Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define how the Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES) operates to safeguard children and adults at risk of harm in order to:

- Protect them from harm
- Provide staff, trustees and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

The IES does not specifically engage with children and adults at risk of harm through its charitable activities but could come into contact with children and adults at risk of harm through its work. Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities should be a governance priority for all charities. It is a fundamental part of operating as a charity for the public benefit and all charities are expected to have appropriate policies and procedures in place, regardless of whether the organisation works specifically with children and adults at risk of harm.

The IES is committed to ensuring that it provides a safe environment and protects staff, volunteers, and anyone who interacts with the Institution from abuse or maltreatment of any kind. We will do this by ensuring our services and activities are delivered in a way which keeps all children and adults safe, including internal operations, membership services and activities, and voluntary activities.

The IES will ensure that safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice. We recognise that we have responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004. The organisation recognises and meets its responsibilities under Working Together 2023. It also recognises it responsibilities to safeguarding Adults at Risk of Harm under the Care Act 2014. The organisation will act in accordance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and all relevant legislation.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who comes in to contact with our work, including children and adults at risk of harm involved as visitors and as participants in our activities both on and off site. Currently children can become IES members at the Affiliate level, with the consent of a parent or guardian. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our staff and volunteers.

Definitions

Children are defined as persons aged under 18 years old.

Adults at risk of harm are defined as those people over 18 years old who, according to the Care Act 2014:

- Have care and support needs
- Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect
- As a result of their care and support needs, are unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect or the risk of it

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Types of abuse

Abuse can take many forms, such as physical, psychological or emotional, financial, sexual or institutional abuse, including neglect and exploitation.

Scope of policy

This policy applies to everyone working/volunteering on behalf of the IES, including the board of trustees, paid staff and volunteers.

Partner organisations will also need to:

- demonstrate that their ways of working align with this policy
- show they have a culture of review and learning and progressive improvement with regard to safeguarding
- adopt an active and open approach to reporting to the IES any incidents or complaints, what action has been taken, and the learning as a result

Policy terms

The IES is committed to the following principles:

- Nobody who is involved in our work should ever experience abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.
- We all have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all our beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, to keep them safe and to work in a way that protects them.
- We all have a collective responsibility for creating a culture in which our people not only feel safe, but also able to speak up, if they have any concerns.

The IES will take the following actions:

- Ensure staff and volunteers will be clear on appropriate policy and procedures related to safeguarding. Where appropriate, failure to maintain standards will be dealt with through the IES disciplinary procedures.
- Review IES activities and identify areas of work where safeguarding issues may arise.
- Ensure clear whistleblowing policy and procedures are referenced in staff training.
- Ensure staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns. In this induction, the IES will ensure that staff understand:
  - o What they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children and adults at risk of harm.
  - o Core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals and the IES must do to keep children and adults at risk of harm safe. In doing so the IES will emphasise that the effective safeguarding systems are those where children's needs are paramount and safeguarding related to adults at risk follows the Six key principles of safeguarding.
- Establish a Safeguarding Lead to take leadership responsibility for the IES's safeguarding arrangements (see below).
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are in place, including procedures on when to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) check.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers share appropriate information in a timely way and discuss any safeguarding concerns with the Safeguarding Lead.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

If a crime is in progress, or an individual in immediate danger, call the police, as you would in any other circumstance.

If you are a beneficiary, or member of the public, make your concerns known to the Safeguarding Lead, or if appropriate, the Chair of the Board of Trustees or any member of the Senior Management Team.

If an IES staff member or volunteer has a safeguarding concern, raise this with the Safeguarding Lead, or if the concern relates to the Safeguarding Lead, with another member of the Senior Management Team or the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Responsibilities

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis. Trustees are aware of and will comply with the Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding and protecting people, as well as the 10 actions trustee boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance.

A Safeguarding Lead will be given responsibility for the oversight of all aspects of safety, including whistleblowing and Health & Safety at Work. This will include:

- An annual review, with recommendations to the Board where relevant.
- Providing oversight of any lapses in safeguarding.
- Ensuring that any issues are properly investigated and dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively, and any reporting to the police/statutory authorities is carried out. For example, the IES will make a referral to the DBS when a member of staff is dismissed or leaves following safeguarding issues.
- Ensuring safeguarding risk assessments are carried out and appropriate action taken to minimise these risks, as part of our risk management processes.
- Ensuring that all relevant checks are carried out in recruiting staff and volunteers.
- Planning programmes/activities to take into account potential safeguarding risks, to ensure these are adequately mitigated.
- Responding to any concerns sensitively and acting quickly to address these.
- If appropriate, the Safeguarding Lead will refer a case for any relevant action, such as suspension or commencing disciplinary proceedings (see Employee Handbook or Members Code of Conduct, where relevant), if such action has been approved by the police and/or the Local Authority Designated Officer, where such external agencies are involved.
- The Safeguarding Lead will have overall oversight of cases that are referred under this Policy. There will be an ongoing review of the implications of any cause for concern arising under this Policy and whether, as a result, it might be necessary to take further action or to review or amend this Policy or associated policies and procedures.

Charity Commission Trustee Safeguarding Policy Resources

- [Safeguarding for charity trustees](#)
- [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees](#)
- [The role of other agencies in safeguarding](#)
- [Infographic: 10 actions trustees need to take.](#)
- [Managing online risk](#)
- [How to report a serious incident in your charity](#)