



ENGLISH HERITAGE

CHILD WELFARE AND SAFETY POLICY AND GUIDELINES



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2. CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE

2.18 CHILD WELFARE AND SAFETY

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CHILD WELFARE AND SAFETY POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

We will do our utmost to ensure that children are protected from harm while they visit our properties. We will do this by:

1. Ensuring that our employees are carefully selected;
5. Ensuring that all employees in contact with children understand the issues of child protection by being fully aware of this policy and guidance;
6. Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child in contact with English Heritage;
7. Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any other staff member, volunteer or member of the public from putting any child in a situation in which there is an unreasonable risk to their health and safety;
8. Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any other staff member, volunteer or member of the public from physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child;
9. Informing employees that they should report to an appropriate senior member of staff any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused..

Admissions Policy

English Heritage policy is that only children above the age of 16 should be allowed on site unsupervised (see also Guidance ch10).

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Who needs to operate this policy and guidance

This applies to all employees, volunteers and other people working with English Heritage (eg contractors and those organising or taking part in events on sites). Although the guidance refers to employees, this should be taken to also include these other groups.

Everyone working for English Heritage is to be made aware of our policy for children's welfare. These guidelines are available on the Intranet under Manuals/ HR Manual/ Conduct & Performance/Child Welfare.

Who this policy and guidance protects

This aims to protect all children and young people under 18 visiting English Heritage properties. It applies whether adults accompany them or not.

We also recognise that vulnerable people of any age will benefit from similar safeguards. Wherever the guidelines refer to children, this broader meaning generally applies.

Vetting Employees

As a further safeguard to the Child Welfare and Safety Guidance, English Heritage carries out CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks on a number of its employees. Managers must come to a view as to which posts will require such checks.

English Heritage believes that site staff, with no specific responsibility for working alone with children will not generally require CRB checks. However, those jobs that involve working alone at singleton sites or working alone in the grounds of larger sites may require them.

For Child Welfare purposes, English Heritage therefore believes the following positions require CRB checks;

- Education Officers and Outreach Officers,
- Mentors of Work Experience Students,
- Supervisors of Volunteers or Apprentices under 18,
- Team Members at remote "Singleton" Sites, and Rangers.

This is not a definitive list, and risk assessments may identify others. For guidance on the CRB disclosure process please see the chapter "Recruitment Checks" in the Human Resources Manual Ch 1.7.

Responsibility of Human Resources

The Human Resources Client Managers help support this policy and their role is threefold:

- to provide guidance on child welfare issues;
- to support managers and employees in dealing with any suggestion of misconduct or need for expert help;
- to be the "countersignatory" for CRB Disclosures.

Responsibility of Managers

It is the responsibility of all managers;

- to ensure that their team-members are fully aware of the Child Welfare and Safety policy and guidelines;
- to advise and support their team members on child welfare issues;
- to apply CRB checks as necessary on existing posts and do a risk assessment of new posts to judge whether they require CRB checks;
- To request confirmation of a CRB Disclosure from people (eg entertainers) who will have unsupervised contact with children .

Responsibility of Employees

It is the responsibility of all employees;

- to strictly observe the Code of Behaviour;
- to take all reasonable steps to protect children from hazards;

- to take appropriate action if an accident occurs;
- to take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children in contact with EH
- to report any incident or suspicion of abuse.
- to ensure that appropriate adult to child ratios are applied when children are accompanied
- to ensure photographs are not taken without the consent of the guardian

Advice on all these is available in the Guidance, which should be read in conjunction with this policy and framework.

CHILD WELFARE GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES

1. INTRODUCTION

English Heritage wants children to enjoy their involvement with us and to feel encouraged to take an active part in heritage conservation. It may be that your work rarely brings you into contact with children and young people but, whenever it does, they are entitled to be safe with you and may look up to you as a role model. English Heritage expects the behaviour of everyone who works with us, whether paid or not, to be above reproach in this respect. This policy and the accompanying guidelines are intended to help us all to honour that.

While primarily intended to safeguard children and similarly vulnerable people, our child welfare policy is also meant to protect staff - and others working with us - from any false allegation of improper conduct in that regard. With both purposes in mind, the guidance given here is intended to help you understand how the policy is meant to be applied in practice.

We cannot cover every possible eventuality in these guidelines, but hopefully they do cover any situation you actually encounter.

2. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

As long as you honour this Code of Behaviour and the other guidance given here, you will have the practical and moral support of senior colleagues in any situation where you have to rely on your own judgement.

People working with English Heritage must always observe the following requirements where children, young people or similarly vulnerable people are concerned.

You should always:-

- Uphold the spirit and specific provisions of the Child Welfare Policy and these Guidelines.
- In so far as possible, avoid situations in which you are alone with children or similarly vulnerable people. If necessary, move to a place where you can both be seen by colleagues or other adults.
- Do your best to behave in an open and friendly manner, but avoid being over-familiar in word or action.
- If a child is hurt or distressed, do your best to comfort and reassure them without compromising their dignity or doing anything to discredit your own behaviour.
- Try to avoid any physical contact or behaviour that could be unwelcome or misconstrued. Physical touch should only be in response to a child's need and should respect their age and individual stage of development.

- It may be appropriate to hold a child's hand, to put a comforting arm around their shoulder or to carry them - for instance, if they have fallen. However, you should first explain what you have in mind and ask directly if that is what they want. Otherwise, it may be unwelcome or misinterpreted.
- Where you have to rely on your own judgement, always treat the child's welfare as paramount – but again be aware of how your actions may be interpreted by others.;

You have a strict duty never to subject any child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to honour this will be treated as gross misconduct. This means that it is unacceptable, for example:

- to distress a child by shouting at them or calling them derogatory names;
- to slap a child;
- to hold a child in such a way that it causes pain, or to shake them;
- to physically restrain a child except to protect them from harming themselves or others;
- to take part in horseplay or rough games;
- to allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind;
- to do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or an accompanying adult can do for them; this includes going to the toilet with a child unless another adult is present;
- to allow or engage in sexually suggestive behaviour within a child's sight or hearing, or make suggestive comments to or within earshot of a child;
- to give or show to a child anything which could be construed as being pornographic;
- to seek or agree to meet children anywhere beyond normal visitor areas or off EH property without the full prior knowledge and agreement of their parents or guardians and your line-manager;
- to give personal details (eg your address or phone-number to a child).

If you witness or suspect abusive behaviour towards a child, you should use the procedural guidelines which follow. We all appreciate that this may call for fine judgment and even courage, but you should act as a responsible adult.

3. PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM HAZARDS OR RASH BEHAVIOUR

General advice

We recognise that it is impossible to ensure that no child ever comes to harm on an EH property. What we collectively, and you as an individual, must do is take all **reasonable** steps to protect children from **likely** risks arising from the nature or condition of particular sites or events. This means allowing for the fact that;

- children are usually smaller than adults. So something set at a reasonable height for an adult may be dangerous for a child or above their sight line.
- children are usually less strong than adults, which may affect the design of doors or gates.
- children are primed to explore and play games. This means that we have got to do our best to anticipate adventurous behaviour and assess the risks involved.
- children have less experience of dangers than adults. They can be unaware or heedless of dangers you can clearly recognise. Even when aware of danger, they may act through bravado.

You have a duty to prevent young people from coming to harm through their own rash actions, but you need to judge carefully to intervene;

- often the best course is to guide them into a safe course of action, rather than just telling them to stop what they're doing - and it is better to give positive rather than negative instructions (e.g. "Walk on the grass, please" instead of "Get off that wall".) Or it may work to distract them from something dangerous;
- if you have to tell them to stop what they're doing, try to be calm, clear and definite about it. It helps to take a deep breath before you say anything!
- avoid being officious or challenging. You need to exert your authority, not "prove" it;
- if, despite your efforts, a child persists in jeopardising their own or other people's safety, get help if you can or consider asking them to leave the site;
- if they are in serious danger and you cannot persuade them away from it, you should treat this as an emergency and contact the emergency services.

Restraining a child

If you think it is necessary to restrain a child from doing something that will harm them or others, first try non-physical approaches - e.g. by talking to them, by asking them not to move if they are injured, by standing in the way.

If you do have to use physical restraint, it should be the minimum necessary for their safety. If they are in imminent danger, you might need to hold them by their clothing. Whatever the circumstances, physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable. Otherwise, it may be regarded as assault.

Alcohol & illegal Drugs:

If there appears to be underage drinking in or around one of our properties, or you see young people apparently taking drugs, giving them to others or being given them:

You should **not** try to stop them, but you should notify the Police - and try to keep an eye that the young people don't otherwise endanger themselves. Police involvement does not mean necessarily that they will be charged with any offence, but it does alert the Police and should result in experienced handling of the situation.

Preventing others from harming a child

You must take all reasonable steps to ensure that no other member of staff, volunteer or member of the public compromises the health and safety of any child in contact with EH.

- For example, someone might move a barrier that had been placed with children in mind, or overlook the likelihood of children being at an event, or suggest an activity that is inherently risky.
- This means intervening directly to prevent this, or reporting the situation to someone with more authority to intervene.
- In dealing with the person, bear in mind that this is more likely to arise through enthusiasm or thoughtlessness than wilful negligence.

4. WHAT TO DO IF AN ACCIDENT HAPPENS

Depending on your judgement of the situation, go to the scene immediately if possible and/or summon First Aid assistance and/or contact the emergency services.

With children, it can be hard to tell whether they have been injured or whether an injury is serious. If you have any doubt about this, you should err on the side of caution and contact the emergency services. Even if a child is accompanied and you think an accident is not being treated seriously enough, get medical assistance on your own initiative if necessary.

The normal accident recording and reporting procedure applies, as in the Site Manual or Health & Safety Manual.

First Aid

Unless there is good reason, First Aid should not be administered without the permission of the child's parent, teacher or accompanying adult. A child cannot give consent. If the parent is not on site, get their phone number, if possible. However, if a child is alone and, say, unconscious, the situation should be dealt with as for any other visitor.

- If at all possible, treatment should only be given by a trained First Aider or Appointed Person.
- Provided this does not in itself put the child at risk, always try to administer first aid within sight and sound of other adults.
- Always tell the child exactly what you are doing and why:

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- Unless it is irrelevant, ask the child if they use any medication (e.g. for asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) or have any allergies. Some children have allergic reactions to stings. Unless it is a first occurrence, a parent or teacher should know of any such conditions:
- For minor injuries, it is alright to use a cotton wool pad or sticking plaster, but you may not *offer* any medication, including antiseptics or pills of any kind. If you have any doubts about helping someone to use their own medication, phone NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or the emergency services;
- Any treatment should be as little as necessary without threatening the child's well-being.

Comforting a child

If a child comes to you for comfort because of a minor accident or fright, it is perfectly in keeping with the Code of Behaviour to hold their hand or put your arm around them. Just make sure:

- that you know about any injury and do nothing to make it worse.
- that physical contact is what the child wants, and the kind of contact between you is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Do your utmost to stay in sight of other adults.

Injury to a child

If a child needs a doctor or hospital, call the emergency services. It is nearly always best to stay on site with them and wait for the ambulance. You should only take the risk of bringing in the child yourself if the emergency services ask you to do so because of exceptional circumstances.

5. WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD IS LOST OR UNATTENDED

Child reported lost

Sites should have a contingency plan to deal with incidents where a child is reported lost. Each site is different and a contingency plan should take account of the nature of the site, staff available, and the arrival time for Police. Factors to consider are

- having an identified contact point
- positions that may be suspended to enable staff to help in the search

When an incident is reported radio all staff to keep a look-out. Arrange an initial search, ideally in pairs, co-ordinating staff and child's guardians. Keep in radio contact if possible and set a time-limit for the search.

If the child has still not been found, then regroup and rethink strategy. This may involve using further searchers or contacting the Police.

Key details if reporting a lost child:

Child's name

Child's age

accompanying person's name

child's address or name of school/group

*physical description of the child (height,
colour of hair, distinctive clothing)*

where the child is now

where & when the child was last seen

Unattended child

If you see a child who seems unattended, introduce yourself and try to establish who they are with and where they last saw them. If you have no clues to where the adults may be, head towards the reception point or designated meeting point at an event. Remember, the adult(s) will be looking for the child too, so stay within obvious places.

If a child is reluctant to come with you, explain that you are going to look - but try to keep them in sight while you do so. Don't try to force a child to come with you. If necessary, call for help or stay with the child until they have been re-united with someone that the child recognises and is willing to be with.

If you come across a child who is definitely lost, explain who you are, find out their name, who they were with and so on, and ask them to come with you to the reception point/main entrance/ designated meeting place. Try to keep them from getting distressed - perhaps by distracting them with something interesting or giving them 'a job' to do. Make sure to keep the child in your sight, and if you have to leave them, only pass them on to someone you can rely upon to look after them.

If whoever the child is with has not been found after a reasonable time, you should notify the Police. You have to judge how long to wait before doing this; it depends on the child and the circumstances. (If the police have been notified, it is important also to let them know if a lost child has been re-united with whoever accompanied them.)

If you find a child in distress, do your best to comfort and re-assure them without compromising their dignity or privacy. Again, it may help to distract them while you take practical steps to help them, but be careful that what you do is openly in their best interests.

If you come across a lost child who doesn't speak English, they probably have been accompanied and other visitors may be able to help find whoever that is.

Key details if in contact with an unattended child

Try to avoid situations where you are alone with children, especially anywhere you are unlikely to be seen or heard. This is as much to protect yourself from suspicion as to protect children. If you can't avoid being alone with a child, you should take prudent precautions:

- *try to move with the child to a place where there are other people*
 - *avoid unnecessary physical contact*
 - *if you do have to touch the child, make sure to get their agreement beforehand, and try not to be over-familiar.*
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6. WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IS BEING VIOLENT TOWARDS A CHILD

If you come across someone hitting, hurting or violently shouting at a child, you should try to prevent the abuse, if you can do so without unreasonable risk to the child or yourself.

- You have to judge whether it is a fleeting incident which warrants showing your disapproval or a threat of actual harm that requires someone to intervene.
- You also have to judge whether intervening is likely to stop the abuse or to inflame the situation. This can be even more complicated if one child is being abused by another.
- So long as you are mindful of the child's welfare, you are entitled to intervene by:
 - asking or telling the perpetrator to stop
 - explaining that such behaviour is not acceptable on English Heritage properties
 - restraining a child from abusing another
 - saying that you will report the incident (as a matter of fact, not a threat)
 - summoning help
 - notifying the Police
 - asking the perpetrator to leave the property.
- While you have to be firm, it can only help if you are calm and un-antagonistic. Bear in mind that you are probably dealing with an upset or angry adult as well as a distressed child.
- Never use or threaten physical force as this could inflame the situation and result in further violence.
- If you have any doubt about what to do, consult your line manager or the Human Resources Client Manager or the 24-hour NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

- If you come across serious abuse, or you think a child is at risk of further abuse, you should phone the Police.
- If you are worried about any incident, you should record the details and report it to your manager.
- The same principles apply if there is a “flasher” on site or someone behaving suspiciously towards children.

7. IF YOU SUSPECT A COLLEAGUE, OR RECEIVE ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

We hope that you will never encounter any situation of child abuse while you with English Heritage. However, you must know what to do if you discover an incident of abuse, suspect a colleague of abuse or receive an allegation of abuse.

Should you ever discover or suspect that a child has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused by someone associated with English Heritage, it is your duty to report this to your line manager or to Human Resources Dept.

For example, a child might tell you of something that has happened to them while visiting one of our properties or at an event. Or you might become suspicious about the behaviour of a colleague or volunteer. Or a member of the public might make an allegation of abuse involving someone working with us. It is not your responsibility to investigate such incidents. Nor should you concern yourself with looking for signs of such abuse. This requires expertise you are not expected to have. Your role is to respond appropriately and to report the situation.

If a disclosure or allegation is being made to you:

1. Listen carefully and sensitively, stay calm, and offer understanding and reassurance.
2. Check your understanding of the situation, without being investigative.
3. Record what you have been told
4. Alert a senior colleague within 24 hours.

If you become suspicious about the behaviour of a colleague regarding children

First apply steps 2, 3 and 4 above.

If you think the situation is sufficiently serious and urgent; contact a senior colleague or the on-call Duty Manager or, failing that, the Police. Don't let anxiety that you might have jumped to a wrong conclusion deter you from reporting any genuine worries that you have. A well-intentioned but mistaken report will not be held against you.

If you feel you need expert support because you come across child abuse while working with us, we recommend that you discuss this with your manager or with a Human Resources Manager, either regionally or at Head Office.

Guidance on responding to a disclosure of abuse

DO YOUR BEST TO

- Stay calm
- Receive the information
- Listen, reassure
- Record the information
- Report to an appropriate colleague
- Accept your own feelings, and
- Consider getting support for yourself

DO NOT

- Probe in an investigative way or ask leading questions*
 - Make a child repeat the story unnecessarily*
 - Promise confidentiality*
-

8. IF AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE IS MADE AGAINST YOU

- If an allegation is made directly to you, you should advise your manager or Human Resources, even if you think it is trivial. If we receive an allegation against you, we will inform you.
- You are entitled to the moral and practical support of your manager, Human Resources and senior colleagues if an unwarranted allegation of misconduct is made against you - as long as your behaviour is in line with the policy and these guidelines.
- Any allegation will be scrupulously investigated, with due regard for confidentiality. In itself, this should not be interpreted as indicating culpability. It is part of our duty to protect people working with us from any unfounded allegation.
- If your behaviour contravenes the policy and guidelines, that will be treated as gross misconduct.
- If you have concerns about how an allegation against yourself or anyone else is being dealt with, you should inform a colleague at the most senior level you think appropriate.

9. CARE WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN

There are two factors that you need to consider in relation to photographs being taken of children. Firstly, that photographs can be used to identify and trace children, especially if there are accompanying details. Secondly, that images can be manipulated for use on internet sites.

Using Photographers

The interest of children must be put foremost, and to guard against misuse of photographs, the following safeguards should be followed when photography by EH staff or commissioned photographers is being arranged on site;

- if a child is to be prominent (or identifiable) in a photograph then consent from the guardian must be obtained and this must be **endorsed** by the child;
- visitors should be made aware that there is a photographer on site, that the photographs are for English Heritage use, and the purpose of them. School parties should be told in advance so that consents can be arranged;
- the photographer must introduce themselves and ensure that consents have been given. Afterwards, these consents must be stored with the pictures.
- the images should show children having an enjoyable and safe visit to the site. They must **not** show children posing in an inappropriate or dangerous way;
- the photographer must be aware of these Child Welfare Guidelines, and ensure that he/she is never alone with children.
- special care needs to be taken if children are in costume. Employees should ensure that there is appropriate adult supervision, and that there are appropriate changing facilities if requested.

Commissioning a photographer

When commissioning a photographer, please ensure that;

- they are reputable and have an office address. They must supply references, evidence of their work and evidence of working with children. They should be accompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult when conducting this work.
- they are made aware of the guidelines above;
- they transfer all copyright of the photographs to English Heritage. Please contact the English Heritage Photo Library for guidance on this.

Visitors taking Photographs

It is to be expected that visitors to our sites will often be taking photographs, but employees are not expected to police all of these. However, if the behaviour of a member of the public is suspicious and causing you concern, then you should take action by following the procedures outlined in section 5.

Issuing Historic Photographs

For reasons of possible misuse as stated in the opening paragraph above, care should be taken when issuing old photographs of children, especially where they may still be minors.

10. ADMISSION GUIDANCE

Children are welcome at all English Heritage properties.

Unsupervised children

English Heritage policy is that only children who are 16 years old or above should be allowed on site unsupervised. This is the age at which we believe they are mature enough to behave responsibly and safely.

Supervised children

Where children are being supervised in organised groups you should follow the Local Education Authority Guidelines on the ratio of adults to children in a party. These vary, but in general are around;

- Under 2 years old: 1 adult to 3 children
- Under 3 years old: 1 adult to 4 children
- Under 8 years old: 1 adult to 8 children
- Over 8 years old: 1 adult to 10 children

With family groups there are no guidelines and the employee responsible should come to a judgement taking into account the nature of the site (ie hazards), the nature of the group and any special needs (please also see chapter 3). It is the accompanying adults who are responsible for the children's supervision and safety, and this should be emphasised to parents/guardians on admission.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

We recognise that it is important for us all to feel confident that any information about alleged or actual child abuse will only be disclosed where it is in the best interests of the child to do so. Furthermore, we have a responsibility to protect the identity of anyone reporting suspected or actual abuse. No such disclosure will be made without careful consultation and prior approval at director level.

Appendix 1

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical abuse: where a child is caused pain, hurt or injury, by direct physical force, by the use of some instrument, or by neglectful failure to prevent such abuse.

Emotional abuse: where a child is caused distress, emotional trauma or psychological damage by severe or persistent verbal abuse, disparagement or neglect.

Sexual abuse: where a child is involved in sexual activity they do not truly comprehend or to which they are unable to give informed consent or which violates social taboos and family roles in order to gratify the sexual desire of another person, physically or otherwise.

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