

The British Society of Soil Science (BSSS) acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance, and complies with best practice requirements. Although we do not host any face-to-face or virtual events which are attended by unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults, there are opportunities for them to engage with our school outreach work and online activities. BSSS does not anticipate, nor expect, any individual to be placed in a position such that they are alone with any unaccompanied child or vulnerable adult. Due care and consideration will be taken to avoid such incidences, with rigorous investigation and reporting to take place should they occur to prevent reoccurrence.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children and vulnerable adults:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience engaging with activities delivered by BSSS and in a safe environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in activities hosted by BSSS.

We acknowledge that some children and vulnerable adults can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. A child is defined by law in England and Wales as a person under the age of 18 years and Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Our Policy

As part of our safeguarding policy we will:

- never expect our volunteers or staff to be alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults. These individuals should always be accompanied by a parent or guardian
- not allow children, young people or vulnerable adults to attend our events (face-to-face or virtually) without a parent or guardian present
- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and vulnerable adults
- value, listen to and respect children and vulnerable adults
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- adopt safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are encouraged to notify the Safeguarding Officer of any signs of abuse, neglect or other safeguarding concerns
- ensure all staff and volunteers know about our policies, procedures and behaviour codes and follow them confidently and competently

- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- record and store information securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- prevent the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals by recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring we meet the minimum requirements made by the relevant authorities
- appoint a nominated safeguarding lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- ensure all online activity we carry out is done so safely and securely and that young and vulnerable people are never encouraged to attend virtual events alone
- request express permission from a parent or guardian of a child or vulnerable adult, before taking photographs or video
- make sure that children, young people, vulnerable adults, and their parents and carers know to contact our Safeguarding/ Welfare Officer or the Deputy Safeguarding/ Welfare Officer for help if they have a concern about any of our activities.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in BSSS. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from the organisation.

Reporting a Concern

If you have **immediate concerns** about the welfare of any child or adult, contact the police on 101 or ring the NSPCC 24-hour free helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Should you have any safeguarding concern regarding any activity undertaken by BSSS or our partner organisations, including concerns about members of staff, volunteers, or attending members of the public, please contact us with due haste on the details below.

Please be aware that we will keep your report and any information or document you disclose to us confidential. We will only disclose information internally or to our external advisors to the extent necessary to investigate your concern effectively or on the occasion a concern is elevated to relevant authorities.

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/ or government guidance
- as required by the local regulatory bodies
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

Contact Details

British Society of Soil Science Cranfield University, Building 42a, Cranfield, Bedfordshire MK43 0AL

T: +44 (0)1234 752 983 F: +44 (0)1234 752 970 E: admin@soils.org.uk W: www.soils.org.uk

Safeguarding/ Welfare Officer

Sarah Garry (Executive Officer)

01234 752983

sarahgarry@soils.org.uk

Board Safeguarding Representative

Bruce Lascelles

01234 752983

Deputy Safeguarding/ Welfare Officer

Natalie Coles (Senior Administrative Assistant)

01234 752983

nataliecoles@soils.org.uk

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