

**HISTORYLINKS MUSEUM
DORNOCH SCIO**

**SAFEGUARDING POLICY and PROCEDURES
June 2023 V2**

POLICY STATEMENT

We aim to ensure that all vulnerable people, whether children, young people, or vulnerable adults, are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and/or volunteers within this organisation. References to Child Protection in this document are also therefore applicable to working with vulnerable adults.

In Scotland, children are defined within the law as under the age of 16 years. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognise our responsibility to provide support to all children and young people under the age of 18 years, however.

We believe that every young person, regardless of age, has a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in them being physically or psychologically damaged. In our organisation, Child Protection concerns will be treated seriously and in confidence. If we have suspicions about a young person's physical, sexual, or emotional well-being, or if a young person discloses something that has happened to them, we will act.

We recognise that child protection should not be treated in isolation. We will follow the guidance given by the Highland Child Protection Committee - www.hcpc.scot We will address recruitment, selection and screening of volunteers and paid employees as appropriate. We will ensure that all staff and volunteers receive training appropriate to their role so that they understand the organisation's Code of Conduct (see Appendix A) and know the procedure that should be followed if they have concerns about a child's welfare (below). A Policy Statement will be displayed in a location that makes it available to all users of the facilities and to all those volunteering with the organisation (see Appendix B).

We will remove any member of staff or volunteer whom we know or suspect to have caused harm to a child, or to have placed a child at risk of harm, and we will notify Disclosure Scotland of our actions and the reasons for them, even if that person has left our organisation.

We recognise that Child Protection/Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Mrs Lynne Mahoney is the nominated Safeguarding Lead for this organisation. She is responsible for ensuring that:

- Safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and are up to date.
- The policy is clearly displayed.

- All volunteers and staff are aware of the policy, have read and understood it.
- All volunteers and staff are provided with a Code of Conduct that includes expectations of conduct and procedures for outings and taking of photos / use of media.
- All Safeguarding / Child Protection concerns are shared and recorded appropriately.
- Disclosure / PVG checks for staff and volunteers are carried out, recorded, and stored effectively.
- Records are kept and referrals are made to Disclosure Scotland in cases where staff or volunteers are suspected or known to have harmed a child and that these individuals are removed from unsupervised contact with young people until such time as a decision is made whether their names should be added to the Disqualified from Working with Children list.
- Any groups applying to use the museum facilities for activities involving children have a Child Protection/Safeguarding policy in place.

SOURCES OF ADVICE AND SUPPORT

If concerns are raised about a child or young person, it is important to seek advice from a professional as soon as possible. Initially, however, unless she is unavailable, all concerns should be raised with the Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Lynne Mahoney. Her telephone numbers are:-

Mobile: 07469 111353

Historylinks Museum: 01862 811275

Email address: curator@historylinks.org.uk

The contact telephone number for Sutherland Local Family Team is 01408 635360. Out of Hours Social Work Emergency Service: 08457 697284. Police – 101 for non-urgent matters, 999 if urgent.

PROCEDURES

RECRUITMENT and INDUCTION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

It is considered good practice to use similar standards when recruiting and inducting volunteers as for paid staff.

- All individuals applying to work with the organisation, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, will be required to complete an application form.
- A formal interview or informal discussion, as appropriate to their roles and responsibilities, will be conducted with all applicants. They may also be invited to meet other members of the organisation to discuss roles and activities to be undertaken.
- Where tasks involve regulated work, i.e., teaching, supervising, or working directly with children or protected adults, a PVG / Disclosure application will be submitted, and any further references or checks required followed up. The suitability of an individual will be decided by the organisation in line with our Equal Opportunities policy.
- On appointment, all individuals will be made aware of Safeguarding policies and procedures and will be provided with training to ensure they fully understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to this.

Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure Information

In accordance with the Disclosure Scotland Code of Practice, we ensure the following practice.

- Checks will only be requested when necessary and relevant to a particular post and the information provided on a disclosure certificate will only be used for recruitment purposes.
- We will ensure that an individual's consent is given before seeking a disclosure and will seek their consent before using disclosure information for any purpose other than recruitment.
- Information will only be shared with those authorised to see it in the course of their duties.
- Where additional information is provided to our designated signatory and not to the applicant, our designated signatory will not disclose this information to the applicant but will inform them of the fact that additional information has been provided should this information affect the recruitment decision.
- Information will be stored in a locked non-portable container for a maximum of 6 months. Only those authorised to see this information in the course of their duties will have access to this container.
- Information will be destroyed by shredding.
- No image or photocopy of the disclosure information will be made. The following details may be retained, however:
 - Date of issue of PVG check
 - Name of subject
 - Disclosure type
 - Position for which disclosure was requested
 - Unique reference number of disclosure
 - Recruitment decision taken.
- If the subject of the disclosure check is found to be on the 'Disqualified from Working with Children List', we will notify the Police that an attempt has been made to acquire work with children.
- We will ensure that all staff with access to information are aware of this policy and have received relevant training and support.
- We will make a copy of this policy available to any applicant for a post, paid or voluntary, that requires a PVG check.

Further advice and information can be found at:

<https://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/disclosureinformation/pvgscheme.htm>

RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING / CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS

Your role is not to decide if abuse has taken place. It is your responsibility to report concerns. Anyone who has concerns must act.

- Upon receipt of any information from a child, or in the event of any suspicion or an allegation made, it is essential that the information is acknowledged and taken seriously. Remain calm, allow the child or young person to speak without interruption, and reassure them that they were right to tell you. Establish the BASIC facts. Avoid asking any more questions than are necessary to clarify whether there is a concern.
- Be clear about what will happen next, who you will tell and when.
- Make sure the child or young person is safe.
- Remember that this is a confidential matter.

Report

Share your concerns with your Safeguarding Lead and agree what action to take. If she is unavailable or if it is inappropriate, contact your Local Family Team (Care and Protection) to discuss your concerns. If there are immediate concerns about a child's safety, contact the Police on 999.

Record

It is essential to make an accurate and detailed written record of what you saw, heard, or knew at the time the event occurred. Give this written account to the Safeguarding Lead. She may be asked to forward a copy of it to the Family Team. It will be treated in confidence and stored securely.

APPENDIX A

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS HISTORYLINKS MUSEUM

GENERAL POINTS:

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Always respect a child or young person's right to personal privacy.
- Never make salacious, suggestive, or demeaning remarks or gestures towards a child or young person.
- Avoid any physical horseplay with a child or young person, or any actions another adult may misinterpret, no matter how innocent and well intentioned your actions may be.
- Always encourage children / young people to feel comfortable and confident to point out to you attitudes or behaviours they do not like, including your own.
- If you suspect that a child or young person is becoming inappropriately attached to you or another volunteer or staff member, you must share your concerns with a senior member of the team.

One to One Situations:

If you are on your own with a child, try to ensure that others are within earshot and preferably within vision. Do not isolate yourself from the rest of the group. If in a different room, leave the door open or ajar.

Images:

Publications and websites are a great way to promote the achievements of children and community groups. It is important to consider any risks that may arise from posting photographs or videos online, however.

- Consent should always be obtained from the parent/guardian and the child whose photograph may be taken or used.
- No personal information will be displayed alongside any published images.
- The organisation reserves the right to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which it is associated.
- Any concerns regarding the use of photographs or film should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead.

Transport Arrangements:

If it is necessary to transport children other than by use of hired transport then consent should be obtained from the child's parent/guardian to whom full details of collection and drop off points will be given. Only drivers with a Disclosure Scotland certificate held by the organisation will be used.

APPENDIX B

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT HISTORYLINKS MUSEUM

We will:

- Hold a register of every child or young person involved with the museum, including relevant medical information and a contact name and number in case of emergency.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Remember that some issues are confidential.
- Provide an example we would wish others to follow.
- Where possible consider activities which involve more than one adult being present or at least within sight and hearing of others.
- Be aware that someone else might misinterpret our actions even if they are well-intentioned.
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy.
- Provide time for children to talk to us.
- Encourage children and adults to respect and care for others.
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.
- Remember to report, not investigate, any suspicions or allegations about abuse.
- Only share concerns and seek support from those identified in the Historylinks Safeguarding Policy.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Mrs Lynne Mahoney, Curator

Mobile: 07469 111353

Historylinks Museum: 01862 811275

Email address: curator@historylinks.org.uk