

Dorchester Camera Club

Vulnerable Individuals attending Club Activities

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline Dorchester Camera Club's policy on children, young people and vulnerable adults attending Club activities. The Club has a duty to ensure that vulnerable individuals are protected within the environment of Club meetings and activities.

Definitions

In the context of this policy, children, young people and vulnerable adults are collectively referred to as 'vulnerable individuals'. Children and young people are defined as those under the age of 18.

Introduction

This Policy is designed to ensure that vulnerable individuals are protected, according to Human Rights legislation, at Club meetings and activities from sexual, emotional and physical abuse, exploitation and other actions and activities that may be considered harmful.

Principles

The Club's Constitution states that "membership of the Club is open to all those interested in photography. Membership is solely at the discretion of the Committee. Persons aged under 18 may only become members by special agreement of the Committee, and must be accompanied at all times by a designated parent or guardian who must complete and sign an appropriate consent form."

The consent form will include the following:

- Nomination of the responsible adult to accompany the vulnerable individual if the parent/guardian does not wish to attend.
- Agreement to pay the relevant membership subscription and attendance fees.
- Agreement that the parent, legal guardian or nominated responsible adult is also responsible for the vulnerable individual until they arrive at the Club venue and the activities commence and once the vulnerable individual leaves the venue at the conclusion of the official Club activities. During the activities, the parent, legal guardian or nominated responsible adult is responsible.

Should a vulnerable individual arrive at a Club activity unaccompanied, attempts will be made to contact the parents and/or legal guardian for the individual to be collected as soon as possible. Until he/she is collected, two Club members will be nominated to supervise the vulnerable individual. If no suitable arrangements can be made for his/her collection within a reasonable time, the police will be contacted.

In the event that the parent, legal guardian or responsible adult accompanying the vulnerable individual is involved in other activities within the Club that takes his/her supervising attention away from the vulnerable individual, then alternative supervision will be organised involving at least two other Club members.

Club portrait sessions should only involve the taking of images of vulnerable individuals under the direct supervision of a parent or legal guardian.

Indecent images should not be taken or displayed at Club events. Regarding events at which images of a potentially suggestive nature could be taken or displayed, prior written agreement from a parent or legal guardian should be obtained for the vulnerable individual to attend.

Vulnerable individuals will be treated as equals by all those present. Acceptable language should be used in the presence of vulnerable individuals.

Images of vulnerable individuals and identification of them in Club literature should not be of a suggestive or indecent nature. Written permission is required from the parent, legal guardian or nominated responsible adult before any images of vulnerable individuals are published.

Vulnerable individuals should not be allowed to operate, assemble or disassemble equipment or enter the kitchen.

All Club members should be vigilant for possible abuse against vulnerable individuals. All reports of abuse, by a vulnerable individual or by a Club member, will be investigated. Once reported, records will be kept, recording times and dates of relevant Club activities and members who were present. An appointed sub-group of the Club's committee will be convened to decide how the matter should be handled. Depending on severity, this group should consider reporting the matter to the relevant outside authorities (such as the police).

A copy of this Policy has been placed on the Club's website and a hard copy of this Policy will be given to the parents or legal guardians of a vulnerable individual at the time of joining and available to all members.