

Great Western Society Limited
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, version 8.1

Summary of the Policy

The Great Western Society acknowledges its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities and government guidance.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount and that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Successful implementation of the policy requires staff, volunteers and contractors to play their full part and aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children and vulnerable adults should:

- Have a positive and enjoyable experience whilst at Didcot Railway Centre, in a safe and learning-centred environment
- Be protected from abuse whilst on site at the Railway Centre or participating in workshops or events

As part of our safeguarding policy the Great Western Society will:

- Support a culture of vigilance
- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults, ensuring that our staff, volunteers and contractors are not put in a one-to-one situation with a child or vulnerable adult
- Ensure that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to those to raise or disclose concern
- Ensure that confidential and detailed records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevent the employment of unsuitable individuals through an accurate reference procedure and DBS checks, where required
- Ensure that our fundraising complies with guidance from the Fundraising Regulator.

The policy and procedures are published in the Journal Room, on our website and on HOPS. Compliance is mandatory for all staff and volunteers of the Great Western Society. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed by the Senior Management Team and, if appropriate, the GWS Board.

The GWS Company Secretary is designated Safeguarding Officer and is responsible for child protection issues and for ensuring any incidents or suspected incidents are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken.

For the purposes of this policy, the same principles that can be applied to children should be used to ensure appropriate action is taken to protect vulnerable adults.

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Vision

Our vision is for Didcot Railway Centre to be recognised for the international importance of its collection and the value of bringing to life the golden age of steam as a dynamic Living Museum.

Mission

Our mission is to fulfil our potential as a heritage venue at the centre of its community. Accessible to all, striving to engage and inspire the widest possible audiences in the history and heritage of the Great Western Railway – the pioneering transport infrastructure that laid the foundations for contemporary transport innovation.

Values

Authentic | Welcoming | Engaging | Innovative | Great Quality | Sustainable.

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults who are visiting or working at Didcot Railway Centre, and donors of funds or artefacts. 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. Our fundraising activity needs to take into account the needs of any possible donor who may be in vulnerable circumstances or need extra care and support to make an informed decision. We also want to protect and support our staff, volunteers and contractors who work or come into contact with these groups.
- 1.2 This policy will apply to all 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), the Chartered Institute of Fundraising 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 are the museum visitors, staff, 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.
- 2.2. "Children" 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 children 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. Appendix A outlines the details of the Young Volunteers Programme.
- 2.5. 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.
- 2.6. No one under the age of 16 will be allowed on site unaccompanied.
- 2.7. "Vulnerable circumstances" are a state in which a person is especially susceptible to harm due to their personal circumstances. It is a state which can vary from day-to-day, which may affect the person's behaviour or decisions and needs a flexible response¹.

3. The policy

- 3.1. Didcot Railway Centre (DRC) welcomes visitors of all ages and abilities, and the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount. Children and vulnerable adults visit in family groups, with carers or in school groups with a responsible

¹ English-Code-of-Fundraising-Practice-October-2019

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adult. Although the primary responsibility for their care rests with their parent or other responsible adult, the Great Western Society (GWS), which operates DRC, 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 adults. 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 adults 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 recognise that every donor is an individual with a unique background, experience, and circumstance and every interaction between a fundraiser and donor is different. We will treat donors fairly so everyone should have the opportunity to donate if they want to do so, and that they are responded to on the basis of their needs and preferences as an individual so they can make an informed decision. A summary of the key principles of treating donors fairly is at Appendix B.
- 3.4. We will do this by:
- Ensuring that our staff, volunteers and contractors 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;
 - Publicising the key elements of the policy through the Staff Handbook, Handbook for Volunteers, displays on Notice Boards, the website and in managers' 'toolbox talks'.
 - Requiring our staff, volunteers and contractors 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 children under 18;
 - Providing clear procedures for parents, guardians, supervising adults and children to voice their concerns if they feel unsure or unhappy about anything;
 - Complying with the Code of Fundraising Practice².
- 3.5. We have designated the Company Secretary as the Designated 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. The Senior

² <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code>

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Management Team (SMT) has nominated the Education Manager as the Deputy Safeguarding Officer responsible for day to day oversight of the policy.

4. Operating procedures

4.1. The policy is supported by the following procedures that help us ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults:

- 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 shall always have a teacher or supervising adult and one other adult in the group to lead guided tours for groups of children. We will only admit children under 16 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 encourage our staff, volunteers and contractors 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 encourage parents and guardians to get out of carriages before their child to help the child down. Our staff, volunteers and contractors 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, volunteer and contractor finding an unsupervised child must seek another colleague to help as soon as possible. If any member of staff, volunteer or contractor is approached by a lost child, they should keep the child with them and notify the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day. The procedures for dealing with lost and found children are at Appendix C.
- Our fundraising activity will be cognisant of the potential vulnerability of donors and we will ensure we comply with the Code of Fundraising Practice (see also Appendix B).
- We will ensure our staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of this policy and we brief them on it and on good practice in respect of children and vulnerable adults 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 adults, and the safeguarding of our own staff, volunteers and contractors:

- Spending excessive time with individual unescorted children and vulnerable adults.
- Visiting secluded places around the Centre or being in a vehicle such as a carriage compartment with an individual child or vulnerable adult without their parent, guardian or teacher being present.

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- Taking children or vulnerable adults 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.
 - 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, volunteers and contractors working with children and vulnerable adults should be aware that some 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 Designated Safeguarding Officer, Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Chief Executive and Duty Manager or Manager of the Day (as rostered).
- 5.2. All staff, volunteers and contractors have a responsibility to maintain the GWS Values and Equality Policy and to report lapses in these standards by others. All staff, volunteers and contractors should discuss concerns immediately with their line manager or if not available, with the Chief Executive, Duty Manager or Manager of the Day, Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer. Any concerns or reasonable suspicions of abuse should be reported immediately and follow the Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart (Appendix D). If your line manager is not available or is part of the cause of your concern then you should report the matter to the Chief Executive, Duty Manager or Manager of the Day, or Safeguarding Officer or Deputy. Any safeguarding concerns that are raised should be documented as soon as possible afterwards using the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (Appendix E).
- 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, volunteers and contractors who raise a concern are provided with the necessary support and complete all required documentation (e.g. Safeguarding Incident Report Form). Serious concerns involving the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer or contractor must be referred immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.
- 5.4. The Chief Executive 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.

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- 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 Chief Executive, who will liaise with the Police and Social Services as necessary. In these circumstances, the role of the Chief Executive 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 Chief Executive to decide whether a child or 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 Chief Executive 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 Chief Executive 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 Chief Executive about a safeguarding incident.
- 5.8. It is the role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to have a detailed knowledge of this policy and procedure and to support the Chief Executive and others to deal with operational issues as and when they arise.

6. Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks

- 6.1. We encourage staff volunteers and contractors who are involved in activities with children and vulnerable adults, including work placements, to put their names forward for the STEM Ambassadors³ scheme, which provides enhanced DBS checking.
- 6.2. In addition, we carry out DBS checks on specific children's characters (e.g. Father Christmas, Fat Controller) and those in roles which have regular and frequent contact with children and vulnerable adults in a supervisory role (defined as four times in a month or four times in a week or an overnight activity⁴). GWS First Aiders are not eligible for an enhanced DBS check on the basis of first aid provision⁵. The Senior Management Team can request additional DBS checking on a risk assessed basis, as appropriate.
- 6.3. DBS checks have no official expiry dates and the recommended period for a DBS check renewal is 3 years.

³ 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)

⁴ Safeguarding for Museums: A Series of Short Guides, Share Museums East & Community Action Suffolk

⁵ www.crb-checkonline.co.uk

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- 6.4. We will accept DBS checks that were requested for previous roles within the previous three years. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will check the applicant's identity matches the details on the certificate, that the certificate is the right level and type for the role applied for, and that nothing has changed if the applicant is signed up for the update service
- 6.5. We will maintain records of staff, volunteers and contractors, STEM Ambassador roles and DBS checks on the HOPS system, in line with our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information⁶

7. Recruitment and Selection of Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

- 7.1. The GWS Recruitment Policy sets out the staff and volunteer recruitment process.
- 7.2. As part of this 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.

8. Reporting Procedure in the case of suspected or alleged abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult

- 8.1. A member of staff, volunteer or contractor who suspects a case of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult has a duty to follow the procedures set out in Appendix E.
- 8.2. Staff, volunteers or contractors 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.

9. Photography

- 9.1. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and to take share and use images of children safely. We will comply with NSPCC good practice⁷ with regards to photography and will seek to keep children safe by:
- always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
 - always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
 - making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
 - changing the names of children whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
 - never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the school name or uniform with a logo)

⁶ Handling of DBS certificate information, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handling-of-dbs-certificate-information/handling-of-dbs-certificate-information>

⁷ <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/>

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- making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary)
- using images that positively reflect children's involvement in the activity.

10. Contact Information:

- 10.1. There are separate safeguarding boards for the local areas for both children and adults.

Children

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

Adults

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board, email oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Donors

Fundraising Regulator, email admin@fundraisingregulator.org.uk

Other useful numbers

NSPCC 24 hour helpline - 0800 800 5000

Childline 24 hour helpline - 0800 1111.

11. Implementation and training

- 11.1. GWS will provide and explain the content of this policy to all new staff and volunteers in the course of the induction process; it is summarised in the Staff Handbook and Handbook for Volunteers.
- 11.2. 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.
- 11.3. Training in dealing with those in vulnerable circumstances will be given to the limited number of staff and volunteers who are likely to deal vulnerable donors.

Version 8.1 of this policy was discussed and agreed by the Senior Management Team on 20 March 2024 and approved by Great Western Society Board on 20 September 2024. It will be monitored and reviewed annually in line with Charity Commission guidance.

Ann Middleton, Version 8.1

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Appendix A - 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. Children cannot⁸:

- 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

Children 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 children 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.

⁸ Do you employ school-age children? Attendance and Engagement Team, Oxfordshire County Council, 2013

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Appendix B – Key principles for dealing with vulnerable donors and those in vulnerable circumstances

BEING RESPECTFUL

This means being mindful of and sensitive to any particular need that a donor may have. It also means striving to respect the wishes and preferences of the donor.

BEING RESPONSIVE

Fundraisers need to be ready to adapt their approach and be flexible to meet the needs of individuals. It also means being prepared to ask questions or take additional steps when necessary.

BEING FAIR

Fundraisers should not make decisions based solely on a particular characteristics such as a person's appearance, the way they talk, any medical condition, or disability. Fairness means responding to people as individuals.

BEING ACCOUNTABLE

Fundraisers should take responsibility for their actions, ensuring that their work is carried out in line with the Code of Fundraising Practice. Consider what processes and procedures are needed and be prepared to explain your decisions and approach.

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Appendix C – Lost and found children and vulnerable adults

Lost children and vulnerable adults

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 and vulnerable adults

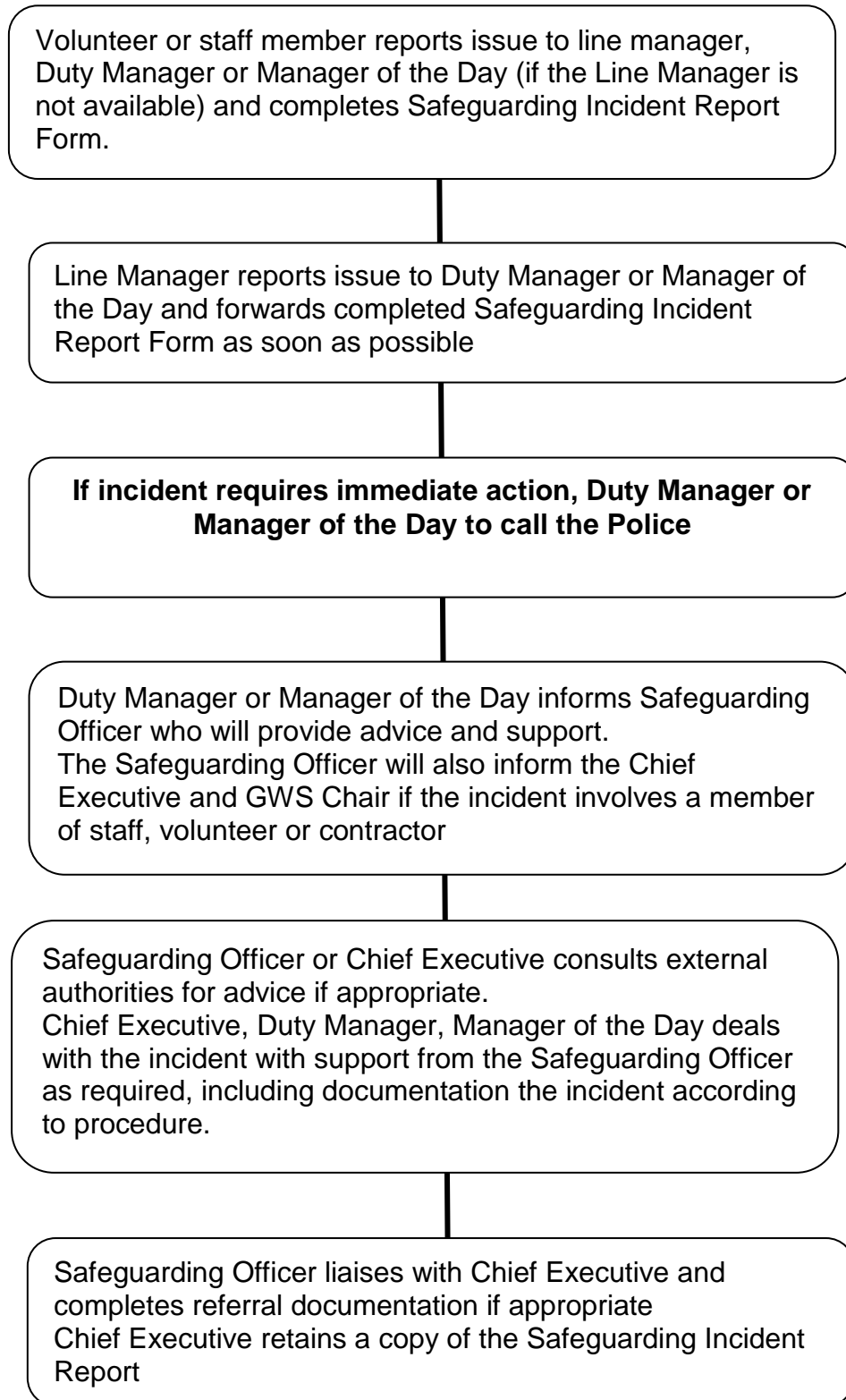
Anyone finding a child should contact the Duty Manager or Manager of the Day (DM/MoD) without delay.

If a child is found, the DM/MoD, or the person they have delegated to deal, should crouch down to the child's height, 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 D –Safeguarding Reporting Flow Chart



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Appendix E – 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 Chief Executive, Duty Manager or Manager of the Day

Any further action taken?

Copy of form sent to:

Safeguarding Officer		Chief Executive	
Signature		Name	Date

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Appendix F - 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

Statement of Investigation

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 Chief Executive will be responsible for investigating any potential breaches of this policy involving staff, volunteers or contractors.

Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

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.

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 D).

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.
- Explain that you cannot keep such information confidential, and that you have a responsibility to report what he / she has said to someone else.

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 Chief Executive must also be informed.

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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.

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.

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 Chief Executive.

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 Chief Executive 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

- All staff should discuss the matter immediately with their line manager or if not available, with the Duty Manager, Manager of the Day or Chief Executive.
- Use the GWS Safeguarding Incident Report Form (Appendix D) 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.