

BSBI Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy 2024

Prepared by & date	Safeguarding task group December 2022 Reviewed by Julia Hanmer, December 2023
Approved by & date	Board of Trustees, 12 December 2023
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The Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (known as BSBI) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (8553976) and a charity registered in England and Wales (1152954) and in Scotland (SC038675). Registered office: WMT LLP, 4 Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3RD, UK.	

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind and that we have a responsibility to promote their welfare, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them. Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility

1. Context and Risk Management

- a. It is a requirement that all charities have a safeguarding policy together with processes and procedures to ensure that it is followed
- b. The public is increasingly subjected to stories related to a lack of appropriate safeguards, particularly where children and young people are concerned
- c. The public's perception of a charity and its moral and ethical behaviour is critical to its reputation and ability to operate and fundraise successfully
- d. This Policy sets out how BSBI handles safeguarding of children and young people. A separate policy sets out how BSBI handles safeguarding adults
- e. Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility.

2. Definitions

- a. Children and young people – anyone under 18 years old.
- b. Volunteers – anyone leading or participating in an activity on behalf of BSBI. This could include, but is not limited to Vice-County Recorders, field, indoor or online meeting or training course leaders, trustees, members of BSBI committees or working groups, and interactions via social media
- c. BSBI members – all members of whatever category
- d. Other adults – engaged in BSBI activity or in contact with such
- e. Serious breach – any incident which breaks the law in the country in which it occurred (UK, Ireland or elsewhere).

3. Policy and Application

This policy applies to all staff, adult volunteers, trustees and members of BSBI and other adults engaged with or affected by BSBI activity, in person or online.

4. Aim and purpose

- a. Children and young people under 18 years old should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a statutory responsibility to promote their welfare, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them
- b. The purpose of this policy is to protect children and young people who engage with

the BSBI from abuse and to protect individuals who engage with children and young people on behalf of the BSBI from unfounded allegations of abuse.

- c. It aims to provide staff, members and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

5. Legal and advisory framework

This policy has been drawn up having regard to:

- a. Children Act 1989
- b. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- c. Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998
- d. Data Protection Act 1998
- e. Sexual Offences Act 2003
- f. Children Act 2004
- g. Equality Act 2010
- h. Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- i. Relevant government guidance on safeguarding
- j. Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (Charity Commission).

Application of this policy must be adapted to meet current legislation and guidance applying to each country that BSBI is active in, as available online:

England & Wales <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

England & Wales <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-for-charities-and-trustees>

Scotland <https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/safeguarding-guidance-keeping-vulnerable-beneficiaries-safe/>

Northern Ireland <https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/safeguarding-resources/>

Republic of Ireland <safeguarding-guidance-for-charitable-organisations-children-final.pdf>
(charitiesregulator.ie)

Isle of Man <https://www.gov.im/categories/caring-and-support/safeguarding/>

Guernsey <https://www.gov.gg/Adult-Safeguarding>

Guernsey <https://www.gov.gg/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=81295&p=0>

Jersey <https://safeguarding.je/policies-strategies/>

6. We recognise that:

- a. We have a duty and a commitment to provide a safe and trusted environment that promotes the welfare of children and young people who come in to contact with BSBI

- b. All children and young people, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have an equal right to protection from harm or abuse
- c. Some children and young people are particularly vulnerable because of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- d. When adults are working with children, effective partnership with parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children and young people and avoiding potential abuse or allegations of such.

7. We will seek to keep children safe by:

- a. Adopting a Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct for staff, volunteers and members (see below) and consistently applying it
- b. Valuing, listening to and respecting all children and young people who we work with, and putting them and affected individuals at the centre of all that BSBI does
- c. Communicating regularly with staff, volunteers and members who work or engage with children and young people, at field or indoor meetings or through other means (e.g. social media), and advising them of our policy and Code of Conduct
- d. Providing opportunities for relevant learning and training
- e. Appointing two designated leads for Safeguarding and a Trustee to have oversight
- f. Seeking to identify where and when we work with children and young people and ensuring that staff and volunteers are suitable and legally able to act in their positions.
- g. Obtaining a standard, enhanced or enhanced with barred list check from the DBS when a role is eligible for one or otherwise carrying out a basic risk assessment with an accompanying parent or carer
- h. Ensuring we do not work regularly with children or young people - defined as once a week or more on 4 or more days in 30, or overnight, unless a special risk assessment has been approved and agreed by the parent or carer of each child
- i. Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- j. Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with staff, volunteers, members, parents and carers
- k. Making sure that children and young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- l. Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff or volunteers appropriately
- m. Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- n. Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- o. Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- p. Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns
- q. Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- r. Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- s. Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, involving parents, children and young people as appropriate

- t. Having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise
- u. Keeping our policy and procedures under review.

8. Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

9 Related Policies and Documents

- a. BSBI Meetings (Leaders) Guidance
- b. BSBI Privacy Policy and Data Handling Policy
- c. BSBI Safeguarding Adults Policy
- d. BSBI Online Safety and Social Media Policy
- e. BSBI Governance Handbook
- f. BSBI Employee Handbook, including: Recruitment and Pre-Employment checks, Health and Safety Policy, Anti Bullying and Harassment policy, Whistleblowing procedure.

10 Appendices

Appendix 1	BSBI Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
Appendix 2	BSBI Safeguarding Procedures - In case of disclosure, allegation or suspicion of abuse
Appendix 3	BSBI Safeguarding reporting form
Further appendices to be added in due course:	
Appendix 4	Role of the Safeguarding Leads
Appendix 5	Permission form for taking images and sharing information

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind and that we have a responsibility to promote their welfare, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them. Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility.

This Code of Conduct aims to create a safe and trusted environment for all children and young people (under the age of 18) who come into contact with BSBI activity. It is to help protect children and young people from abuse by or inappropriate behaviour of adults. It is to protect staff and volunteers from unfounded allegations of abuse of children or young people.

1 Applicability and enforcement

- a. This code of conduct applies to all members of staff, volunteers and trustees operating on behalf of BSBI and BSBI members or others engaged in BSBI activity. Any breaches of this Code of Conduct, relating to children and young people, must be reported to the **BSBI Safeguarding Leads**, both of whom are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked:
 - Chief Executive: Julia Hanmer, (+44 (0)7757 244651 or julia.hanmer@bsbi.org)
 - Honorary Field Meetings Secretary: Jonathan Shanklin (+44 (0)1223 571250 or +44 (0)758 648 6338 or jdsh@bas.ac.uk).
- b. Serious breaches (see definition in section 2 above) by any staff member, volunteer, BSBI member or other will result in a referral to a statutory agency, which may include the police (UK) or An Garda Síochána (Ireland), Local Authority social care department, the Independent Safeguarding Authority, the Charity Commission (England and Wales) or OSCR (Scotland) and the Health Service Executive
- c. A breach of this Code of Conduct by staff may be regarded as a disciplinary offence under BSBI Staff Disciplinary Procedures.

2 What to do: staff, volunteers, BSBI members and others involved in BSBI activities must:

- a. observe this Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
- b. ensure that any contact with children is appropriate for the activity and only work with children if:
 - they have proof of relevant and current vetting for such activity, i.e. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) standard or advanced checked or
 - children are accompanied by an adult or carer with whom they have carried out and agreed a basic risk assessment
- c. ensure that more than one adult is present (within sight or hearing) during activity with children. or young people; if they have to talk with a child or young person alone, make sure another adult is aware of the situation
- d. seek to promote a safe, trusted and respectful environment for all children and young people by:
 - treating all fairly, avoiding favouritism, being a good role model
 - ensuring language used is appropriate, not deliberately offensive or discriminatory
 - ensuring the right to privacy is respected
- e. following online safety guidelines
- f. ensure that any risk assessment for an activity takes children into account
- g. ensure that children and young people feel safe and secure with adults with whom they are in contact and agree to any sharing of information and images in advance with parents or carers.
- h. keep a tally of how frequently they work with children and young people. If this approaches regular contact (defined as once a week or more, or on 4 or more days in 30, or is to be overnight) report it in advance to the BSBI Safeguarding Leads for a risk assessment to be made and permission granted or not, with agreement of parents or carers
- i. report all concerns or allegations of breach of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Code of Conduct to the **BSBI's Safeguarding Leads**, as soon as possible after the concern or allegation is raised. A BSBI Safeguarding reporting form is provided in the Appendix.

3 What not to do: staff, volunteers BSBI members and others involved in BSBI activity must not:

- a. work with children or young people without being vetted or having the approval of an accompanying parent or carer
- b. subject a child or young person to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- c. develop inappropriate relationships with a child or young person, sexually abuse or exploit them
- d. put themselves or others in a potentially vulnerable or compromising situation or behave in a way that may be open to misinterpretation by anyone
- e. make promises to children or young people not to report disclosures of abuse
- f. allow concerns or allegations of abuse to go unreported
- g. work regularly with children or young people (defined as once a week or more, or on 4 or more days in 30, or overnight) unless the BSBI Safeguarding Leads make a risk assessment and grant permission with agreement of parents or carers.

BSBI Safeguarding Procedures In case of disclosure, allegation or suspicion of abuse

Roles:

- DSL – Designated safeguarding leads:
 - Julia Hanmer tel: +44 (0)7757 244651 email: julia.hanmer@bsbi.org
 - Jonathan Shanklin tel: +44 (0)1223 571250 or 44 (0)758 648 6338 email: jdsh@bas.ac.uk
- Safeguarding Trustee – Anthony Thomas

Timeline	If disclosure is made at a BSBI delivered event or activity	If disclosure is made when BSBI is delivering in partnership with another organisation, where the partner organisation is the safeguarding lead partner (e.g. their venue).
Immediate – if child is at imminent risk	<p>If an emergency call 999</p> <p>If not an emergency, make a written record (record your concerns or observations and sign and date these)</p>	<p>If an emergency call 999</p> <p>If not an emergency, make a written record (record your concerns or observations and sign and date these)</p>
	Call BSBI DSL	Inform DSL of Partner organisation
Within 24 hours if incident ongoing or likely to happen again	Back at home/office – provide written copy of record to DSL	Call BSBI DSL
	DSL consult with Safeguarding Trustee and Competent Authority/Local Authority Safeguarding Team	Back at home/office – provide written copy of record to BSBI DSL
		BSBI DSL follow up with partner organisation’s DSL
		If appropriate, BSBI DSL consult with Safeguarding Trustee
Within 7 days if general concern, no immediate harm	BSBI to make or NOT make a referral	If unhappy, BSBI DSL to follow up with the Competent Authority/Local Authority Safeguarding Team
	DSL inform person reporting disclosure of action taken	DSL inform person reporting disclosure of action taken

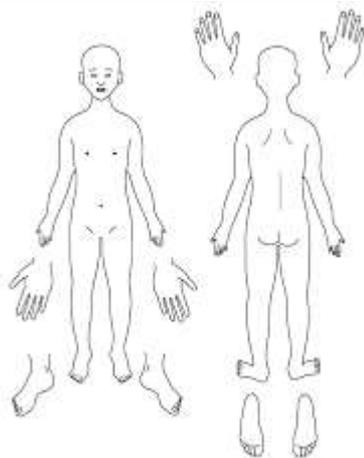
BSBI Safeguarding Reporting Form: PART 1

Your name:	Your contact details (phone or email):
Who else was present during the disclosure?	Today's date:
Name of BSBI event or activity at which disclosure occurred	Name and contact details for Partner organisation(s) if co-delivered
Location of disclosure:	Date and time of disclosure:
Name of child/children or young person/s or vulnerable adult(s) concerned (full name if possible)	Name and contact details of parent/carer of child, young person or vulnerable adult (if appropriate)

Please complete only relevant boxes

What was said by the child, young person or vulnerable adult or by the person alleging or suspecting abuse? *(Try and record the exact words said)*

Describe their emotional condition (your observations e.g. concern, worry, upset, crying) and physical condition (please use the diagram below to mark on the location of any injuries that you have seen, if relevant):



N.B. please DO NOT take any photos

Why were you concerned? Please say what it was that concerned you. <i>If you include your opinion here, please make sure it is substantiated</i>	
What did you say back to the child, young person or vulnerable adult? <i>(Try and record the exact words you used)</i>	
Your signature:	Date and time:

If Partner organisation is safeguarding lead: Name, job title & contact details of Partner Organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Date and Time that the documents were handed over:	Where were you when you handed the document to the Partner's DSL?
Feedback / information provided by the Partner's Designated Safeguarding Lead when handover took place?		

BSBI meeting/activity leader actions

NOW

1. If you believe the child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, you must contact 999 straight away (police/ambulance depending on help required)
2. Notify the BSBI DSL by phone, to inform them of the situation.
3. If Partner organisation is the Safeguarding lead – find the Partner Organisations DSL (unless the DSL is the person against whom the allegation has been made, if that is the case find another senior member of staff) and pass this document to them (ideally physically in person, or failing that by phone or email) and verbalise your concerns. Make a photocopy or take a picture of your report and keep this.
4. Give this report (or your copy of the report, if the partner organisation is the lead) to the BSBI DSL as soon as practicable.

PART 2: Record for Disclosures or Suspected Abuse
(TO BE COMPLETED BY BSBI's DSL)

DSL responsibilities and actions

BSBI's DSL/deputy is responsible for:

- completing Part 1 if information is not complete
- completing Part 2 of the Report (see information required below) and keeping it updated
- notifying the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility within 1 working day, that an incident has been reported and keeping the Trustee updated on progress
- if Partner organisation was safeguarding lead, following up the incident notification with the DSL of the partner
- establishing what (if any) action has been taken by the DSL of the partner and other agencies and noting this; there may be multiple entries, each separate entry should be dated
- reporting the incident to the next Board of Trustees meeting
- carrying out any actions which the Board of Trustees may advise
- maintaining a secure record of the incident for future reference (password protected if digital or locked file if hard copy).

Information required for completion of Part 2:

- confirmation that the named DSL responsible for ongoing action has been notified
- date of follow-up enquiry to partner organisation (if appropriate)
- action taken by partner organisation (if appropriate), date of follow-up enquiry establishing this information; may be multiple entries, each should be initialled by the DSL
- any other action, notes, concerns; to be updated as necessary.

For office use only			
Address of child, young person or vulnerable adult:	Parent/ guardian /carer name	Address of parent/guardian/carers (if different from address of child, young person or vulnerable adult):	
For children under 18: Date of birth of the child or young person:	Are there other agencies involved with this family? E.g. social services	Have the parents/ guardians agreed to be referred?	
Actions taken	By who?	Date	Initials of DSL

Disclosure followed up on _____ (date) with _____ (competent authority)

What action has been reported by others following BSBI's report?

BSBI actions complete: DSL/Deputy signature: _____ Date: _____

Guidance Notes

Responding to a Disclosure

If someone tells you that they, or someone they know, are being abused:

- Believe what the person is saying and take it seriously
- Reassure the person who has made the disclosure to you that they have done the right thing.
- Give the person time to talk and do not probe or ask leading questions. Investigation is not your responsibility
- Do not promise to keep secrets. All allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.
- Explain to the person that you will share this information with a senior member of BSBI who will ensure the appropriate procedures will be followed
- E-mails or text messages received giving details of suspected abuse should be immediately responded to within 24 hours (usually by contacting the person by phone or face-to-face to obtain further information)
- Record the event in accordance with BSBI's Safeguarding Policy.

Reporting Procedures – DO NOT DELAY

It is vitally important that any disclosure made in confidence is recorded factually as soon as possible; this is whether or not the matter is taken to another authority.

An accurate account should be made of:

- Date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made
- Names of people who were involved
- What was said or done by whom
- Names of person reporting and to whom reported.

Remember...

- The interests of the child or vulnerable adult are paramount
- In cases of suspected abuse all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to take action in the ways set out in BSBI's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy or BSBI's Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Immediate action, to refer or consult, is required where there is suspicion of abuse
- Investigation is the responsibility of the relevant Competent Authority's Children's Social Care Department and the Police. These agencies have to balance the necessity for action to protect the child or vulnerable adult with the potential adverse effects of an investigation on the family and/or others
- Record keeping is essential at each stage and all documents should be kept to the standards outlined in the policy.