

## **Hampton Hill Photographic Society – Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy**

*In this policy, the use of the words child or children includes Vulnerable Adult(s) unless the context means that it does not apply.*

The Society exists to encourage an interest in photography, both within its membership and in the wider community. In this context, children are very welcome to join the Society and take part in its activities. The Society has a legal duty of care to children and in order to safeguard the interests of all members the following procedures shall apply.

### **The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

This legislation covers the protection of both children and vulnerable adults. For the purpose of the Act, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18. A vulnerable adult is any adult aged 18 or over who, due to disability, mental function, age, or illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.

The legislation aims to protect these groups with respect to:

Sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse.

Physical abuse.

Health and safety issues.

Protection of personal data

### **Under 18 membership**

Members and visitors under 18 years of age must be accompanied at all meetings and other events by a parent or guardian, or an adult with the specific agreement of the parent/guardian, who will be responsible for their safety at all times.

When joining the Society, the membership application form with respect to a child must be signed by their parent / guardian to signify acceptance of this policy. If the child is not to be accompanied at meetings by their parent/guardian, the designated responsible adult(s) taking their place should be named on the membership form.

### **Membership of Vulnerable Adults**

It may not be obvious that a Member (or prospective Member) or visitor is a vulnerable adult and the Society relies on the vulnerable adult (or his or her carer) to make his or her circumstance known to the Secretary at the time of joining or to any Member of the Committee at any time subsequent to joining or by a visitor (or the visitor's carer) at a Society event.

It is the responsibility of any Committee Member or the Society's event organiser to take reasonable steps to ensure that no Member or visitor at a Society event is at risk of or subject to significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation by other Members or visitors.

For sections below annotated (\*), not all aspects will be applicable to all vulnerable adults depending on their vulnerability.

### **Child Protection Policy**

The Society has a duty of care to safeguard children participating in Society activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of children and others who may be particularly vulnerable due to disability, mental function, age, or illness or traumatic circumstances must be taken into account.

The Society will ensure the safety and protection of all children who participate in Society activities through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the Society.

The Society recognises that in its activities it has a responsibility towards a child to prevent any form of abuse, specifically physical, sexual, or emotional, and to protect children from any form of bullying.

Adherence to the policy is a condition of all grades of membership of the club – members' attention is drawn to this policy on the joining form, along with other Society policies and rules. In the case of children, their parent or guardian must countersign the form as acceptance of the policy.

Allegations concerning incidents should be reported to any member of the Committee, who in turn should pass these on immediately to the Secretary. If the allegation is one of abuse, the Secretary shall liaise with the Chairman in deciding what action should be taken. This could be the sensitive interviewing of the individual, the calling of a full committee meeting or the reporting of the allegation to the Social Services Department and / or to the Police. A copy of all written records, reports, notes and correspondence relating to any incident should be kept by the Secretary.

### **Code of Behaviour when engaging with Children as part of Society events (\*)**

Members should avoid spending time alone with a child on his or her own. If members find themselves in this situation, they should make sure that they may be clearly observed by others.

Members should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or that their parent/guardian can do for them.

Members should avoid taking a child to the toilet unless another adult is present or has been made aware (their parent/guardian).

Members, other than a child's parent or guardian, should avoid having a child aged under 18 in their own vehicle, unless accompanied by that child's parent, or guardian.

Members should avoid unnecessary physical contact with a child. **Do not** allow or engage in inappropriate touching of a child of any kind.

Do not physically restrain a child unless the restraint is to prevent physical injury or for the safety of the child.

In all circumstances physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable; otherwise the action can be defined as assault.

It is accepted by the Society that photography being an art form will mean that images of all types, print or electronic (digital projection or internet), may be presented as part of the Society's activities. These may not be to everyone's taste, and indeed may potentially offend. By countersigning the application form parents/guardians of children signify acceptance of this. If the images or activities of a particular meeting or event are likely to be unsuitable for children this will be prominently included in the publicity for the meeting or event.

### **Notes on Mentoring (\*)**

The Society may occasionally offer mentoring by a more expert member of the Society. Mentoring of a child is only allowed with the explicit agreement of their parent / guardian and only if more than one adult is present – this may include a parent/guardian

When demonstrating equipment or techniques, the mentor may be required to be in close proximity to the child. This should be kept as short as possible, and only with the express permission of the child and with prior permission of the parent or guardian.

### **Confidentiality of personal information**

A database of members' contact details is maintained by the Society. Care is taken to protect this information, as set out in the separate Data Protection Policy. The contact details, including email address, of any child member will be integrated into this database, unless a request for its omission is received from the child's parent or guardian.

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2016