

# **Dudley and West Midland Zoological Society.**

## **Policy on Protecting Children and Vulnerable People.**

### **Introduction.**

The Dudley and West Midland Zoological Society aims to ensure that any children and vulnerable people, whether young persons or vulnerable adults are protected and are kept as safe as is reasonably practicable while they are in contact with the employees, volunteers or agents of the Society. In order to do this the Society will ensure all staff and volunteers are suitably selected and screened, trained, supervised and made aware of Protection Issues.

### Selection

- All applicants to the organisation will complete an application form with the names of at least two referees.
- Short listed applicants will be asked to attend for an interview
- The references of short listed candidates will be taken up before an appointment is confirmed.

### Screening

- Where relevant to the post, successful applicants for posts with the Society will be asked to agree to an appropriate Police Check.
- Checks will be undertaken prior to the applicant taking up a post.

### Training

- All new employees will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the workings of the organisation, its aims, values services and structure.
- Training on specific areas of Health and Safety Procedures, Emergency Procedures and working practices will also be given.
- Relevant training and support will also be provided on an on going basis and cover information about their role and information and training to help them carry out this role.

- All employees will also be made aware of identifying and reporting abuse, confidentiality etc.

### Supervision

- All employees and volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support.
- All staff will be regularly assessed and attend an annual review of their performance.

All staff and volunteers involved in recruitment, supervision and training are aware of this policy and will receive the appropriate training and support to ensure its implementation.

### **The Aim of the Policy.**

- To ensure that all contacts and interactions between children, vulnerable people and Zoo staff and volunteers is of the highest standard.
- To prevent the targeting of the Zoo Site and the Zoo's activities by individuals who seek to abuse children and the vulnerable.
- To ensure that all the zoo's activities are organised and arranged in such a way as to minimise the opportunities for abuse to happen.
- To ensure that should a person associated with the Society become aware of the maltreatment of a child, vulnerable young person or vulnerable adult, they will act to protect the child, young person or vulnerable adult.

### **Protecting children, young persons or vulnerable people.**

The following procedure is in place for those wishing to protect a child, young person or a vulnerable adult.

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses to you that they have been abused by someone else, you should in the first instance

1. Allow them to speak without interruption, accepting what is said without investigation or interrogation.
2. Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing **no** judgement.

3. Let them know that you are pleased they have shared the information with you.
  4. Advise the child that you must pass on the information.
- Report the information to your Line Manager or the Duty Manager.
  - The matter will then be reported to the relevant authorities for investigation.
  - If you become aware of an incident where a child, a young person or vulnerable adult is being abused emotionally, physically or sexually report the matter to your Line Manager or the Duty Manager.
  - If you receive an allegation about any person, including yourself, report the allegation to your Line Manager or the Duty Manager Lead at once.
  - Try to ensure that no-one else is compromised.
  - In all cases refer the matter to your Line Manager or the Duty Manager.
  - Record the facts.
  - Refer not investigate.
  - Report the facts to your Line Manager or the Duty Manager.

### **Protecting Staff.**

To protect themselves from allegations of abuse or incorrect behaviour towards children, young people and vulnerable adults, all staff **must**:

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect.
- Provide an example of good conduct for others to follow.
- Ensure they are never alone or outside of the sight or hearing of other adults during your contact with children and vulnerable people.
- Respect a young person or vulnerable persons right to personal privacy.
- Ensure that well intentioned actions are not open to misinterpretation.
- Be aware that even caring physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted.
- Be aware that caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Staff however, **must not**:

- Have inappropriate conversations with children, young adults and vulnerable adults.
- Have inappropriate physical contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Make suggestive or derogatory marks in front of vulnerable individuals
- Make suggestive or derogatory gestures in front of vulnerable individuals
- Jump to conclusions about other people with out checking the facts.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Trivialise or exaggerate child, young person, or vulnerable adult abuse issues.
- Take chances when common sense and good practice suggests another approach
- Ignore these guidelines.

# DUDLEY AND WEST MIDLAND ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

The Society has a concern for the welfare and well being of each individual with whom it comes into contact. It seeks to safeguard the well being and welfare of these people, regardless of age. This applies to all people on the Zoo Site as well as at other locations, such as schools, exhibition sites, field research sites etc., where the Society may conduct its work.

It is the responsibility of each individual working for the Society to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people

It is important to ensure that all interaction with children and young people by all employees of the Society and its contracted organisations is without blemish and of the highest standard.

All employees of the Society will remain alert and vigilant and seek to diminish the risk that the Society will be targeted by those individuals who seek to abuse children.

All activities organised by the Society and young people will be organised in such a way as to reduce as far as is reasonably practicable opportunities for abuse to occur. All staff undertaking the organising and implementation of such activities will be carefully vetted and selected.

In the case of any member of the Society becoming aware of the maltreatment or abuse of a child or young person, that person should act to protect the child.

Those wishing to protect a child must do so by referral to, in the first instance, their Line Manager or to the Duty Manager or to the relevant Authorities. This will ensure that the Society has fulfilled its duty to protect the child, has treated the matter seriously and done all that it can to protect the child from further harm.

The operation of such a policy of vigilance and protection will also serve to protect and support those members of staff working with children.