

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Smoke of Battle recognises its responsibility to keep children and young people involved in the group safe and to respond appropriately in the event of safeguarding concerns.

The policy and procedures below are based on legislation and guidance that seeks to protect children in England and Scotland. This document applies to all children and young people under the age of 18.

Parental Consent

- A consent form is required for each child or young person involved in the group. This should be completed by their parent or guardian and will be stored in line with GDPR requirements.

Member Behaviour

Members should:

- Treat children and young people with dignity and respect.
- Work in an open environment. Private or unobserved situations with children or young people should be avoided.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Avoid using inappropriate language.

Supervision

- Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied to events by a parent, guardian or another responsible adult that has been specifically designated by the parent or guardian.
- Young people over the school leaving age but under 18 do not need accompanying or chaperoning at events.
- There is the potential for young people 14 and over but under the school leaving age to attend events unaccompanied. This must be organised on an event-by-event basis with the group and a nominated chaperone needs to be present at the event.
- Nominated chaperones should be a member of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme or have completed a DBS check. They also need to be familiar with the child protection policy and procedures.

Safe Weapons Handling

- Children and young people under the age of 15 should not handle shotguns.
- Handling and use of both real and replica weapons should be age-appropriate and relevant safety protocols should be clearly explained and followed at all times.
- Children and young people may only take part in skirmishes with permission from a parent or guardian and under appropriate adult supervision.

Photography

- Photographs and videos of children and young people may only be taken by members of the group providing parental permission has been given on the consent form.
- Such pictures may be used for publicity purposes, but should not be associated with a child or young person's name or other personal details.
- As a re-enactment group, being photographed at events comes with the territory and whilst the group will adhere to parental preferences regarding in-house photography, they cannot take responsibility for photographs taken by visitors or other people in attendance at an event.

Reporting Concerns

The designated Child Protection Officer for Smoke of Battle is Kate Stephenson

All concerns and issues relating to the safeguarding of children and young people should be passed to the Child Protection Officer as soon as possible. A concern is if someone suspects a child or young person associated with the group may be suffering any form of abuse or if a child or young person discloses abuse. Types of abuse include:

- Emotional
- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Bullying
- Discriminatory
- Financial
- Institutional

When alerted to concerns about a child or young person the Child Protection Officer should:

- Ensure that the child or young person is in no immediate danger and that any medical or police assistance required has been sought
- Consider whether the concern is a safeguarding issue or not. If there is any doubt or uncertainty, statutory agencies should be consulted.
- If there is considered to be a safeguarding issue, details should be passed to the police and/or statutory bodies such as social services.
- If the concern is not considered to be a safeguarding issue and it is decided that no referral should be made, a record should be made of the concern including any action taken and the reasons for not referring. If relevant, the situation should be monitored on an ongoing basis.
- If a safeguarding issue arises that involves any member of the group as the alleged abuser, that individual should be excluded immediately from all group activities until any police or statutory body investigation is concluded. The Smoke of Battle committee may later decide to conduct their own investigation, but this must not be initiated until any external investigation is completed.

- Both the alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality and a criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.

This policy is dated 2 November 2025 and is due for review on 2 November 2028.