

Greenfield Valley Trust Child Protection Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Every year many hundreds of children and young people visit the The Greenfield Valley Museum and Heritage Park managed by the Greenfield Valley Trust (GVT). Many of these children and young people visit as part of organised groups or with family and friends. While the primary responsibility for children's welfare rests with the supervising adult, GVT wishes to ensure that all children are safe and protected from harm whilst on its premises.

1.2 GVT will refer any child protection issues on to the appropriate agencies. In particular if GVT encounter a case that constitutes, or may constitute, a criminal case against a child the police will be informed by the Operations Manager.

1.3 It should be noted that children entering buildings and galleries, without direct supervision, should be welcomed if they are behaving appropriately. GVT reserves the right to deny access to children under the age of 8, if unaccompanied by an adult.

1.4 GVT also wishes to protect its staff and volunteers from unfair allegations: the guidelines in this policy will ensure that there is no doubt over obligations and standards.

1.5 This policy will apply to all permanent and temporary staff and volunteers. Where appropriate the selection provisions may be waived for consultant contractors or volunteers in situations where the risk is identified as being low.

1.6 This policy has been drafted with advice from the Child Protection and Placements Team of the Wales Assembly Government, NSPCC and Children in Wales, reference has also been made to the "All-Wales Child Protection Procedures"

2 Legal background

2.1 The Police Act 1997, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 provide an integrated system of child protection. Essentially, the legislation provides that individuals may be disqualified from working with children by inclusion on one or more of a number of official lists. It is a criminal offence for an employer to, knowingly, recruit a disqualified individual into a post working with children (NB this also applies to voluntary work).

2.2 The National Information Service (NIS) equates to the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and both act as a "one-stop shop" for employers to check whether a prospective employee is a disqualified person. Only standard checks are available from the NIS. Enhanced checks are available from the CRB.

3 Policy Statement

3.1 As one of North Wales' premier heritage and educational institutions we believe that :

- The welfare of the child or young person is vitally important
- All children have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be properly investigated and dealt with swiftly and appropriately
- All staff, contractors and volunteers should be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses. Failure to maintain appropriate standards may be dealt with using the disciplinary procedure.

GVT will therefore ensure that

- Staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained in issues of child protection and regularly monitored.
- All staff are aware of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Group leaders, service providers and any other interested parties are given information on GVT procedures regarding the safety of children while at the Museum
- Teachers, group leaders and any other interested parties are provided with information about the GVT's expectations regarding Child Protection responsibilities whilst visiting the museum.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 The Flintshire County Council HR department will be responsible for administrative procedures relating to staff selection and induction and for advising on any disciplinary action.

4.2 The Operations Manager will monitor implementation of the policy and take appropriate action on any breaches within their areas of responsibility.

4.3 All staff have a responsibility to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and to report lapses in these standards by others. Any concerns or reasonable suspicions of abuse should be reported to line management.

4.4 Any allegations of inappropriate behaviour should also be reported to the Operations Manager (or nominated deputy ,if absent) who will liase with police and social services as necessary.

4.5 The role of the Operations Manager will be to:

- Consult initially with Flintshire County Council Children's services department or Local Safeguarding Children's Board, or Police helpline to test out any doubts or uncertainty about the concerns
- Assess information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.

- make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police.

4.6 It is not the role of the Operations Manager to decide whether a child has been abused or not, this is the task of the Flintshire County Council Children's services which has this legal responsibility, or of the police. The NSPCC also has powers to investigate child protection concerns.

5 Selection

5.1 All appointments to GVT staff and volunteer posts will be conditional on a satisfactory check of the applicants criminal record. For most posts a standard disclosure via the NIS will be sufficient although an enhanced disclosure via the CRB will be required for posts with regular and/or unsupervised access to children.

5.2 A risk assessment should be carried out for each post prior to appointment by the appropriate Operations Manager to determine the level of disclosure needed. The assistance of F.C.C. HR may be sought.

5.3 All applicants will be required to declare all past criminal convictions (and any current or pending investigation) prior to interview.

5.4 All appointments will be subject to satisfactory employer/personal references and a satisfactory probationary period.

5.5 At interview applicants will be required to account for any gaps in employment history.

6 Training

6.1 GVT will provide and explain the content of this policy to all new staff and volunteers in the course of the induction process.

6.2 Basic child protection awareness training will be given to all appropriate members of staff.

6.3 Any individual need for more detailed guidance and training for both new and existing staff should be identified by the Operations Manager and will be provided/facilitated by the F.C.C. HR department or relevant support workers.

6.4 Enhanced child protection awareness training will be given to any members of staff with regular contact with children. This will include demonstrators and outside contractors where appropriate and practicable.

7 Guidance

7.1 Guidance on child protection to all staff is given in Appendix II.

Signed _____ for Greenfield Valley Trust **Date** _____

Signed _____ for Flintshire County Council **Date** _____

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Our Promise to Children

Appendix 2 - Standards of Behaviour Expected of GVT Staff

Appendix 3 - Procedure to be followed by Museum Staff in Case of Suspected or Alleged Child Abuse

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Appendix 5 - Leaders/Teachers Responsibilities While Visiting the Museum

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Appendix 1 - Our Promise to Children

Everyone at the Greenfield Valley Heritage Park and Museum are committed to making sure you have the best time possible whilst you are visiting us. We all believe that you have a right to feel safe and comfortable whilst you are with us. Therefore we will do our very best to live up to the promises that we make to you.

We promise to:

1. Make you feel welcome;
2. Always think about your needs as the main consideration;
3. Treat all children and young people fairly;
4. Make sure that all our staff and volunteers know what they are supposed to be doing;
5. Make our activities and your visit as safe as possible;
6. Listen to what you want to tell us;
7. Do our best to make sure you have fun.

Appendix 2 - Standards of Behaviour Expected of GVT Staff & Volunteers

Do

- Approach any child apparently in distress and ask if you can help.
- Seek assistance from colleagues or supervisors where appropriate.
- Be aware of the possibility of danger from others and question situations that you find suspicious.
- Keep a look out for children apparently unaccompanied .
- Communicate the details of any lost children to the appropriate central point.
- Keep any lost children in a public area where they can be clearly seen.
- Act professionally in all matters
- Be aware of appearances and avoid any situations which might appear compromising.
- Report any allegation (even if this is just a suspicion) of abuse or inappropriate conduct immediately to your line manager.

Do not

- Engage in any "rough and tumble" or other horseplay
- Physically restrain a child or young person except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. to prevent injury, damage to property or the collections or to prevent theft) and even then be careful to use only the minimum restraint necessary.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to any visitor.
- Use foul or abusive language to any visitor and especially not to or within earshot of a child
- Physically assault or abuse any visitor and especially not a child or young person
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind. The main principles of touch are:
 - the desire to be touched should always be initiated by the child
 - touch should always be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child
- do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or that a parent/leader can do for them.

It is strongly recommended that staff do not, except in emergency situations:

- go into the toilet with children unless another adult is present or gives permission (this may include a parent, teacher, group leader)
- spend time alone with a child on his/her own. If you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, make sure you can be clearly observed or seen by others. You should, wherever possible, also avoid being alone in a vehicle with otherwise unaccompanied children or young people although this may not always be practicable, for example when accompanying work experience placements.

Appendix 3 - Procedure to be followed by Museum Staff in Case of Suspected or Alleged Child Abuse

A member of staff who suspects that a child has been abused is bound to follow the procedures below. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to either a staff member or a child in this situation, although the general NMGW rules on the protection of sensitive data will apply. Any personal information acquired in the course of working with children or families should only be communicated on "a need to know basis", as detailed below.

A child may be any young person up to the age of 18.

Abuse can be defined as being either physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Neglect can also be a form of abuse.

Possible sources of abuse might include;

- Abuse by other museum staff;
- Abuse by the public
- Parental abuse
- Self-harm; or
- Peer abuse ('bullying'): Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Such abuse should always be taken as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. A significant proportion of sex offences are committed by teenagers and, on occasion, by younger children. Adults should not dismiss some abusive behaviour as 'normal' between young people.

Any member of staff who:

- suspects that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused; or
- has a disclosure made to them; or
- receives a complaint from a member of the public relating to child protection issues in the museum; or
- has a direct allegation made against them; should discuss the matter immediately with the Operations Manager or Principal Museum's Officer, if not available, with another manager on duty .

This manager should report initially to F.C.C. Children's Services or if the situation is immediate, assess the situation and take whatever action is appropriate to stop or prevent the abuse or potential abuse.

It is important that all allegations are recorded in writing and reported to the Operations Manager.

The manager should also take contact details from the complainant.

If the allegation concerns another member of staff, the appropriate manager should consult the HR department in accordance with the F.C.C. disciplinary procedure before considering suspending him or her (or, if a contractor, excluding him or her from the site) until an appropriate investigation, which may be under the Disciplinary Procedure, can be carried

GVT – amended 19/05/10

out.

In exceptional circumstances, a member of staff may feel that he or she is unable to report concerns through the formal hierarchy, in which case there is provision for reporting concerns using the disclosure policy - and in particular the confidential Expolink Hotline (0800 374199)

Concerns may also be reported to the NSPCC Child Protection Number (0808 100 2524 during office hours) or the 24 hour line (0808 800 5000)

If the allegation concerns a visitor or member of the public, the manager should consider whether there are reasonable grounds for excluding him or her from the site until an appropriate investigation can be carried out. In some cases the immediate involvement of the police may be appropriate.

If the child involved is part of an organised group, the manager should consult with the group's designated leader and will make every effort to agree an appropriate course of action.

If the child involved is with a family member or other responsible adult the manager will consult with this person and will make every effort to agree an appropriate course of action.

Responding to a disclosure by a child or young person

If someone tells you that they or another child or young person is being abused;

- Show that you have heard what they are saying, and that you take their allegations seriously.
- Encourage the child to talk, but do not prompt or ask leading questions. Don't interrupt when the child is recalling significant events. Don't make the child repeat their account.
- Explain what actions you must take, in a way which is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child.
- Do not promise to keep what you have been told secret, as you have a responsibility to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust.
- Write down what you have been told, using the exact words if possible.
- Make a note of the date, time, place and people who were present at the discussion.
- Report your concerns to your line manager
- Do not worry that you may be mistaken. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment.

Appendix 4 - Procedures to be Followed by Museum Staff in Cases of Lost/Found Children

If someone reports to you that a child is missing, Inform Visitor Centre staff and/or Operations Manager or deputy (as applicable to your particular site) immediately giving as full details as possible of:

- Name of child
- Age of child
- Address/name of school
- Physical description of child (height, colour of hair, clothing, etc.)
- Where child was last seen
- The time the child was last seen

Once a sufficient check is made, if the child is not found, the Operations Manager or equivalent will inform the Police.

The member of staff who has had the report made to them should reassure the parent/guardian that action is being taken to locate the child and explain that contact will be maintained with them through a staff member on duty.

The staff member will maintain contact with the parent/guardian until the child is found by relaying messages by telephone, radio or in person

If a child who is lost comes to you follow this procedure:

Reassure the child and contact VC staff and Operations Manager or equivalent with the following details;

- Name of child
- Age of child
- Address/name of school
- Physical description of child (height, colour of hair, clothing, etc.)
- Where the child was found

If anyone else is with the child, ask them to remain with you until the parent/leader has been located.

If you are on your own with the child, ensure that you are in a public area where you can be seen and heard.

If the child is not claimed, the Operations Manager will be responsible for contacting the local Police.

Every effort should be made to calm and reassure lost children while waiting for the responsible adult/police.

A written record will be kept by the Operations Manager and relevant personnel of lost or found children and procedures followed.

Best Practice would be to verify with the child or young person that the parent/guardian is indeed who they say they are.

If a child is found in distress, whilst it would be appropriate to give verbal reassurances the member of staff should clarify that the child wishes to be helped.

Appendix 5 - Leaders/Teachers Responsibilities While Visiting the Museum

The Greenfield Valley Trust wishes to ensure that children are protected from harm while in the Museum. In addition to the Museums responsibilities, we ask that leaders/teachers of groups exercise their own responsibilities.

In particular all leaders/teachers shall:

- Ensure they supervise the children/young people at all times
- In the case of an accident, contact a member of the museum staff who will follow the GVT Staff Emergency Procedures
- In the case of a lost child, contact a member of Museum staff who will follow Museum procedures
- Not have in their possession or consume alcoholic beverages or use illegal drugs or smoke on the Museum premises
- Not verbally or physically abuse a child/young person
- Ensure adequate insurance cover for the group and leader
- Inform their group of how to behave while in the Museum and heritage Park
- Observe GVT Fire Precaution Procedures

We wish to remind all leaders/teachers that the primary responsibility for the welfare of the children in their care rests with them at all times.

We will communicate concerns to the leader/teacher-in-charge, (unless this person is the source of concern) and follow this up with the school/organisation.

Concerns about the conduct of the leader/teacher will be reported directly to the school/organisation and possibly the police.

Appendix 6 - Group conduct while in the Museum

The Greenfield Valley Trust wishes all visitors to have an enjoyable stay. We therefore expect all visitors to display courtesy and respect for others and for the Museum property at all times while visiting the Museum.

Group leaders should therefore not allow members of their group to:

- Use threatening, abusive or violent behaviour
- Bully (verbally or physically)
- Make any sexist, racist or other offensive remarks toward any person or other group
- Vandalise Museum property or displays
- Leave litter on the Museum premises
- Feed, touch, scare or hurt any animals present
- Enter areas of the Museum that are cordoned off
- Use bad language
- Smoke
- Consume alcohol or use illegal drugs
- Eat or drink apart from in cafes, restaurant and places set aside for school parties to eat their own refreshments

In the event that any of the above are not followed the Museum reserves the right to refuse admission and/or ask the group to leave.

Appendix 7 - Guidance for staff when dealing with work experience students

Some members of staff will, from time to time, be required to work with young adults from 15-18 years of age.

It is recognised that the schools and colleges expect young adults undertaking work experience placements to develop independence, responsibilities, and the ability to make their own decisions and to apply learning.

It is also recognised that it is not practical, or necessary, for work experience students to be supervised or accompanied by two or more staff at all times. However, it would be consistent with the tenor of this policy, for the welfare of the young person to be paramount. Therefore, to enable both the Museum staff member and the work experience student to have a positive experience the below mentioned points should be borne in mind:

If you are spending time alone with a student, consider:

- Ensuring that another Museum staff member knows your location and the proposed activity
- Ensuring that the door is left ajar or that there is a clear view into the room/exhibit through a window
- If travelling alone in a vehicle with the student, ensuring that another member of staff knows where you are going, what you are intending to do and the estimated duration of your journey

At the start of any placement you should take some time to explain the format of the placement, including place and conditions of work and ensure that he or she is comfortable with the proposed arrangements.

You should also ensure that the student has had adequate time to discuss the proposed plans with their college, school, parent or guardian as appropriate

Appendix 8 - Use of Photography

It will frequently be the case that photographs are taken of children and young people participating in education programmes, work experience and voluntary activities and that these will be used for publicity purposes. The Museum is aware that such pictures may be vulnerable to abuse by unscrupulous persons. Therefore, if a photograph of a single child or a group of less than 5 children is to be used for material which may be viewed by the public, written permission will be sought from the school or other responsible organisation, or from the child's parents directly where appropriate. For groups of 6 or more children, specific permission will not be sought, although blanket permission will be requested from the school as a matter of courtesy.

Sometimes children will be asked to 'pose' for publicity photographs. In this case, parents will be asked for written permission to use the photographs in any appropriate way in perpetuity. Any photographs taken will be labelled and dated.

Visitors and other members of the public who appear to be taking photographs in inappropriate circumstances should be challenged where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion.