Stourport Camera Club is committed to the welfare and safety of all members, both full and student, of our Club as well as users of our services. We aim to foster and atmosphere where everyone feels secure, valued, listened to and taken seriously.

**Definitions:**

**Child** – person under the age of 18.

**Vulnerable Adult** – a person over the age of 18 who is or may be for any reason unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. (NHS definitions)

**Abuse** – may take the form of physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional and psychological abuse; and neglect. (WHO definitions)

**Appropriate Adult** - a parent, guardian or social worker; or if no person matching this is available, any responsible person over 18. (PACE 1984)

**Designated Person/s:**

The Designated Persons for Child Protection are the Chairman and officers of the club.

**Role of the Designated Person/s:**

* Ensure that all members are aware of the CVPP of the club.
* Decide whether to take further action about any concerns brought to their attention e.g. make referral to Social Services or the police.
* Where necessary liaise with Social Services or Police over suspected cases of child abuse;
* Ensure that accurate records relating to individual children are kept in a secure place;

**Procedures to be followed by members with concerns:**

* Any person concerned about a child or young person within the club must inform a designated person immediately.
* The designated person member must record information regarding the concerns immediately upon receipt. The record must be a clear, precise, factual account of the observations.
* The Designated Person will discuss the matter with the club committee within 24 hours, and the committee may decide to seek advice from outside agencies or refer the concerns to the Social Services and or Police.
* Particular attention will be paid to the welfare of any child who has been identified as at risk, or who has been placed on the Child Protection Register.

**When to be concerned:**

A member or volunteer should be concerned if a child –

* Regularly has unexplained injuries or; frequently has injuries even when reasonable explanations are given; or offers conflicting or vague explanations for injuries.
* Frequently has injuries, even when apparently reasonable explanations are given;
* Exhibits significant changes in behaviour, performance or attitude;
* Discloses an experience in which he or she may have been significantly harmed.

Further more detailed guidance can be found at:

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/

**Dealing with a Disclosure:**

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member should –

* Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
* Accept what is being said.
* Allow the child to talk freely.
* Reassure the child, but not make promises which it might not be possible to keep.
* Not promise confidentiality, as it might be necessary to refer the case to Social Services.
* Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault.
* Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
* Listen, ask open questions and do not ask direct questions.
* Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
* Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.

**Record Keeping:**

When a child has made a disclosure, the member should:

* Make some brief, contemporaneous notes as soon as possible after the conversation.
* Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed as evidence.
* The record should include: the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child as far as possible.

**Allegations Involving a Member or volunteer.**

When a complaint is made against a member or volunteer, that person will be immediately relieved of any Club duties and responsibilities until the matter is resolved.

**Junior Members**.  Please note that this addendum is not only for the protection of juniors but also for the protection of adult members against false accusations.

* The Club is keen to encourage young photographers to join, but full membership is limited by the Constitution to those aged 18 and over. Those aged under 18 may join as Student members.
* Student members aged under 16 must be accompanied at all times by an appropriate adult.
* Student members aged over 16 but under 18 must have written permission from a parent or guardian to attend Club meetings.
  + A parent or guardian (or another adult with the written permission of the parent or guardian) must accompany the Student member to and from meetings.
  + After the meeting at least three adult members must stay until the junior member has been collected by the parent or guardian or other authorised adult.
  + A parent or guardian or other authorised adult is encouraged to attend the whole of any meeting, without charge, if they wish.
* Repeated failure to adhere to these rules may result in the termination of the Student’s membership.

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