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice regularly.

**3. Child Protection Procedures**

The Committee members and volunteers from the AIA may come into contact with young people and vulnerable adults at some of the community events run by the AIA.

Committee members and volunteers will be made aware of the AIA’s child protection procedures.

Four of the AIA’s Committee members have PVG disclosure. They are Jennifer Gordon, Alan Stewart, Christine Palmer and Elizabeth Riches. These four are deemed to be the AIA’s child protection representatives and can be consulted by any Committee members or volunteers regarding child protection issues. One AIA Committee member, Kate Anstruther, has a certificate in Mental Health First Aid for Young People and can be consulted by any Committee members or volunteers regarding concerns about a young person’s mental health. All volunteers and committee members will be made aware of this.

**Code of Behaviour on Child Protection**

We recognise that it is not practical to provide definite instructions that would apply to all situations at all times to guarantee the protection of children and volunteers. Stated below are the standards of behaviour required of volunteers and any staff in order to fulfil their roles. This should assist the protection of both children and volunteers/staff.

α. Volunteers/staff must implement the Child Protection Policy and Procedures at all times

β. Volunteers/staff must never:

Engage in rough, physical games including horseplay with children.

Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind. The main principles of touch are:

- touch should always be in response to the child’s need
- touch should always be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.

Physically restrain a child/young person unless the restraint is to:

- prevent physical injury of the child/other children/visitors or staff/yourself
- prevent damage to property
- prevent or stop the commission of a criminal offence

In all circumstances physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable, otherwise your actions can be defined as assault.

Make sexually suggestive comments to or within earshot of a child.

Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or that a parent/leader can do for them.

- χ. It is strongly recommended that staff do not, except in emergency situations:
- carry children/young people on their own in a vehicle
  - go into the toilet with children unless another adult is present or gives permission (this may include a parent, teacher, group leader)
  - spend time alone with a child on his/her own. If you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, make sure you can be clearly observed or seen by others.

If an allegation against a volunteer/member of staff has occurred, an investigation will be carried out. If the investigation finds that a volunteer/member of staff has acted inappropriately or not acted in the best interests of the child, the AIA will contact the police.

### **Procedures to be followed by AIA volunteers/staff in a case of suspected or alleged child abuse**

A volunteer/member of staff who suspects that a child has been abused is bound to follow the procedures below. Confidentiality can not be offered to either a volunteer/member of staff or a child in this situation.

Any volunteer/member of staff who:

- suspects that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused; or
- has a disclosure made to them; or
- receives a complaint from a member of the public relating to child protection issues; or
- has a direct allegation made against them;

must report the matter to one of the AIA's child protection representatives. They will report to the President if available, otherwise directly to the Police.

### **Guidance on disclosure of abuse and how to deal with it**

#### **How do you react?**

##### **Do-**

Stay calm

Recognise your own feelings

Receive the information

Reassure

Listen

Record

Report to one of the child protection representatives

Get support yourself

##### **Do Not -**

Promise confidentiality to the child

Probe for more information/investigate

Panic

Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily

Use leading questions

Remember – how you react may mean the child/young person telling or not telling his/her story. It may be the beginning of a personal journey for the child/young person.