

BHAS Child Protection Guidelines

Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or vulnerable person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and vulnerable people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

Introduction

BHAS has a duty of care to safeguard from harm children (and others who may be particularly vulnerable) involved in BHAS organised activities. BHAS also has a duty to promote practice that reduces the risk to members involved in BHAS organised activities where children may be present.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

The aim of this policy is to promote basic good practice that will provide children, vulnerable people and society members with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in BHAS activities *and* to allow all members to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Child and vulnerable person involvement with BHAS organised activities

The Society organises public talks to which non-members have access on payment of a fee. These events are infrequent (no more than two a month) of short duration and held in publicly available hired premises. Young people aged 16 and 17 years should not be excluded from participation on the basis of age alone and should be admitted on a case by case basis.

The Society occasionally organises day trips and because they are of extended duration and involve travelling considerable distances from the home area they should be restricted to those children and vulnerable adults who are accompanied by parents or guardians.

It is a Society rule that any child under the aged sixteen or under attending BHAS field unit activities must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Archaeology students aged 17 years should be accompanied by a parent or guardian on first attendance in order that they can satisfy themselves as to the nature of the activity and to countersign health and safety advice forms, relinquishing rights to finds form and photographic consent forms.

Society activities which are open to the public include “open days” and exhibitions where members of the public are free to examine displays and speak with society members. Whilst Society members have no formal responsibility for children and vulnerable adults under these circumstances these guidelines should still be followed, bearing in mind that children and vulnerable people may not be under the immediate care and control of their parents, guardians or carers. Members may

also share their interest in archaeology in other public arenas such as exhibitions organised by other groups and by visits to schools. When involved in these public activities it is expected that members will either follow this child protection policy or the child protection policy of the organisation they are visiting whether their membership of BHAS is made explicit or not.

Good practice guidelines

- ⤴ Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations).
- ⤴ Treat all young people/vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- ⤴ Maintain a safe and appropriate distance especially when demonstrating the use of excavation tools and other instruments.
- ⤴ Involve parents/carers wherever possible.

Practices to be avoided

- ⤴ Avoid spending time alone with children or vulnerable adults away from others.
- ⤴ Avoid taking or dropping off a child or vulnerable adult to an event or activity unless accompanied by an appropriate adult.
- ⤴ BHAS members should not seek the personal details, private contact addresses or telephone numbers from a child or vulnerable adult beyond that which is necessary to record their presence at an activity and to obtain an emergency contact. If further details are required they should be obtained from a parent or guardian after an explanation as to why the details are required has been given. Similarly, the personal contact details of a BHAS member should never be given to a child or vulnerable adult but to their parent or guardian.

Practices never to be sanctioned

- ⤴ Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- ⤴ Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- ⤴ Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult.

Use of photographic/filming equipment

In some circumstances photographs may be taken of people engaged in BHAS activities for use on our website. If these photographs involve individual or small groups of children the informed consent of their parent or guardian should be sought and obtained in writing.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

Any suspicion of poor practice must be reported to a committee member as soon as possible. Any instance of a member failing to follow good practice could result in expulsion from the society on a majority vote of the committee..

Any suspicion that a child has been ill treated or abused while engaged in BHAS activities **MUST** be reported to the committee immediately. If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a committee member, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.