

Didcot Railway Centre
Home of the Great Western Society
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy, version 5.2

Our Vision is to recreate the golden age of the Great Western Railway.

Our Mission is:

- To be a nationally accredited independent organisation
- To maintain Didcot Railway Centre as a working museum dedicated to the Great Western Railway
- To provide suitable facilities to demonstrate restoration and maintenance of the Collection
- To be open to the public for the enjoyment, benefit and education of the community.

Our challenge is to become a more commercially orientated organisation in order to achieve the Vision.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable people who are visiting or working at Didcot Railway Centre.

Particular provisions for members of the Education Team are at Appendix A and governing young volunteers at Appendix B. Provisions regarding child employment are described on HM Government's website at <https://www.gov.uk/child-employment>.

Background and definitions

In South Oxfordshire: Young people have an important role to play in South Oxfordshire and there are over 26,000 young people aged between 10-15 living in the district¹. At 21%, the proportion of young people living in Didcot was above average.

In museums: Children and their families are a significant audience for museums, and children and young people are the museum visitors, staff, trustees and volunteers of the future. Arts Council England's goal is for every child and young person to have the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts. All Arts Council England-funded organisations, individuals and projects that work with children and young people or vulnerable adults are required to have a safeguarding policy in place.²

The legal position: For legal purposes, someone is a child until their 18th birthday. Children are the legal responsibility of their parents and carers even when they are not present.

The broad definition of a vulnerable person³ is someone who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation".

At Didcot Railway Centre: children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Applications from members under 18 (including family members) must be signed by the applicant's parent or guardian certifying that they will be responsible for the young member conforming with the Great Western Society's rules and regulations. Young volunteers under the age of 16 must be a member of the GWS Young Volunteers. In 2013, 20% of visitors were children and 10% were families, a static trend over the last four years.

¹ Census 2011 Summary 2011, South Oxfordshire

² <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk>

³ 1997 Consultation "Who Decides?" issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department

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The policy

Didcot Railway Centre welcomes visitors of all ages and abilities, and we pledge to treat everyone with respect. We aim to provide a healthy and safe environment for all our staff, volunteers and visitors, including children and vulnerable people. Their wellbeing is considered as part of our health and safety management process. We will also do all we can to protect children and vulnerable people from physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to the best of our ability whilst they are on our premises or in our charge. We aim to ensure that volunteers and paid staff are not allowed to get into a one-to-one situation with any child.

Children and vulnerable people visit in family groups, with carers or in school groups with a responsible adult. Although the primary responsibility for their care rests with their parent or other responsible adult, Didcot Railway Centre seeks to ensure that its activities and policies also afford as much protection as is reasonably practicable.

We will do this by:

- Treating children and vulnerable people with dignity and respect.
- Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are selected, trained, supervised, supported and protected.
- Requiring our staff and volunteers to be good role models and not using offensive language or making sexually suggestive comments. Failure to maintain appropriate standards may be dealt with using the disciplinary procedure.
- Complying with legal requirements for the employment of young people under 18.
- Providing clear procedures for parents, guardians, supervising adults and children to voice their concerns if they feel unsure or unhappy about anything.

Operating procedures

The policy is supported by the following procedures that minimise the opportunity for abuse:

- We work in an open environment, avoiding unobserved secluded locations or situations.
- We will only admit children under 12 to the Centre with an adult and require that they shall be supervised at all times.
- We do not permit children to participate in any activity without the consent of their parents, guardian or teacher.
- We will carry out first aid treatment with more than one adult present wherever possible except in the rare situation of serious injury where any delay in providing urgent first-aid pending the arrival of medical aid would be harmful to the child or vulnerable person.
- We shall always have a teacher or supervising adult and one other adult in the group to lead guided tours for groups of children.
- We encourage parents to get out of carriages before their child to help the child down. Our staff shall not touch a child unless it is in clear view of the parent or guardian, who can see that there is no inappropriate behaviour, or in an emergency when the child may be at risk of harming him or herself.
- Any member of staff or volunteer finding an unsupervised child must not physically touch the child, if possible, and must seek another colleague to help as soon as possible. If any member of staff or volunteer is approached by a lost child, they

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should keep the child with them and notify the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day as soon as possible. The procedures for dealing with lost and found children are at Appendix C.

- We will take all concerns and allegations of abuse seriously and ensure that we respond promptly and appropriately. We may refer incidents to children's services and, when necessary, the police.
- When children under 12 are asked to pose for publicity photographs, we will ensure that we ask their parents or guardians for permission.
- We carry out Disclosure and Barring Service⁴ (DBS) checks on the education team, specific children's characters (e.g. Father Christmas, Fat Controller) and supervisors of young volunteers. We require our entertainers to be DBS checked.
- For work experience students we will encourage members who are placement supervisors to put their names forward for the STEM Ambassadors⁵ scheme.
- We will ensure our staff are aware of this policy and we brief them on it and on good practice in respect of children and vulnerable people in training sessions for operating staff, event helpers and guides.
- We have designated our Chairman as responsible for child protection issues and for ensuring that child protection issues are taken seriously and any incidents or suspected incidents are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken.

We avoid the following unacceptable practices both for the protection of children and vulnerable people, and the safeguarding of our own staff and volunteers:

- Spending excessive time with individual unescorted children and vulnerable people.
- Visiting secluded places around the Centre or being in a vehicle such as a locomotive footplate or carriage compartments with an individual child without their parent, guardian or teacher being present.
- Taking children to their home or an adult's, or in a private vehicle, other than in a group.
- Engaging in rough play or games of physical contact.
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Being with an individual child in a toilet or shower.

This policy was approved by Great Western Society Board on 6th February 2016. It will be monitored and reviewed biennially.

Ann Middleton
Version 5.2
February 2016

⁴ Previously Criminal Records Bureau(CRB)

⁵ STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network) Ambassadors are everyday people from real working backgrounds who volunteer their time for free to act as inspiring role models to young people (www.stemnet.org.uk)

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Appendix A – Safeguarding pupils

This appendix applies to Education Team members, whether they are staff or volunteers. The Education Team recognises its responsibility for safeguarding pupils. The designated Safeguarding Staff member is the Education Manager. Team members must comply with the following procedures:

Procedure

1. Ensure that every member of the Education Team knows who the designated Safeguarding Staff member is and what the responsibilities are.
2. Ensure that Education Team members understand their responsibilities in being alert to, and acting appropriately in, cases of abuse or suspected abuse.
3. The Education Team should keep accurate written records of concerns about children and ensure that all safeguarding records are kept secure and confidential.
4. Ensure that Education Team members are selected and recruited by going through appropriate checks. Under 18s are not subject to DBS checking but should have a risk assessment made either by the outside company or organisation that provides them or by the school.
5. Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand that there is a procedure to be followed in dealing with child protection allegations made against staff and volunteers. This procedure must be followed on all occasions. All staff should be made aware of this process.

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Appendix B - young volunteers at Didcot Railway Centre

The Young Volunteers programme is structured, supervised and provides fun, learning and recorded achievement for its members. The young volunteer projects should have a specific output to encourage learning.

The GWS complies with the 'Child Protection Principles for Employers involved in Work Experience' as provided by Oxfordshire Education Business Partnership. Young people cannot⁶:

- Work in a pub (except washing up or serving food)
- Work in factories or any industrial undertaking
- Work in a commercial kitchen cooking or food preparation (Chip Shop, takeaway or restaurant)
- Collecting money door-to-door
- Work more than 3 metres above the ground

Young people may become Young Volunteers when they are 12 years of age (Year 7 at school) and they must be members of the Great Western Society. It provides for young people up to the age of 16.

Young members under the school leaving age must complete an information and agreement form together with their parents or guardian and the Society to allow them to take part in voluntary work at Didcot Railway Centre.

No events requiring overnight accommodation are to be included in the Young Volunteers programme.

It is a requirement that supervisors of Young Volunteers should be STEM Ambassadors or be DBS checked.

Supervision

New Young Volunteers will work in a small group on a specific project, or as part of a larger working party, directly supervised by a member of staff or volunteer.

Having gained experience, Young Volunteers will work under the supervision of a group manager or as part of a regular working party.

Once a Young Volunteer has achieved a level of competence and responsibility, they may be judged capable of carrying out their own projects, under the general supervision of a manager. In these cases, the Young Volunteer will work to a written plan produced by the department concerned. A copy of the workplan will be deposited in the DRC Office. The young volunteer must report to the Manager of the Day or Duty Manager before they start and when they have completed the work.

⁶ Do you employ school-age children? Attendance and Engagement Team, Oxfordshire County Council, 2013

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Appendix C – Lost and found children

Lost children

If a child is lost, the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day (DM/MoD), will note details of the child (e.g. name, age, height, clothing, where last seen) and will arrange for a calm, thorough search of the Railway Centre.

The priority must be to find the child but the DM/MoD should also reassure the parent or guardian of the lost child that a search is underway. It may be useful to nominate a member of staff or volunteer to stay with the parent or guardian until the child is found.

If the child is not found, the DM/MoD will contact the Police and the GWS Chairman. The DM/MoD will complete the Incident Report Form in the normal way.

Found children

Anyone finding a child should contact the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day (DM/MoD) without delay.

If a child is found, the DM/MoD, or the person they have delegated to deal, should crouch down to the child's height, show them their name badge and tell them that they work at Didcot Railway Centre. The DM/MoD should take the child's name, address and telephone number if possible; giving the child time to respond as the child may be extremely distressed. The DM/MoD must not physically touch the child if possible and must seek another colleague to help as soon as possible. If the child does not give any details, the DM/MoD must call the Police.

The DM/MoD, or the person they have delegated to deal with the situation, may take the child around the Centre to look for the parents provided there is at least one colleague with the child at all times, preferably including the person who made the initial contact to avoid further distress to the child. The child must never be left alone nor should the DM/MoD or colleague be alone with the child at any time. The DM/MoD must ensure care is taken to make appropriate public address announcements, for example, asking the parent to contact a member of staff and not making any reference to the child. If the parents are found, the DM/MoD must ask for identification and not release children to anyone under the age of 16. The DM/MoD will complete the Incident Report Form in the normal way.