

Safeguarding Policy

Mission Statement

To provide fun, learning and inspiration to all our visitors through a unique interpretation of the River Thames, Henley and Rowing.

Policy Statement

The River & Rowing Museum welcomes everyone who visits the Museum. The Museum acknowledges the responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for all users of the building and surrounding environment for whatever the purpose be they trustees, staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors or tenants. The aim of this policy is to ensure everyone including children and Adults at Risk (AAR) are safe when visiting the Museum or whilst being visited by Museum staff and volunteers. While it is aimed specifically to protect children, young people and AAR from abuse, it includes the wider meaning of health and safety.

Children and Adults at Risk Statement

The River & Rowing Museum encourages the use of its facilities for education and enjoyment by students in formal education, including those on work experience, children/adults at risk visiting as members of the public or attending informal learning events, and people of all ages with special educational needs.

This policy and its related procedures apply equally to children and young people under the age of 18 (or under 16 if they are employed), and to adults at risk (AAR) who are unable to care for themselves by reason of mental, physical or learning disability, age or illness.

This policy is mandatory. It should be read in conjunction with the Museum's Whistleblowing Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

Policy Aims

The aims of the Policy are:

- To create a healthy and safe environment throughout the museum site and during all programmed activities.
- To ensure that staff and volunteers are well informed and supported and have received appropriate training.

Objectives

The specific objectives we pursue in order to achieve our aims are:

- To ensure that all staff and volunteers are carefully recruited, trained and supervised.
- To raise the level of awareness of all staff and volunteers about appropriate behaviour towards children and AAR.
- To promote the general welfare, health and full development of children/AAR.
- To develop effective procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.

Legislation

The policy is in line with the requirements of the following current legislation: Children's Act 1989, Police Act 1997, The Protection of Children Act 1999, Children Act 2004, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, Care Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023.

Key Principles

All children and AAR have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Their welfare must always be the overriding consideration when dealing with children and young people.

We will endeavour to ensure that:

- All children and AAR are treated with dignity and respect.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Information is provided to teachers, group leaders and other interested parties about our expectations regarding child/AAR protection responsibilities whilst they are visiting the museum (Terms and Conditions, adult: child/AAR ratios).
- We work in partnership with relevant agencies, by sharing information and involving parents and children/AAR appropriately.
- We review and update policies and procedures at least annually, and/or in line with changes to legislation.
- We appoint a designated person, currently Megan Sealy, Education Development Manager, as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), to be responsible for dealing with any concerns about child and AAR protection and to report to the Chair of the Trustees, who in turn accepts responsibility for ensuring that child/AAR protection issues are taken seriously and any incidents or suspected incidents are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken. In the post-holder's absence, one of the Deputy Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) (currently Mary Arkinstall, Diane Steel and Anne Butler (Duty Managers) will deputise in dealing with issues that require immediate attention.

Dissemination of the policy

- The Museum's Safeguarding Policy is provided as part of the induction package to all employees, volunteers and regular freelancers.
- All other people working on the site (e.g. to deliver a children's workshop) will be given a copy of the policy and procedures.
- This policy, and the opportunity to request a hard copy of the document, will be made available to parents, carers and teachers on the Museum's website.
- The use of registration and consent forms will be a means of showing parents, carers and teachers that we have a firm policy in place.

Definitions of Abuse

- Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or AAR by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.
- Abuse may take place in a family, institutional or community setting – by those known to the child or AAR or, more rarely, by a stranger.
- Abuse may be by adults or children – male or female.
- **Physical abuse** may involve, hitting, shaking, throwing etc. or deliberately inducing illness.

- **Emotional abuse** is persistent emotional maltreatment that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development, for example conveying that a child/AAR is unloved or inadequate, deliberately silencing the child/ AAR, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child/AAR, or serious bullying.
- **Sexual abuse** includes forcing or enticing a child/AAR to take part in sexual activities and occurs whether or not the victim is aware of what is happening. It includes forcing a child/AAR to watch pornography or sexual activities, encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child/ AARs basic physical and/or psychological needs (e.g. food, shelter, medical equipment or protection from harm) and is likely to result in the serious impairment of health and development. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

- Staff should be aware of further safeguarding issues including, but not exclusively:
 - Bullying and cyberbullying, where behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, intentionally hurts another individual or group physically or emotionally.
 - Honour Based Abuse (HBA) which encompasses crimes committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community and includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage. All HBV is a form of abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled as such.
 - Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation (the Prevent Duty) is as important as protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.
 - Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are both forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence.
 - Abuse through technology. Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who do not want to receive such content.
 - Further guidance on safeguarding issues is available at www.gov.uk and www.nspcc.org.uk.

Procedures

Further detailed procedures and policies relating to specific issues and events are on the museum's shared drive and should be read by the relevant staff in conjunction with this document, e.g. Health & Safety Policy, Access Policy, Whistleblowing Procedure and Data Protection guidance.

Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers (see Procedures – Recruitment)

Our recruitment and selection procedures take all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are screened out and prevented from working with children, young people and AAR. Our recruitment and selection guidelines include:

- Deciding on the skills and experience that an individual needs.
- Interviewing applicants, whether voluntary or paid, prior to appointment in role.
- Requesting at least two written references, from referees who are not related to the applicant, which are followed up to specifically ask former employers if they know of any reasons why an applicant should not work with children/AAR.
- Applying for an enhanced DBS check where staff are working in unsupervised Regulated Activity, as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and amended in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012; this process involves asking for documents to confirm the identity of the applicant (e.g. birth certificate, national insurance number, passport or driving licence).
- Ensuring that the museum conforms to all changes to relevant legislation.

Induction & Training

Once a new member of staff or volunteer has been selected, they receive relevant induction and training in awareness of child/AAR protection issues, policy and procedures. Safeguarding training is regularly updated (at least annually). In addition, safeguarding updates are provided as required, but at least annually, to provide staff with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Supervision

All staff and volunteers are supported, managed and developed in their new role. Good practice by those working directly with children and AAR is monitored through:

- Observation of educational activities.
- Meetings with staff and volunteers.
- Feedback from participants attending activities.

Code of Behaviour

It is possible to reduce situations where abuse of children and AAR may occur, and help to protect staff/volunteers by promoting the following good practice:

- Always work in an open environment, avoiding unobserved secluded locations or situations.
- Avoid, where possible, situations where children/AAR are left unattended.
- Avoid physical touch, except when necessary in emergency situations to save the child/AAR from danger.
- Do not give or ask for personal contact details.
- Obtain the carer's or parent's consent in writing prior to taking photographs.
- Always respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally.
- Always place the well-being and safety of the child/AAR above successful performance of a task or activity.
- Be good role models and don't use offensive language, make sexually suggestive comments, smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children or AAR.
- Avoid using sexual imagery, even if from a historical context, that is inappropriate to the age group.
- Carry out First Aid in the presence of another adult (schools are responsible for their own First Aid).
- Challenge inappropriate language, including child on child abuse.
- Avoid rough play, horseplay, or games of physical contact.
- Avoid doing things of a personal nature that they can do for themselves or with the assistance of their parent/carer if present.
- Avoid using physical restraint, other than to prevent danger to the child/AAR or others.

Any instances contravening the above should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Equally, if a child or AAR is accidentally injured as a result of your actions, seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report such incidents as soon as possible to the DSL or Deputy Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) and make a written note. Parents/carers should also be informed.

General Safety on Visits & Events

- Fire drill will be explained to all visiting parties and workshop groups at the start of a visit.
- All workshops and activities will be risk assessed.
- Visiting schools will be asked to meet our required adult: child ratios (1:2 ages 0-2 years, 1:6 3-7 years, 1:8 7-11 years & 1:15 11+).
- All materials used during workshops or for self-led activities in the galleries will be suitable for the age and ability of the audience.
- One member of the education team who is DBS checked will run activities. They may be supported by education volunteers who are also DBS checked and Front of House volunteers. School workshops will always be supported by school staff and so RRM education staff and volunteers should never be alone with visiting school groups.
- A member of staff should accompany children's workshops led by freelancers.
- A contact number for a parent/carer will be taken at events at which children/AAR are left unaccompanied.
- Parents/carers will be asked to disclose relevant medical information at events at which children/AAR are left unaccompanied.
- Children/AAR should *not* be accompanied *into* the toilets; if an emergency arises, e.g., a child/AAR is sick during a workshop, call another member of learning staff and/or the Duty Manager - one to replace you in the workshop and one to accompany you with the child/adult at risk. A DBS checked member of the team should accompany children/AAR into the toilet area but never into the cubicle during events with unaccompanied children/AAR.
- Children/AAR visiting with schools should not go to the toilet area alone as this is shared with members of the public. The school's risk assessment states this and school staff are asked to accompany their pupils to the toilet area.
- Unaccompanied children/AAR and adults will not attend the same workshops.
- Exhibitions and displays will be created and monitored with the safety of all visitors in mind.

Work Experience Pupils

- Work experience students under the age of 16 should not be left to work on their own or with anyone that works in an unsupervised Regulated Activity who does not have a DBS check.
- Work experience students aged 16 or over are permitted to work on their own and with staff members who are not DBS checked.
- All work experience students will be monitored if using ICT equipment.
- Work experience students under the age of 16 will have signed consent from a parent or guardian stating the information above.
- Also see 'Other Areas Requiring Parental Consent'.

Young People Working as Mr Toad

- All staff and volunteers performing as Mr Toad are required to wear at least shorts and t-shirt/vest top. A member of staff will help to 'dress' them in the Mr Toad outfit in an open environment. This should be done in the main staff office where the windows have privacy glass and out of the sightline of the staff door. Another member of staff/volunteer should be present.

- Employees *under* the age of 18 must be 'dressed' by a DBS checked member of staff and another member of staff/volunteer should be present.

Digital Safety

- Schools will take responsibility for children using phones and devices during a visit to the museum, specified in the terms and conditions for school visits.
- Young people using ICT outside of school visits will be supervised by a member of staff and will use RRM computers only to access the internet, which is filtered and monitored.

Visiting Contractors On-site

- All contractors coming through the staff entrance should sign-in using the Contractors signing-in book.
- If the contractors are not wearing branded company clothing, they should be given a Museum Visitor lanyard to wear for the duration of their visit.
- Visitors that are working in the galleries, for example putting in a Community Gallery exhibition should also wear a Museum Visitor lanyard.
- Lanyards should be collected when signing out/leaving the building.
- All contractors are made aware of the Museum's Health and Safety Policy during a briefing on their first visit to site.

Lost Child/Adult at Risk

The Museum has a procedure for managing and recording lost children/adults at risk.

Uncollected Children/Adults at Risk

The Museum has a procedure for managing and recording uncollected children/adults at risk.

The Retention of Records

Photographic records of children/AAR will be retained for a maximum of 4 years – as detailed on the photographic consent form. Booking forms from booked events are shredded immediately after each event.

Other Areas Requiring Parental Consent

Written parental/carers' consent is also required for the following:

- The use of ICT equipment by those under 16 (where not provided by school administration)
- Inclusion in a survey or consultation if under 14 and the child/AARs identity is recorded
- Taking part in a project

Outreach

Schools and other organisations may ask for confirmation that our staff are DBS checked if they work in unsupervised Regulated Activity. The host organisation's Safeguarding Policy should be followed unless it is incomplete or outdated. Any incidents should be reported to the host organisation's designated person.

Having concerns about a child or adult at risk

Staff should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and always act in the best interests of the child/AAR. If staff have concerns about a child (as opposed to a child being in immediate danger) they should speak to the DSL or in their absence, a DSO. Any staff member can make a referral to Social Care, but they should inform the DSL as soon as possible if they do so.

Dealing with Suspected Abuse

It is not required of an employee or volunteer to take individual responsibility for deciding whether or not abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to protect children/AARs in order that appropriate agencies (e.g., social care) can then make enquiries and take any necessary action.

Once the incident/allegation has been reported, it is the responsibility of the DSL to inform Social Care without delay. If the DSL is not available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact a DSO who should inform Social Care. The Director should be kept informed of developments at all times. A representative of Social Care will decide how and when parents/carers will be informed and ultimately become responsible for what steps to take next.

Allegations against Staff/Volunteers

- to be read in conjunction with the Whistleblowing Procedure

Do not allow allegations made by a child/AAR to go unrecorded or not acted upon.

Should an individual member of staff or volunteer witness or hear an allegation of abuse against a colleague, it is vital that:

- The allegation is taken seriously. **It is your duty** to consider any allegation to be potentially dangerous to the child/AAR and therefore report it.
- The situation is investigated by trained professionals. **Your** responsibility is to report quickly to the appropriate person.
- A written record of any details of which you are aware is made.
- The allegation is reported to the DSL or DSO, giving details of the allegation, how you became aware of it and any other relevant details. In a case where the senior member of staff may be involved, report to another senior manager you can trust.
- Where appropriate, confidentiality will be maintained.

It is important that the rights of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information. Any requests for information from members of the public (including parents) or the media should be directed to the DSL and should be given a 'no comment' response.

What to do if 'Taken into Trust'

Children/AAR who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening to and taking seriously what a child, or possibly an AAR, says, you will already be helping to protect them. It is useful to think in advance how you might respond to this situation. If possible remain in view, do not go somewhere on your own, and preferably involve another member of staff if the child/AAR is in agreement. If you are in a group situation, such as a holiday workshop, ask the additional adult to fetch the DSL/DSO so the incident can be reported without delay.

- Listen to what they say; show you are taking what is being said seriously.
- Keep questions to a minimum, but use open questions to encourage the child/AAR to use their own words.
- Reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Confirm that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you and that they have done the right thing.
- Stay calm and don't rush into actions that may be inappropriate.

- Explain that you will have to tell other people in order to keep the child safe. Ensure you are quite clear about what the child/AAR says, so you can pass it on to child/AAR protection professionals.
- If possible, report the incident to the DSL/DSO immediately so they can seek advice and/or make a referral while the child/AAR is still on site to ensure they are safe to go home.
- Record exactly what the child/AAR has said to you, in a legible and accurate format, as soon as possible after the incident. Stick to the facts and do not give your opinion. Include:
 - ❑ The child/AARs name, address, date of birth.
 - ❑ The date and time of the incident happening.
 - ❑ The nature of the allegation.
 - ❑ A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
 - ❑ Your observations (e.g. a description of the child/AARs behaviour, physical and emotional state).
 - ❑ Exactly what the child/AAR said and what you said. Record the child/AAR account of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
 - ❑ Any action you took as a result of your concerns (e.g., who you spoke to and resulting action, including any contact with parents, managers or social care). Include names, addresses and telephone numbers.
 - ❑ Sign and date what you have recorded.
 - ❑ Report to the DSL/DSO, whose responsibility it is to decide whether to take the matter further by making a formal referral to one of the following:
 - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
 - Child/Adult at Risk Social Care
 - The Police
 - The NSPCC (for advice).

Please refer to the Oxfordshire Threshold of Need Matrix 2022



Please refer to the Oxfordshire Threshold. If your concern is a level 3 on the Threshold of Needs Matrix, you would complete an online MASH referral. If it is a level 4 (immediate safeguarding concern) you would call the MASH immediately **0345 050 7666**. The MASH may then ask you to follow up in writing, but they will advise of this over the phone.

Useful Contacts

RRM Designated Safeguarding Lead: Megan Sealy (Education Development Manager)
 RRM Deputy Safeguarding Officers: Diane Steel, Mary Arkinstall and Anne Butler (Duty Managers)

Reporting suspected abuse

If a child/AAR is in immediate danger, call 999.

Immediate Concerns about a Child/AAR

If you have an immediate concern, for example:

- Allegations/concerns that the child/AAR has been sexually/physically abused
- Concerns that the child/AAR is suffering from severe neglect or other severe health risks
- Concern that a child/AAR is living in or will be returned to a situation that may place him/her at immediate risk
- The child/AAR is frightened to return home
- The child/AAR has been abandoned or parent is absent

Contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on **0345 050 7666**. This number takes you through to Customer Services who will ask a series of questions and triage into MASH where safeguarding concerns are raised.

Emergency Duty Team (outside office hours): **0800 833 408**
 Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board www.oscb.org.uk
 Helpline for concern about child sexual exploitation **0345 050 7666**
 To report concerns about a professional or person in a position of trust: **01865 810603**
 or email LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Safeguarding reporting forms should be stored in an electronic locked folder. This folder is only accessible by the DSL/DSOs and Museum Director.

If you are unsure whether to make a referral

You can contact the Locality and Community Support Service (LCSS) and request a ‘no names’ consultation (meaning you don’t give the individual’s name). You can then discuss the situation with them and they will advise you on what to do next. If a referral needs to be made, they will advise you of this.

LCSS South (including Henley): **0345 241 2608**

For e-safety concerns

Contact the Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre (CEOP) <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

There is an online form to report concerns. For immediate concerns, call 999.

Reporting suspected abuse (adults at risk)

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board www.osab.co.uk
 Safeguarding Triage Team (if you are unsure if it’s a safeguarding issue) **01865 328232**

Thames Valley Police Non-emergency number 101

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline (if you are concerned about a child): **0800 800 5000**

NSPCC Childline (for children to call): **0800 1111**

Say Something CSE helpline (if you are concerned about Child Sexual Exploitation): **116 000**

M Sealy

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approved by: Fiona Dennis and Tracey Bowen (River & Rowing Museum Trustees)

December 2024 (To be reviewed every year or earlier if there are major changes in legislation or the organisation.)