

Safeguarding Guidelines

Sidmouth Science Festival has a duty of care to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults involved in Sidmouth Science Festival activities from harm. All children have a right to protection and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Sidmouth Science Festival will maximise the safety and protection of all children involved in the Sidmouth Science Festival through adherence to the Safeguarding guidelines adopted by the Sidmouth Science Festival. All volunteers must understand and adhere to our Safeguarding guidelines.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989) Although many volunteers will be DBS checked and should therefore understand the implications of working with children and young people, all volunteers will be briefed before the event.

All volunteers need to be made aware of the boundaries of acceptable behaviour in relation to the various types of contact and levels of contact (eg those organising, managing and participating in any activity with children.)

All volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (eg avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with participants.

Volunteers must not:

- Be left alone with children at any time.
- Continue if they demonstrate any abusive behaviour to anyone (ie bullying, taunting, swearing)

- Directly supervise children under nine years of age (who should always be accompanied by a parent or carer)
- Have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others, e.g. making discriminatory, suggestive remarks or actions even in jest.
- Use any information about young people (eg contact details, photographs)
- Respond to allegations or suspicions

(It is not the responsibility of anyone working for the Sidmouth Science Festival to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.)

- Sidmouth Science Festival will assure all volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child.
- Should an incident occur it is important to record the events in writing.

Where there is a complaint against a volunteer there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Sidmouth SCIENCE Festival In case of allegation

What to do :

- React calmly
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell and they are not to blame, and take what the child says seriously
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't ask about explicit details.
- Reassure but do not promise confidentiality which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- Inform the child/young person what you will do next
- Make a full and written record of what has been said or heard as soon as possible and don't delay on passing on information.

The report will include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth
- The child's home address and telephone number
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own

concerns or those of someone else

- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and other relevant information. Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay
- A description of any visible injuries. Also any indirect signs such as behavioural changes
- Details of witnesses to the incident
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened
- Have the parents been contacted?

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