



TECHNICAL  
SPELEOLOGICAL  
GROUP

# Child Protection Policy Statement

## Child / Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy Statement

TSG has a duty of care to safeguard all children / vulnerable adults involved with the club 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. For the purposes of this document when we refer to young people we are referring to both children and vulnerable adults.

TSG will ensure the safety and protection of all young people involved with the club through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the TSG. This enables every young person who takes part in activities organised or promoted by TSG to be able to participate fully, while being protected from neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

### 1. The Legal Framework

- 1.1 The TSG recognises the requirements of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (PoCA) and subsequent legislation affecting children, young persons and vulnerable adults.
- 1.2 PoCA includes 'children', that is under 16's, and 'young persons', that is 16 to 18s as well (further referred to here with equal meaning as "young persons").
- 1.3 PoCA takes in sexual, emotional and physical abuse, and also 'neglect' (which includes all aspects of failure to ensure the safety of young persons and vulnerable adults).

### 2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 TSG recognises the importance of the welfare of young persons and their right to protection from abuse as set out in section 1 of this document.
- 2.2 TSG recognises its duty of care to young persons for the actions of its officers.
- 2.3 TSG will take all allegations of the abuse of young people seriously, and will respond to such allegations appropriately and quickly.
- 2.4 TSG considers that in any caving, mine exploration, or other associated activity, the safety of the participants and conservation of the cave are of paramount concern at all times.
- 2.5 TSG wishes to encourage the participation of children and young persons in caving

and mine exploration, provided that:

- The introduction of caving to these persons is carried out by suitably experienced adults.
- The introduction is done in a progressive manner attuned to the physical and mental capacities of the participants.
- During this introduction the conservation requirements of this unique environment are stressed as part of the ongoing development of the individual.

### **3. Allegations of Abuse**

3.1 If TSG receives an allegation of child abuse against any Officer or Member, then one or more members of the Committee will be immediately informed, and appropriate action will be taken. The allegation will be treated as a potentially criminal activity, and will be reported to the police.

3.2 If TSG receives an allegation of child abuse against any Member, then one or more members of the Committee will be immediately informed, and will take prompt action, as an executive body, to consider such matters as suspension of Membership and associated rights and benefits, and any necessary further actions.

3.3 TSG Committee Members will maintain the confidentiality of the accused and the accuser, in any situation of alleged abuse.

### **4. Members Recommendations**

4.1 TSG recommends that in any activity involving young people, whether training or caving or preparing for caving, or any other TSG activity, there should be at least two adults present at all times.

4.2 TSG recommends that where regular caving and/or caver training activities, or other activities, are planned, involving the same adult or adults, an appropriate vetting process, of the participating adults, shall be carried out.

4.3 TSG recommends that all Members should be provided with clear guidance for caving, and other activities, and if certain members are involved in regular activities they should be made aware of best practice guidelines as set out in Child Protection in Sport Unit, Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport - NSPCC.  
<https://thecpsu.org.uk/download/media/1040/english-standards.pdf>