

Gallery Photogroup

Child Protection Policy

SCOPE

This policy provides a code of conduct and advice to members of the Gallery Photogroup whilst taking part in any activities that form part of the Group's programme. A child is defined by The Protection of Children Acts (PoCA) of 1978 and 1999 as a person under the age of 18.

POLICY

The Gallery Photogroup has a duty of care to safeguard children from harm and abuse.

All members of the Gallery Photogroup must ensure that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount;
- all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- they report any concerns to the named person designated by the management committee. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- before taking photographs, they seek both the child's and their parents' permission, and using the parents' consent form, record their permission;
- they plan well ahead if seeking parental consent via an event organiser e.g. a headteacher, centre manager, club secretary, because centre or venue managers may not be the event organiser;
- they use images that represent the activity;
- they use only images of children in suitable dress and avoid the potential mis-use that the age of the child and some sports present (swimming, gymnastics, athletics)
- they avoid using children's names in a caption
- they prevent unauthorised processing of personal data and images, for example by using a secure storage area for electronic images
- they recognise that although they can freely take images in a public place where people attending might expect photographs to be taken and there is no expectation of privacy, an individual (such as a parent of a child) may not want an image used. It is better to avoid such a situation arising in the first place.
- They recognise that publishing photographs by posting them on a website can pose a particular risk. Images accompanied by personal information, e.g. 'this is XXX who likes horses', could be used by an individual to learn more about a child prior to grooming them for abuse, or may be adapted inappropriately for use on a pornographic website.

Further guidance is available from the Honorary Secretary

22nd May 2007

GALLERY PHOTOGROUP – CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

GUIDANCE - PROMOTING APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004

The Protection of Children Acts (PoCA) of 1978 and 1999

The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Protection of Children Act makes it an offence for a person to do any of the following:

- a. to take, or permit to be taken, any indecent photograph of a child
- b. to distribute or show such indecent photographs
- c. to have in his possession such indecent photographs, with a view to their being distributed or shown by himself or others
- d. to publish or cause to be published any advertisement likely to be understood as conveying that the advertiser distributes or shows such indecent photographs, or intends to do so

TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

Members are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations and to act upon the following advice.

- Always put the welfare of each young person first, before the photography.
- Obtain permission from the subjects and their parents/carers (a draft consent form is attached)
- Provide a clear brief about the purpose of the photography and the use of the images
- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with no secrets. Do not enter children's rooms or changing rooms.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with subjects (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Treat all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encourage them to take responsibility for their children in your working environment. If groups have to be supervised, always ensure to work in pairs.
- Avoid physical contact. Where possible use verbal instructions to position a young person for suitable photographs to be taken. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Consult and consider carefully the views of parents.
- Be an excellent role model - this includes not smoking, drinking alcohol or swearing in the company of young people.

DEALING WITH SUSPECTED ABUSE

Four categories of child abuse are recognised – physical, sexual, neglect and emotional- which can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important for members to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with their judgment about the appropriate action to take.

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative activity, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon

Responding to allegations or suspicions

Photographers who have contact with young people can be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following these guidelines, but please remember it is not the responsibility of a Gallery Photogroup member to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place.

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If as part of the Gallery Photogroup's activities, you see, hear or are told something that makes you concerned about a child's welfare, record it and report it without delay to the Gallery Photogroup designated person who will ensure that all relevant child protection information is shared with the appropriate statutory child protection agencies.

These are some helpful responses if you are told something.

- Remain calm, accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully, without interrupting.
- Be aware of your own non-verbal messages.
- Make it clear that you are taking him or her seriously.
- If a child discloses information:
 - Acknowledge the child's courage and reassure him or her that they are right to tell.
 - Reassure the child that he or she should not feel guilty and that you're sorry that this has happened to him or her.
 - Let the child know that you are going to do everything you can to help him or her and what may happen as a result.
 - Be clear that you will have to share what he or she has told you with specific others but that everything will be done to maintain confidentiality.
 - Make a note of what was said and who was present.
 - Use the child's actual words wherever possible.
 - Ensure that an appropriate person is found to help him or her communicate if a child has a different first language or communication difficulties.

These are things to avoid. Do not:

- allow your shock or distaste to show
- probe for more information than is offered
- speculate or make assumptions
- make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- make any promises that you cannot keep - eg, promising that 'everything will be alright'
- agree to keep the information a secret
- express disbelief in what the child is saying
- try to investigate or question the child, except to clarify what you have heard - particularly important in cases of sexual abuse.

Useful websites:

The Child Protection in Sport unit of the NSPCC
The Internet Watch Foundation

www.thecpsu.org.uk
www.iwf.org.uk

Graeme Clarke
Chairman
22nd May 2007

Gallery Photogroup

Consent form for the use of photographs (Parents and children)

The Gallery Photogroup recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all young people. In accordance with our child protection policy we will not permit photographs, video or other images of young people to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and children.

The Gallery Photogroup will follow the guidance for the use of photographs a copy of which is available from The Secretary email davidg@mbro.demon.co.uk or telephone 01642821738. The Gallery Photogroup will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform secretary David J. Gray immediately.

I (*parent/carer*)

of (*insert address*)

.....

SignedDate.....

Telephone

Email

consent to (*Insert member's name*)Member No.....

photographing (*insert name of child*)

at (*insert event*)on (*Insert Date*)

For (*Insert purpose*).....

.....

I (*insert name of child*)consent to

(*insert name of member*)

photographing my involvement in (*insert event*)

on (*insert date*)

signed.....Date.....