

## Policy 2.1. SAFEGUARDING

### POLICY STATEMENT

British Exploring Society is committed to safeguarding all children and vulnerable adults who are subject to its duty of care throughout the delivery of any activity, residential or otherwise, whether in the UK or overseas. In addition, British Exploring Society recognises its responsibility to liaise with other agencies to protect children and vulnerable adults whenever they are or may be victims of abuse in any sphere of their life whether with BES or outside of our care.

British Exploring Society will support the positive outcomes and the safe and effective care of all expedition members through adherence to the guidelines contained in this policy and in related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). This policy applies to all staff including office staff, Trustees, expedition leaders, medics and volunteers and visitors who may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults during field visits and events.

British Exploring Society is committed to:

- Taking into account the interests and wellbeing of young people in all its considerations and activities;
- Respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the young people with whom it is working;
- Taking all reasonably practicable steps to protect young people from neglect and all forms of abuse;
- Promoting the welfare of young people and their protection within a relationship of trust.
- Ensuring that all online activities are specifically considered to ensure they create a safe environment with those whom we work and/or interact with.

British Exploring Society recognises that all young people, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

In addition to outlining British Exploring Society's commitment, this policy and related SOPs provide staff and visitors with practical guidance relating to a range of safeguarding issues.

### FURTHER POLICY DETAIL

#### DEFINITIONS

**Safeguarding** is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm including:

- protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and maltreatment;
- preventing harm to the health and development of children and vulnerable adults;
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

The risk of harm from activities is also an element of safeguarding policy and for that reason there will be overlap between Policy 2.1 and Policy 3 and related SOPs.

**Child Protection** Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Child** is anyone under the age of 18.

**Vulnerable Adult** is anyone over the age of 18 who needs or may need community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of or be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

**Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or be neglectful by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. People may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the Internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or a child or children. This policy takes the definition of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect from the UK Government's "*Working Together to Safeguard Children*" document 2018.

## RECOGNISING AND RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

- British Exploring Society requires all its staff to be receptive to the needs of children and vulnerable adults and be vigilant to potential issues relating to the welfare of those within their care;
- Staff will receive training and guidance on identifying and responding to concerns, and the relevant procedures can be found in *SOP 2.1.3 Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns*;
- Leaders will ensure that any safeguarding concerns are treated in the strictest confidence and will be mindful of data protection issues relating to any records kept or maintained in the field. Any records returned to the office will be treated in accordance with British Exploring Society *Policy 2.4 Data and Privacy Protection*;
- British Exploring Society will endeavour to raise any concerns with authorities in the UK where relevant, through the appropriate Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

## SUPPORT NEEDS, CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR AND THE USE OF PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

- British Exploring Society recognises that some members of an Expedition Programme may have specific care and support needs which need to be considered, to ensure their welfare during delivery of expeditions, UK training and residential events;
- In some cases, a member of an Expedition Programme might have specific needs, including emotional, behavioural, learning support or care needs. These needs will be identified either through a declaration of the young person/vulnerable adult or additional information provided

by a referring adult. In such cases, this information will be communicated, as appropriate to members of the expedition leadership team including the Chief Leader and expedition Medic and a decision will be made about whether the needs of the expedition member can be safely accommodated and/or if reasonable adjustments need to be made to accommodate them.

- Where support needs relate to intimate care, British Exploring Society will only be able to accommodate the expedition member if a staff member trained in delivering intimate care can accompany the person;
- British Exploring Society recognises that any member of an Expedition Programme can react unpredictably under the unique pressures provided by the expedition environment and, accordingly, all British Exploring Society staff receive guidance on how to deal with challenging behaviour. Details of this guidance can be found in SOP 2.1.4. Working with Challenging Behaviour;
- British Exploring Society recognises that there may be times when physical intervention is required to prevent an expedition member causing harm to themselves or others. British Exploring Society staff receive guidance on their legal position with respect to physical interventions and the factors involved in such a decision (SOP 2.1.4. Working with Challenging Behaviour).

## **MEDIA, WRITTEN CONTENT AND CONSENT**

- All British Exploring Society staff contracted to record any form of media (photo, films, images and written content) of activities will be required to ensure media contains appropriate content and that all effort has been made to gain informed consent for such media;
- British Exploring Society will make every effort to ensure that all photos, films and written content submitted to its office will be used appropriately with all relevant consents gained;
- All staff, Trustees and visitors are expected to remain mindful of the appropriateness of media that they may collect during their contact time;
- Leaders will ensure that they do not circulate or reproduce images or other forms of media of expedition members in a public or semi-public forum (i.e. members, contacts or “friends”) including on social media without the express permission of the person concerned. The Leader takes full responsibility for the decision to reproduce any media content without the appropriate consents;
- British Exploring Society can take no responsibility for the photos and film held on personal cameras by expedition members after the end of their programme with us or the termination of their contract. . However, all expedition members will be advised to take personal responsibility for ensuring no photos are taken of them during events which they would not be happy to be held on a personal camera.
- British Exploring Society provides information to expedition members to help them protect themselves and to help ensure their responsible use of media platforms as part of its commitment to safeguarding.

## **ONLINE ENGAGEMENT**

- Online engagement includes all activities conducted by British Exploring Society that include interaction with or the attendance of external parties where there will be children or vulnerable adults in attendance. This includes but is not limited to Wildestan, where Wildestan includes

individual sessions, expeditions and any future iterations of the programme, Webinars or Fire-side talks.

- British Exploring Society has conducted a risk assessment of online platforms for the delivery of online engagement and will ensure that any additional online platforms used for the delivery of activities are adequately risk assessed prior to use.
- British exploring society maintain an online engagement Risk Assessment which makes the basis for the development of the Code of Conduct and Terms & Conditions It acknowledges the over exposure of Wildestan to safeguarding risks and
- All Staff and External presents are required to acknowledge the Online code of conduct and Terms & Conditions of participation.
- British Exploring Society acknowledges that its Wildestan Adventures and Expeditions programme presents the greatest risk in relation to online delivery and the below are specific to that programme
  - All British Exploring Society Staff and Experts will attended a in-house online safeguarding training prior to the delivery of online content.
  - All Experts are required to provide a up to date reference request, unless they are in possession of a enhanced DBS certificate for the purpose of leading on an expedition with British Exploring Society.
  - All Experts are required to sign up to the online Code of Conduct, Terms & Conditions and assume responsibility for any camera person whom they may require the support of to film. The use of the “Wildestan Expert Guide” to support the planning and design of there session will ensure compliance with British Exploring Societies Safeguarding measures for online activities.
  - All British Exploring Society Staff are to use the “Wildestan Hosts Guide” while host or co-hosting a session. The document provides guidance on how to manage and respond to safeguarding concerns during a session.
  - All Young Adventurers who participate in a Wildestan Adventure or Expedition will also sign up to the Online Code of Conduct and Terms & Conditions.
- All infringements of the Code of Conduct or Terms and Conditions of participation will be dealt with accordingly. Guidance on the actions to be taken can be found in the Wildestan host Guide.
- All online safeguarding concerns will be raised to the Safeguarding Lead and as required the Head of Expeditions and CEO of British Exploring Society
- Recognising and responding to Online Safeguarding concerns will follow the same process as the prior section in this Policy and SOP 2.1.3 Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns;

## **RECRUITMENT OF STAFF**

- British Exploring Society operates Safer Recruitment practices: our job descriptions always make specific reference to working with young people and our responsibilities for safeguarding; we make clear that candidates must have suitability to work with young people; we always seek references, and those references include specific questions about each candidate’s suitability to work with children; we require enhanced DBS checks for all staff, volunteers and trustees.

- All staff are recruited to fulfil specified competencies. In the case of Leaders, this includes their ability to manage a group safely in the expedition environment and secure the welfare of all group members.
- We ask staff and volunteers about overseas residency as part of their interview process. A stipulation of our application form is a declaration from candidates about any periods of residency overseas for 3 months or more, in the last 5 years.
- We ask for more information from candidates where we see anomalies, discrepancies, a history of gaps (including overseas) or unexplained pauses in employment or training which may be a cause for concern; changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression; or a mid career move from a permanent to temporary post.
- In addition to their fulfillment of essential competencies, all staff who may come into unsupervised contact with a child or vulnerable adults will undergo screening to ensure their suitability to work with these client groups. These checks will include receiving Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosures from the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks. Details of the Procedure for completing DBS checks can be found in [SOP 2.1.1](#).
- In order to work directly and unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults, office staff and trustees will need to have completed an enhanced DBS check within the preceding 24 months;
- In light of the seasonal nature of British Exploring Society expeditions, all expedition Leaders who are not otherwise employed by British Exploring Society between seasonal contracts will be required to complete a new enhanced DBS check, or provide relevant details from the DBS update service on commencement of each seasonal contract within each calendar year (Leaders who work on two expeditions within one calendar year will be permitted to use the same DBS check);
- All staff appointments are made subject to completion of DBS checks. Such checks will be completed before any staff member is required to spend any time unsupervised with a child or vulnerable adult. Any DBS checks which are returned with a positive response will be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration. Where such checks raise concerns about the suitability of the appointment, the staff member's contract will be cancelled.
- In addition to one-off DBS checks, staff members who are registered with the DBS update service will be able to supply British Exploring Society with their unique ID code to enable British Exploring Society staff to make a real time check of their criminal record.
- In the event that a staff member is not a resident of the UK, British Exploring Society will follow the guidance of the applicant's country of residence for criminal records checks or 'Certificates of Good Character';
- When a new candidate is identified at interview as having been resident overseas for 3 or more months in the last five years, and is not covered by Certificates of Good Character/Good Conduct, or a UK criminal records check, they may be subject to one of several additional checks. Because there is no single, definitive criminal records check for overseas residency, the final decision to recruit an individual with overseas residency and the assessment of any risk associated with that decision must rest with the CEO, supported by our Safeguarding Lead.
- For an individual with overseas residency in the last five years, the Safeguarding Lead and CEO will secure one or more of the following checks, depending on the reason given for an overseas residency, the location of the residency and the availability of evidence to support that residency.

We may:

- a) Seek to secure or ask to see an existing overseas DBS check;
- b) Seek to secure or ask to see an existing International Child Protection Certificate (if the individual has worked in a country using the CETS system)
- c) Ask for written references from an employer/s for the period;
- d) Contact overseas referees directly;
- e) Ask for a self declaration from the Leader;
- f) Any combination of the above.

We may also choose to adopt a different approach to different residencies, even with the same Leader, if this seems likely to produce more satisfactory evidence to support better safeguarding.

- British Exploring Society takes the view that its approach to securing assurance in relation to overseas residency must be proportionate and pragmatic depending on the information we already have about the Leader in question and our assessment of the safeguarding risk they may present.
- The CEO, Safeguarding Lead and Expedition leadership team will undertake a risk assessment if necessary to manage the participation of any Leaders we choose to recruit with a declared residency overseas for 3 months or more in the last five years and/or who has indicated significant gaps in employment.
- Professional references will be sought in support of all appointments. Where staff members have not worked for the British Exploring Society before, 2 references will be required. Where Leaders have worked for BES in the preceding calendar year, 1 up to date reference will be required.

## **CODE OF ETHICS AND GOOD CONDUCT**

- All members of an Expedition Programme, including Leaders, Explorers and other Participants are required to conduct themselves according to the Society's Code of Ethics and Good Conduct;
- The Code of Ethics and Good Conduct is designed to support positive outcomes and foster a culture of safety, equality, mutual care and respect on Expedition Programmes. It serves to help all members of an expedition programme maintain appropriate relationships and boundaries;
- Any infringements of the Code of Ethics and Good Conduct will be dealt with by the supervising Leader or Chief Leader. In some cases, this may result in the member of the expedition programme having to return home early.

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

- Where British Exploring Society works in partnership with other organisations, their safeguarding policies and procedures will be sought.
- Where partners provide staff for any delivery, written assurances will be sought that they have recently been DBS checked (or equivalent).
- Where appropriate, office contractors will be asked to undertake DBS checks before undertaking work for British Exploring Society.