Safeguarding Children Policy

1. **Purpose**

Hengistbury Head Outdoors is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who participate in our activities.

We believe that every child has the right to be safe, protected from harm, and treated with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or background.

This policy applies to all:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Trustees/Directors
- Contractors
- Sessional workers

2. Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest UK Government guidance)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (where applicable)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures

3. Safeguarding Principles

Our safeguarding practice is guided by the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Every child has the right to protection from abuse and neglect.
- All children should be listened to and taken seriously.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Concerns must be acted upon promptly and appropriately.
- We will work in partnership with parents, carers, and statutory agencies where appropriate.

4. Definition of a Child

For the purposes of this policy, a child is anyone under the age of 18 years. For children who are in Looked after care this age extends to 21.

5. Types of Abuse

Children may experience abuse in many forms, including:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (including county lines)
- Online abuse
- Grooming
- Bullying and cyberbullying

- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Honour-based abuse
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Peer-on-peer abuse

6. Responsibilities

Directors

Directors are responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place.
- Reviewing this policy annually.
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed.
- Supporting safeguarding training and DBS processes.

The Operations director is the named lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL is responsible for:

- Receiving safeguarding concerns.
- Maintaining confidential safeguarding records.
- Making referrals to Children's Social Care or other agencies where appropriate.
- Supporting staff and volunteers.
- Liaising with statutory agencies.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Name: __Jess Pearcey_____

Email: ___Jess@hengistbury.org_____

Telephone: _07847256108_____

Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

● Complete appropriate safeguarding training.

● Read and follow this policy.

● Maintain professional boundaries.

● Report concerns immediately.

● Never ignore signs of abuse or neglect.

● Maintain confidentiality while recognising that safeguarding concerns must be shared appropriately.

7. Recognising Abuse

Staff and volunteers should remain alert to signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm, including:

● Unexplained injuries

● Sudden changes in behaviour

● Poor hygiene or persistent neglect

● Fearful or withdrawn behaviour

● Inappropriate sexualised behaviour

● Frequent absences

● Disclosure of abuse

● Concerns relating to online activity or exploitation

The presence of one indicator does not necessarily mean abuse has occurred, but concerns should always be reported.

8. Reporting Concerns

If a child discloses abuse or you have concerns:

1. Stay calm.

2. Listen carefully.

3. Reassure the child they have done the right thing.

4. Do not promise confidentiality.

5. Avoid asking leading questions.

6. Record exactly what was said as soon as possible.

7. Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Where a child is believed to be in immediate danger:

● Contact the Police by dialling 999.

● Contact Children's Social Care as soon as possible.

● Inform the DSL at the earliest opportunity.

9. Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns must be:

● Recorded promptly.

● Accurate, factual, and dated.

● Signed by the person making the record.

● Stored securely and confidentially.

● Shared only with those who need to know.

10. Information Sharing

Information may be shared without consent where:

● A child is at risk of significant harm.

● A crime may have been committed.

● There is a legal safeguarding duty to share information.

Information sharing will always be proportionate and comply with data protection legislation.

11. Safe Recruitment

The organisation will:

- Follow safer recruitment practices.
- Obtain references where appropriate.
- Carry out enhanced DBS checks where required.
- Provide safeguarding induction and ongoing training.
- Maintain codes of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Ensure appropriate supervision of volunteers.

12. Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns about unsafe practice, poor conduct, or failures in safeguarding.

Anyone raising a genuine safeguarding concern will be supported and will not suffer detriment for doing so.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or safeguarding guidance changes.

Date approved: _____20/07/26_____

Review date: ___21/07/27_____

Signed: ____S Glen_____

Role: _____Operations Director_____