

## **WALKING ON AIR**

### **PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS POLICY revision 1.1 (02/02/2026)**

#### **1. AIMS**

Walking On Air is committed to the safety and well-being of the volunteers and pilots (plus all members and visitors who take part in its activities).

It recognises its responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure best practice.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that its volunteers and pilots are familiar with this policy.

The policy has been written with consideration to Volunteer Scotland (VS) and the Office of the Scottish Charity Register (OSCR) guidance.

#### **2. KEY PRINCIPLES**

Various United Nations Conventions on Human Rights underpin Scottish Law, which has been used to guide this policy :

- a) The best interests of the pilot must always be the primary consideration.
- b). All pilots should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
- c). All pilots have the right to protection from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- d). All pilots have the right to express their views on matters that affect them.

#### **3. ROLES (Directors, Instructors and Ground Helpers).**

a). The Directors have appointed a PVG Protection Officer( Garry Simpson) and Depute PVG Protection Officer (Maria Duncan) whose role will be to :

i) provide assistance to the Directors in organising PVG certification for all instructors and ground helpers.

ii) to annually review the policy and report to the Directors

- All Directors, Instructors and Ground Helpers must provide evidence of their PVG scheme membership to the Walking On Air PVG Protection Officer or Depute PVG Protection Officer. This will be arranged by the PVG Officers.
- Visiting Instructors or Ground Helpers unable to provide PVG certification must work under the supervision of an Instructor or Ground Helper who has PVG certification.

b). An enrolment form must be accepted for pilots, by the Ground Helpers and / or Instructor from the pilot prior to flying. This should include relevant information relating to any physical or mental conditions which might cause safety issues.

i) PVG Protection Officers should identify any training needs in the annual review.

#### **4. CODE of PRACTICE (Directors, Ground Helpers and Instructors)**

You should :

a). Where possible, plan activities which involve more than one person being present.

i) Instructors should check, before flying, the forms in the briefing room describing pilot flying health and safety needs.

ii) Be available to listen to concerns and be able to refer to other sources of help. This must include Walking On Air PVG Officers.

iii) Ensure that any touching is explained fully and in every way is continuously led by the pilot or carer.

iv) Try to ensure your actions cannot be misunderstood. Be aware that avoidable physical contact with a pilot is unwise as it can be misinterpreted. A helpful form of words could be "please advise me at every stage of lifting, fitting the parachute and straps of how you want me to assist you". This form of words is fundamental in protecting all

v) Accept that to continue to volunteer with Walking On Air that you engage with the PVG Protection Officers to be disclosed. This involves providing two types of photographic evidence and an example of home address (this can be done in person or by secure video such as WhatsApp).

vi) Ensure data is protected and secure according to Data Protection Act

## 5. ACTIONS TO TAKE IN THE EVENT OF SUSPECTED ABUSE

- a. Identify a confidential and quiet space for interview.
- b. Seek support for interview from a PVG Protection Officer or Director.
- c. Allow the pilot or carer to speak freely and without prompts.
- d. If appropriate and possible, find out some basic information about the alleged abuse:
  - Where
  - When
  - What
  - Who
- e. Write a contemporaneous note.
- f. Inform a PVG Protection Officer.
- g. The PVG Protection Officers must discuss together any potential actions or reasons for inaction.
- h. The PVG Protection Officers should consider taking further advice from Police Scotland and or Social Work.
- j. The PVG Protection Officers must write a contemporaneous note.
- k. If you receive an allegation of abuse against yourself, notify a PVG Protection Officer as soon as possible.
- l. If you consider anyone to be in IMMEDIATE danger then call Police Scotland on 999.

For non emergency calls you can call :

Police Scotland on 101 or

Social Work Contact Centre on 03451 551503

## 6. CONTACT DETAILS

Walking On Air Protection Officers :

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