

Child Policy

&

Best Code Of Practice

2013

Foreword

The Burrenbeo Trust is a registered charity (CHY no: 16834) dedicated to raising greater appreciation of the Burren region which lies in County Clare and the adjacent areas of County Galway. We do this through education, provision of information, conservation, advocacy and research.

OPENING EYES TO THE LIVING BURREN

The Burrenbeo Trust is Ireland's first landscape charity. We are a multidimensional resource for the Burren region. Our function is to promote and support the sustainable management and use of this unique landscape and heritage in an accessible, inclusive and effective manner.

Appreciating A Diverse Heritage

The Burrenbeo Trust promotes local and global education and awareness with regard to the Burren.

Awareness Building

The Burrenbeo Trust engages young people by creating awareness of our Living Landscapes through experiential learning and outdoor activities.

Visitor Management

The Burrenbeo Trust contributes to improved visitor management and enhanced visitor experience in the Burren, through the provision of high quality information.

Conservation Volunteers

The Burrenbeo Trust founded and continues to support Ireland's fastest growing conservation volunteer group, the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers, which harnesses the efforts of local and visiting volunteers by reinforcing the part we can all play in becoming custodians of this unique Landscape. We welcome all those aged 18 and over; younger volunteers must be accompanied by an adult and of an age where they can actively assist with the task in hand.

Glossary

Adult

For the purposes of this code, an 'adult' is any person who aged 18 or over, including members, parents, teachers, employees, local experts and volunteers.

Child

For the purposes of this code, a 'child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age.

The Trust

The Burrenbeo Trust.

Employees

Paid staff of the Burrenbeo Trust.

Member

For the purposes of this code, a 'member' is someone who has paid the appropriate membership subscription to the Trust and whose membership is current.

Local Experts

Individuals subcontracted by the Burrenbeo Trust.

Volunteers

Trust volunteers (i.e. unpaid).

Statutory Guidelines:

ROI: Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

Code of Good Practice - Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector, 2nd Edition May 2003.

Our Duty to Care: Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport, 2003.

Safer Organisations: Safer Children, October 2002.

The Burrenbeo Trust Child Policy

Note, not all the work we do involves young people, this policy is relevant to the below:

- **Ecobeo** – our 20-week programme in local primary schools which creates *Young Burren Experts*.
- **Áitbheo** – our 10-week programme in secondary schools which creates *Place Champions*.
- **Burren Wild Child** – one off outings which we organise to give families, local schools, youth groups and visiting groups of children an learning experience in the outdoors.

For each of the above it is our policy to have a family member, teacher, or designated adult present with responsibility for the children. The Trust is never left alone with the children; the objective of the Trust is to engage responsible adult(s) in support of the children.

Our aim when working with children:

Our work with children aims to cultivate in them an awareness of themselves, a sense of pride in their surroundings and an awareness of their role as future custodians of the landscape.

How do we do this?

- **Ecobeo** uses a range of activities including talks, games and outdoor activities to immerse children in the Burren landscape over a 20-week period.
- **Áitbheo** works with transition year students. By using the Burren as a case-study for natural and built heritage the students go on to explore in depth the area around their own home.
- **Wild Child** gives children a taste of adventure and exploration in the Burren.

Events are tailored to the capabilities of the participating children, allowing every child to operate in a safe and secure environment.

Burrenbeo Trust Child Protection Policy Statement

The welfare and safety of the children involved in the above three programmes is the foremost priority of the Trust. Our local experts and volunteers endeavour to ensure that children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm while participating in the Trust's activities.

In law a child is defined as someone under the age of 18 years, who is not or has never been married (Child Care Act 1991, Children Order 1995).

The Trust's Code of Good Practice and Child Protection Policy are designed to protect children and young people from physical and emotional harm or abuse.

The Trust provides its employees with information to help them understand appropriate behaviour when dealing with children, what situations might constitute reasonable grounds for concern and advice on how to respond to. See Appendix 1.

All employees of the Trust are responsible for the implementation of the Child Protection Policy. It is the responsibility of all such adults to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- they observe the guidelines established for the safety and security of young people.
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed and maintain a policy of transparency with their fellow employees and the parents / guardians.

The above policy aims to guide the Trust's interaction with children in the best interests of the child. It will be updated on a yearly basis to allow for any changes to the Trust's programme of activities.

APPENDIX 1 – Best Code of Practice

Code of behaviour

Employees need to be aware of the dangers of a too casual and unthinking familiarity with the young people in their charge and should endeavour to ensure that their attitudes and actions will at all times:

- never lead to a betrayal of the trust of young people, parents and teachers.
- never impart inappropriate knowledge or interact with a child in a manner that is unwanted and may result in hurt to the child.
- never seek to control and create dependence in a child.
- respect the personal and sexual boundaries of others.
- do not engage in sexually provocative games, talk or actions.
- do not engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- never make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun.

5 points of behavioural awareness

1. Act in an open and visible manner

When working with children, employees should ensure that an open environment exists.

When a situation arises where a certain amount of privacy is required (e.g. a disciplinary issue or treatment of an injury) the Trust will ensure that there is always another adult is aware or are within vision (preferably within earshot). However sincere the intentions, an employee should not be a 'one - man- band' and run a meeting / activity on his or her own. It is imperative that there is another adult present, in itself to comply with the organisation rules for the safety of the children , as well as for the security of being less likely to be accused of doing something improper.

2. Sometimes it's better not to join in

Do not join in games 'to make up the numbers', to encourage participation or to add to the novelty of the game or activity. To do so is risky; all it takes is for a young person to be hurt, or suggest that he or she has been inappropriately touched for the 'fun' to become 'serious'. Do not engage in horseplay with children. The simple advice is – organise, supervise and enjoy watching the fun!

3. Be positive in your conversation

The way you speak to young people about themselves or others can create a positive and supportive atmosphere. Improper comments, suggestions or inappropriate humour can result in hurting and

confusing a child. Avoid making suggestive or salacious remarks in the presence of children. Keeping your conversation at the appropriate level for the age of the child will avoid causing hurt and misinterpretation of your intentions and will provide a positive example to the child.

4. Be alert to your own emotional feelings and the feelings of others

Young people can sometimes 'hero-worship' an employee. This type of situation must be handled sensitively, avoiding both rejection and encouragement. Use the support of other employees to deal with such situations, as this will help to avoid any perception of encouragement on your part. Our emotions can fluctuate due to trauma, stress, bereavement and many other causes. If support is required talk things through with another trusted adult. Avoid involving young people in your emotional problems.

5. Consider the situation

This may be the most important point of all: consider each situation. While your intentions may be based on the most innocent and altruistic of motive, if in doubt about how your actions might be interpreted then adopt a safer course of action.

Employees should ensure that:

- an activity is suitable for the age, experience and ability of the children concerned.
- activities are led by suitable persons with the necessary skills.

Risk Management

The management of risk and safety should be a priority of all employees engaged in Trust activities with children. Risks assessments should be carried out prior to activities in order to eliminate (or reduce to an acceptable level) the potential risks to children.

The assessment of risk involves a number of steps in the planning of an activity, some of which include:

- looking for hazards.
- determining the level of risk involved.
- deciding who might be harmed and how.
- putting in place measures to minimise any identified risks.
- reviewing the risk assessment on a continuing basis throughout the activity.

Below is the breakdown of the organisation’s risk assessment for outings into the field with children.

Wildchild events			Control		
Hazard	Risk	Likelihood	Email beforehand	Event Brief	On site preparations
Rough/uneven terrain	Falling/damage to joints and bones.Cuts and bruises. Other injury	medium/high	Advise upon suitable footwear. Warn if location of event is far from the road.	Warn about terrain and careful footing. Only play running around games on suitable terrain. Encourage children to help each other.	Have first aid-kit and qualified first-aider on location. Leader has the means to call for an ambulance
Extremes in weather	Cold, windy or wet - risk of hypothermia , hot - risk of sunburn, hyperthermia/sunstroke	low	Advise all to bring appropriate clothing and protection for all conditions. During severe weather events should be cancelled.	Advise all to drink plenty of water at regular intervals if hot. Advise all to use sunscreen & hat. Advise the wearing of multiple layers of clothing if cold.	Have first-aid kit, and qualified first-aider on location. Have plenty of drinking water if sunny. If cold, windy, wet leader to keep constant check on group moral. Leader to be aware of signs of hypothermia and to have the means to call for an ambulance. Have group shelter on site.
Traffic (if walking along any roads)	Hit by passing vehicle	low		Be aware that you are on a road and therefore need to allow for passing traffic. If walking along the road keep group in single file facing the oncoming traffic and make sure all are aware of which side of the road to go to should any traffic approach.	Have first aid kit on site and a qualified first-aider. Leader to have the means to call an ambulance
Ticks	Lyme Disease	medium		Advise to wear long sleeves, tuck trowsers into socks & insect repellent in areas where ticks active. Advise to check for ticks after the event. Have information on ticks and Lyme disease available in case anyone has an interest.	Have a qualified first-aider and first-aid kit containing a tick remover on site. If bitten advise to contact GP if any symptoms occur similar to those on the Lyme disease fact sheet (that should be given to person bitten).
Stinging insects	Sting/insect bite	medium		Advise to wear long sleeves, tuck trowsers into socks.	Have first-aid kit and qualified first-aider on site. Leader to have the means to call an ambulance in case of adverse reaction to sting/bite
Attack from aggressive or frightened animal	Physical injury/bites	medium		If livestock obviously in the area warn people to keep away/not frighten them etc.	As will be in public areas no dangerous livestock should be present. Have first aid kit and qualified first aider on site and the means to call for an ambulance.
Water	Drowning	low/med	Warn if event location is near water especially if children or dogs are expected to be present.	Warn to avoid the water. Advise on location of life rings if any.	Have qualified first aider on site and the means to call for an ambulance.
Getting lost	Multiple	medium		Instruct group to stay together, not wander off and to let the leader know if anyone is missing straight away.	Make sure that any adults with the group are aware of where the group is going to and how to get back to the start point. Keep a constant eye on the group and try to go at the pace of the slowest group member. Space adults out in the group with one at the back.

Accidents/Incidents:

Relevant employees are expected to have knowledge of First Aid and ideally should hold a suitable qualification in First Aid. Should an accident/incident occur, all the facts, contact details of all concerned and medical/other intervention (if such was necessary) should be accurately recorded (see Appendix 2) and forwarded to the office as soon as possible. Employees should make contact with their line manager or with the staff at the office if there is any doubt, or advice needed on the procedures that are to be followed in reporting accidents or incidents.

Transport

As a general rule, the responsibility for getting children to and from Trust activities lies with parents /guardians. However, at times the group may take responsibility for organising transport to events or activities (e.g. Ecobeo fieldtrip). It is always preferable that a reputable bus company be engaged on these occasions.

Medical needs

Parents/guardians have primary responsibility for the medical needs of their children.

Photographs and images of children

Guidelines in relation to the use of images of children on web sites and publications are outlined below. Trust employees should be aware of them and apply them as and when necessary.

Newspapers may request children's names to accompany photographs; these should only be supplied at the discretion of, and with the permission of, the parents.

Rules to guide use of photography:

- If the children are named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the child.
- Ask for the child's permission to use their image.
- Ask also parental/guardian permission to use the child's image.
- Only use images of children in appropriate dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- The content of the photograph should focus on the activity not on a particular child.
- Where photographs are to be used on the Trust website the permission of parents guardians should be specifically requested. Avoid using names of children when posting photographs on a website.
- The inappropriate use of images should be reported.

The above Code of Behaviour aims to guide the Trust's interaction with children in the best interests of the child. It will be updated on a yearly basis to allow for any changes to the Trust's programme of activities.

APPENDIX 2 – Incident Report Form.



Incident report form

Time and Date:

Location and task description:

Leader/first aider:

Details of casualty (*name, address, phone number*):

Nature of incident:

Actions taken:

Witnesses: