

**Great Western Society Limited**  
**Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy, version 6**

**Summary of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable people who are visiting or working at Didcot Railway Centre. We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of children and vulnerable adults involved as visitors and participants in all our activities both on and off site. We also want to protect and support our staff who work or come into contact with these groups.

We have designated the Company Secretary as Safeguarding Officer 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.

**Do:**

Work in an open environment, avoiding unobserved secluded locations or situations, where possible. Avoid one-to-one situations with any child or vulnerable adult.

Be aware of the possible risks and question situations that they find suspicious.

Encourage parents and guardians 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.

Notify the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day if you find a lost child and follow the Lost & Found Children Procedure.

Ask parents' or guardians' permission when children are asked to pose for publicity photographs.

**Don't:**

Spend excessive time with individual unescorted children and vulnerable people.

Visit secluded places around the Centre or being in a vehicle such as a carriage compartment with an individual child without their parent, guardian or teacher being present.

Take children to their home or an adult's, or in a private vehicle, other than in a group.

Engage in rough play or games of physical contact.

Physically restrain a child, young person or vulnerable adult, except when it would affect the safety of either individual involved or a third party.

Use foul language or making sexually suggestive comments to any visitor.

Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind.

Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves or that a parent / guardian / leader can do for them.

Make personal contact with any child or vulnerable adult by email or social networking, unless for occasional ad hoc operational reasons.

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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.

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable people who are visiting or working at Didcot Railway Centre. We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of children and vulnerable adults involved as visitors and participants in all our activities both on and off site. We also want to protect and support our staff who work or come into contact with these groups.
- 1.2 This policy will apply to all Trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors and will be used to support their work at Didcot Railway Centre and off site where relevant. It has been drafted in line with best practice and following documentation available from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and relevant Government legislation and guidance. Our policies and procedures are published on our website.

## **2. Background and definitions**

- 2.1. 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 to ensure that all visitors are safe and protected from harm whilst on our premises.
- 2.2. "Children and young people" are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. The term "vulnerable adult" refers to someone 18 or more years old who may have a physical, learning or sensory disability, a mental health problem, a serious illness, or may be an older person.
- 2.3. Membership applications from persons 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.
- 2.4. Volunteers under the age of 16 must be members of the GWS Young Volunteers. Volunteers aged 16-17 can work with other groups provided the risks associated with the role have been assessed and appropriate control measures put in place.

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**3. The policy**

- 3.1. Didcot Railway Centre (DRC) welcomes visitors of all ages and abilities, and the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount. 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, the Great Western Society (GWS) seeks to ensure that its activities and policies also afford as much protection as is reasonably practicable.
- 3.2. 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. All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly investigated by GWS and / or external authorities where relevant and will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
- 3.3. We will do this by:
- Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are trained in safeguarding;
  - Ensuring that all staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of the policy and procedures for the protection of children and vulnerable adults;
  - Requiring our staff and volunteers to be good role models and not use offensive language or make sexually suggestive comments. Failure to maintain appropriate standards may be dealt with using the GWS disciplinary or problem solving procedure;
  - Providing teachers, group leaders and any other interested parties with information about our expectations regarding protection and safe supervision responsibilities whilst visiting DRC;
  - 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.
- 3.4. We have designated the Company Secretary as Safeguarding Officer 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.

**4. Operating procedures**

- 4.1. The policy is supported by the following procedures that minimise the opportunity for abuse:
- We will only work in an open environment, avoiding unobserved secluded locations or situations, where possible. We will do our best to avoid one-to-one situations with any child or vulnerable adult. If a child or vulnerable adult wishes to talk in confidence we will try to find a quiet space in a public area where this is possible.
  - We will only admit children under 16 to the Centre with an adult and require that they shall be supervised at all times.

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- We do not permit children to participate in any activity without the consent of their parents, guardian or teacher.
  - We will encourage our staff and volunteers to be aware of the possible risks and question situations that they find suspicious.
  - 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.
  - 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 and guardians 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 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 A.
  - When children 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 Service (DBS) checks on specific children's characters (e.g. Father Christmas, Fat Controller) and supervisors of young volunteers.
  - For work experience students we will encourage members who are placement supervisors to put their names forward for the STEM Ambassadors<sup>1</sup> scheme.
  - We will ensure our staff and volunteers 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.
- 4.2. 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 carriage compartment 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.
  - Making personal contact with any child or vulnerable adult by email or social networking, unless for occasional ad hoc operational reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> 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](http://www.stemnet.org.uk))

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- Physically restraining a child, young person or vulnerable adult, except when it would affect the safety of either individual involved or a third party.
  - Using foul language or making sexually suggestive comments to any visitor.
  - Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
  - Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any kind.
  - Doing things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves or that a parent / guardian / leader can do for them.
- 4.3. All staff and volunteers working with young people should be aware that some young people and vulnerable adults may behave inappropriately. Any sanctions and approaches to discipline should in the first instance be managed by the responsible adult. If a staff member, volunteer or contractor is in a position where a sanction is to be issued (for example in the case of unaccompanied children who are behaving inappropriately) then this must be appropriate to age and understanding. Please refer to the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day if you are in any way uncertain of what action to take.

**5. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.1. The key staff affected by this policy are the Safeguarding Officer, DRC Manager and Duty Manager or Manager of the Day (as rostered)
- 5.2. All staff, volunteers and contractors have a responsibility to maintain the standards of behaviour set out in the GWS CASTLE Values & Behaviours and to report lapses in these standards by others. All staff should discuss concerns immediately with their line manager or if not available, with the DRC Manager, Duty Manager or Manager of the Day or Safeguarding Officer. Any concerns or reasonable suspicions of abuse should be reported immediately and follow the Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart (Appendix B). If your line manager is not available or is part of the cause of your concern then you should report the matter to the DRC Manager, Duty Manager, Manager of the Day or Safeguarding Officer. Any safeguarding concerns that are raised should be documented as soon as possible afterwards using the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (Appendix C of this policy).
- 5.3. Line Managers will monitor the implementation of the policy for their respective areas as per procedure and will also be responsible for ensuring that staff who raise a concern are provided with the necessary support and complete all required documentation (e.g. Safeguarding Incident Report Form) and are also supplied with a Safeguarding Receipt of Referral (see Appendix D). Serious concerns involving the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer or contractor must be referred immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.
- 5.4. The DRC Manager will be responsible for implementing procedures relating to selection, vetting, training and induction, and for advising on any disciplinary action required. A central database of all Safeguarding Incident Report Forms will be maintained and monitored by the Safeguarding Officer.
- 5.5. Any allegations of inappropriate behaviour (e.g., breach of the Safeguarding Code of Conduct) by staff, contractors, volunteers or visitors must be reported by line managers or the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day to the DRC Manager, who will

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liaise with the Police and Social Services as necessary. In these circumstances, the role of the DRC Manager is to:

- Assess information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate;
- Consult initially with the Safeguarding Officer, the local Police and where appropriate with other statutory bodies;
- Make a formal referral if required to a statutory child protection agency or the Police.

5.6. It is not the role of the DRC Manager to decide whether a child / vulnerable adult has been abused or not; this is the task of the Social Services Department which has this legal responsibility (in case of children), or of the Police. The DRC Manager will pass information on to the relevant authorities who have the necessary expertise to make the required decisions about the action required. In all serious cases involving safeguarding issues, the DRC Manager must be contacted as soon as possible.

5.7. All Duty Managers and Managers of the Day will be trained safeguarding duty officers. It is their responsibility under this policy to deal with any operational safeguarding issues that arise including lost and found children / vulnerable adults. It is also the Duty Manager's or Manager of the Day's responsibility to decide when to notify the DRC Manager about a safeguarding incident.

5.8. It is the role of the Safeguarding Officer to have a detailed knowledge of this policy and procedure and to support the DRC Manager and others to deal with operational issues as and when they arise.

## **6. Recruitment and Selection of Staff, Contractors and Volunteers**

6.1. Legislation provides that individuals may be disqualified from working with children by inclusion on one or more of a number of official lists contained in the statutory provisions. It is a criminal offence for any employer to knowingly recruit a disqualified individual into a post working with children. This also extends to volunteers and contractors. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 places requirements on employers and individuals who are involved in regulated activity. Regulated activity applies to some of our staff, contractors and volunteers. This is defined as an activity, which involves, frequent or intensive contact with children or vulnerable adults and is of a specified nature e.g. teaching, training, and supervision or is in a specified place such as schools:

- The frequent contact test will be met if the work takes place once a week or more.
- The intensive contact test should be met if the work takes place on 4 days in one month or more, or overnight.

6.2. As part of the staff and volunteer recruitment process, all applicants will be required to confirm that they are willing to complete a DBS disclosure application. The level of the disclosure will depend on the extent to which the post involves working with children or vulnerable adults.

6.3. Wherever possible, appropriate checks will have been completed prior to start date.

6.4. Job applicants who have been successful at interview and whom GWS wishes to make an offer of employment to, volunteers or contractors who will be regularly required to

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work with children and vulnerable adults will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure Application. Until this check has been completed and appropriate clearance has been granted, they will not be eligible to work with children or vulnerable adults. At interview, all applicants will be required to account for any gaps in employment history.

**7. Reporting Procedure to be followed by staff, volunteers and contractors in the case of suspected or alleged abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult**

- 7.1. A member of staff, contractor or volunteer who suspects a case of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult has a duty to follow the procedures below.

**Statement of Investigation**

- 7.2. It is vital that anyone who suspects that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm or abuse takes personal responsibility to act. Keeping worries or concerns to yourself may put children and vulnerable adults at further risk of harm. It is not GWS's responsibility to investigate a child or adult safeguarding complaint but to refer concerns on to local children's or adults' social care departments or the Police. The DRC Manager will be responsible for investigating any potential breaches of this policy involving staff, volunteers or contractors.

**Responding to a Safeguarding Concern**

- 7.3. Concerns about adults and children may arise in different situations. You may witness or observe something, hear it from others, in person or on the phone, by email or letter or be told directly.
- 7.4. The following guidance must be followed if you receive an allegation of child or vulnerable adult abuse:
- Ensure the welfare of the child / young person or vulnerable adult.
  - Check your understanding of the situation, without being investigative.
  - Explain that you have a responsibility to report what the child / vulnerable adult has said to someone else.
  - Report the matter as soon as possible to your line manager and / or the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day. The Duty Manager or Manager of the Day will then liaise with the GWS Safeguarding Officer who will advise about the need to contact parents, carers or guardians and police / statutory authorities.
  - Record all the details on the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (see Appendix C).
- 7.5. If a disclosure or allegation is being made to you by a child / young person or vulnerable adult:
- Ensure that any medical attention needed is addressed as a priority if required.
  - Listen to what he / she has to say with an open mind.
  - Check your understanding of the situation, without asking leading questions.
  - Make a note of the discussion as soon as possible afterwards, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present as well as what was said. Try to record the words that were actually spoken and not your own interpretation of them.

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- Explain that you cannot keep such information confidential, and that you have a responsibility to report what he / she has said to someone else.
- 7.6. If the allegation concerns a visitor or member of the public, the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day should consider whether there are reasonable grounds for excluding them from the Centre until an appropriate investigation can be carried out. In some cases the immediate involvement of the Police may be appropriate. For example, if anyone was causing harm to a child or adult in a public place then the involvement of the Police must be sought immediately. In all major incidents, the DRC Manager must also be informed.
- 7.7. If the child, young person or vulnerable adult involved is part of an organised group, the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day will consult with the group's leader and make every effort to agree an appropriate course of action.
- 7.8. If the child, young person or vulnerable adult involved is with a family member or other responsible adult and they are not causing any harm, the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day will consult with this person and will make every effort to agree an appropriate course of action.
- 7.9. If the child is under 16 years of age or a vulnerable adult and is unaccompanied the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day will speak to the child or vulnerable adult and then decide on the appropriate course of action. If relevant external authorities need to be informed then this should be done by the DRC Manager.
- 7.10. If the allegation concerns another member of staff, volunteer or contractor, the staff member must raise this matter with his or her line manager or consult the Safeguarding Officer in confidence. If a formal investigation is deemed necessary then this will be carried out by the DRC Manager in accordance with the GWS Disciplinary Procedure. Depending on the nature of the allegation, the GWS may be required to involve the appropriate authorities, including the Police.

**Recording Information**

- 7.11. All staff should discuss the matter immediately with their line manager or if not available, with the Duty Manager, Manager of the Day or DRC Manager.
- 7.12. Use the GWS Safeguarding Incident Report Form (Appendix C) to record as much information as you can about the situation; what has happened, where and when, who was involved and any contact details. Also record what action has been taken so far.
- 7.13. This information should be passed immediately to your line manager or the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day. You can do this by phone, email or in person.
- 7.14. Wherever possible, you will receive a Receipt within 5 working days of your submission of the Safeguarding Incident Report Form to your line manager / Safeguarding Officer and will be kept informed about what has happened since on a need-to-know basis.
- 7.15. It is important to pass on what information you have, even if the informant has only divulged a little or will not give his / her details. This information must be maintained in the strictest confidence and failure to treat such information confidentially may be viewed as a potential disciplinary matter.



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7.16. Staff wishing to seek further advice can contact the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline. This is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week and the contact number is 0808 800 5000.

**8. Contact Information:**

8.1. There are separate safeguarding boards for the local areas for both children / young people and adults.

**Children and Young People**

The appropriate safeguarding board to contact is the one based where the child or young person lives. If it is not possible to confirm the address referral should be made to the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) on 01865 815843 or email: [oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**Adults**

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board, email [OSAB@Oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:OSAB@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**Other useful numbers**

NSPCC 24 hour helpline - 0800 800 5000

Childline 24 hour helpline - 0800 1111.

**9. Training**

9.1. GWS will provide and explain the content of this policy to all new staff and volunteers in the course of the induction process. Basic, and where appropriate, enhanced child protection awareness training will be given to some members of staff and volunteers dependent on their roles and responsibilities.

This policy was approved by Great Western Society Board on 7 July 2018. It will be monitored and reviewed biennially.

Ann Middleton, Version 6, April 2018

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**Appendix A – Lost and found children**

**Lost children**

If a child is lost, the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day (DM/MoD), will inform the Ticket Office and stop any children leaving the Centre. The 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.

When the child is found, the DM/MoD will inform the Ticket Office that the Centre can be re-opened.

**Found children**

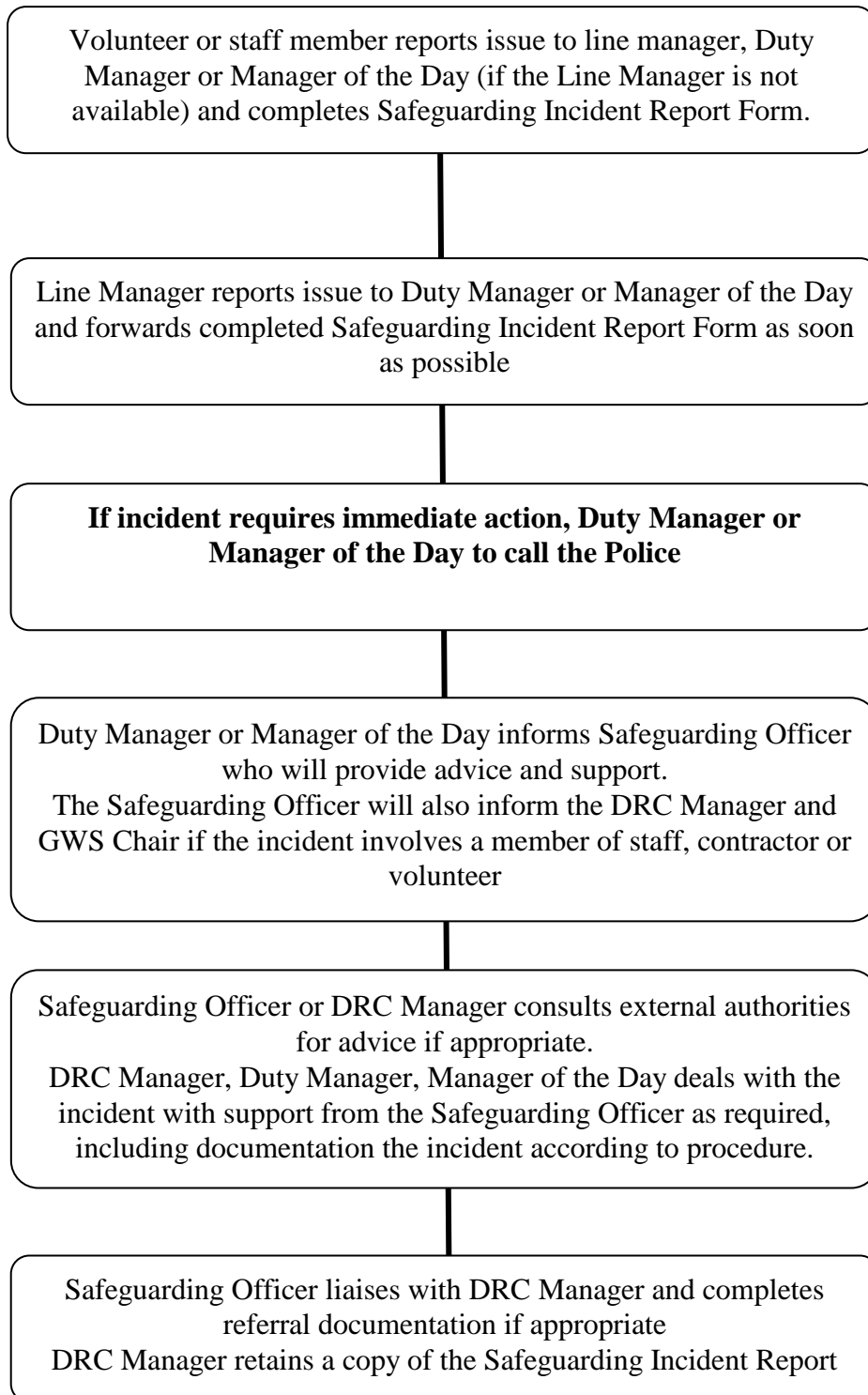
Anyone finding a child should contact the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day (DM/MoD) without delay.

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.

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**Appendix B –Safeguarding Reporting Flow Chart**



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**Appendix C – Safeguarding Incident Report Form** (to be filled out by the person reporting the concern)

Name of child / vulnerable person		Age and Date of Birth (if known)	
Any special factors (e.g. disability)			
Home address		Telephone number Home:  Other:	
Exact location where the incident happened			
Description of what has promoted concerns (please include details of any specific incident, dates, times, etc.) and describe any physical or behavioural indicators which have been observed.			
Have you or anyone else spoken with the child/ vulnerable adult and if so what was discussed?			
Have you or anyone else spoken with the parents / carers / guardians / or any other adults and, if so, what was said?			
To whom reported		Date and time reported	
Your name and position			
Signature	Date		

To be completed by the DRC Manager, Duty Manager or Manager of the Day

Any further action taken?

Copy of form sent to:

Safeguarding Officer		DRC Manager	
Signature		Name	Date

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**Appendix D – Receipt of Safeguarding Incident Report Form**

Name of Line Manager / Duty Manager or Manager of the Day	
Name of person reporting safeguarding incident	
Date safeguarding incident reported	
Action taken:	
Next steps:	

Copy of form sent to:

Safeguarding Officer		DRC Manager	

Signature	
Print name	
Date	