

Museum of
**Natural
History**
University of Oxford

Public Engagement Safeguarding Policy 2025/26

Background

The Public Engagement team at the Museum of Natural History facilitate a range of events and educational sessions, including:

- School group visits
- Family friendly activities
- Outreach sessions for pupils at schools
- Digital sessions for pupils unable to visit the museum
- Informal learning sessions with young people e.g. Youth Forum and Summer Schools
- Sessions for community groups including adults with learning disabilities and vulnerable adults

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive MNH's services from harm
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of MNH, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from [nspcc.org.uk/learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning).

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind

- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- all children have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations>]
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families and carers.
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- we will follow the anti-bullying and harassment policy laid out by the University of Oxford to create a safe anti-bullying culture. Any behaviour witnessed that constitutes bullying will be reported to the teacher or supervising adult to resolve using their own policies. More information is available here <https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/university-policy-on-harassment#collapse1321471>
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns

Safeguarding During Education Activities and Events

To comply with the University of Oxford's Safeguarding Code of Practice, each Education Officer will be the Activity lead for the activities/events they organise and responsible for recording and raising any issues that come to light during these activities to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Sarah Lloyd).

Activities should:

- be designed so that appropriate training and supervision is available to those working with children and adults at risk
- minimise occasion on which members of the University will need to work alone in an unsupervised way with children or adults at risk
- be appropriately risk assessed
- have any identified risks minimised
- have local processes for reporting concerns outlined clearly

All staff should record training undertaken within the risk assessment and with HR.

Risk Assessments:

- Completed risk assessments should be available for all staff and volunteers involved in the activity
- All staff and volunteers must read relevant risk assessments prior to engaging with activities involving children or adults at risk
- The University Policy Statement on Risk assessments (Policy s5/08) is available on the University website. It includes the five steps needed in risk assessments:
 - Identify hazards
 - Identify the persons or groups who may be harmed and how
 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
 - Record findings and implement appropriate changes
 - Monitor and review

Pre-event Induction:

- Pre-employment checks should be carried out in accordance with the University's guidance
- Children and adults at risk who are participating in an event or activity must be given clear information on to whom they can report concerns
- The Activity lead/ Event Organiser and Designated Safeguarding Lead must be recorded for each event

Staff Training

In addition to pre-employment checks, every Activity Lead/Event Organiser must:

- Have an Enhanced DBS check
- keep training and information up to date

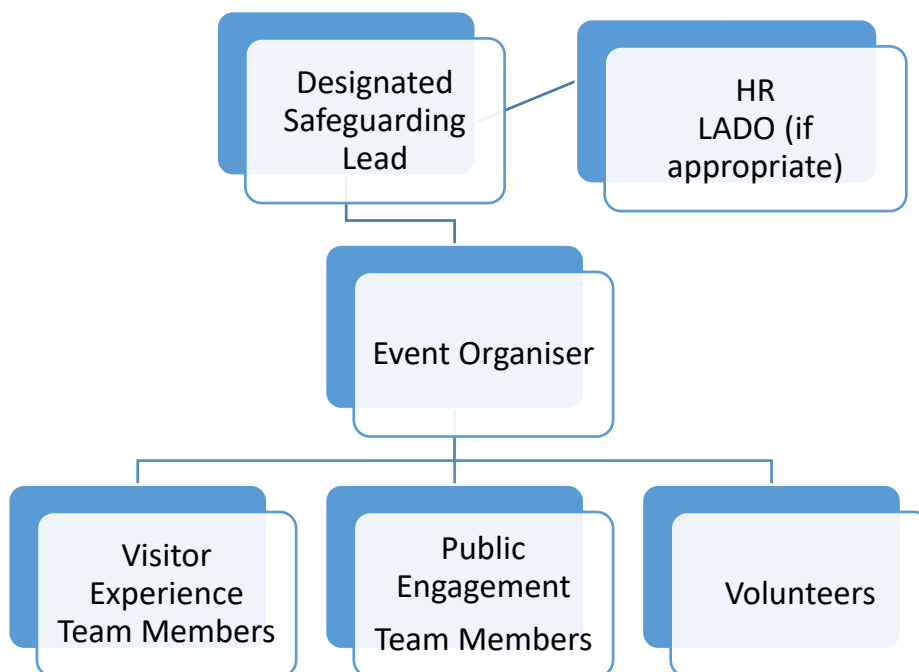
All staff involved in an activity should:

- Complete the e-learning 'Introduction to Safeguarding' training provided by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board and/or Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board
- Complete any additional training identified by the risk assessment process
- Be aware of the complaints procedure, including what information must be recorded and who to raise any issues to.

Training can be recorded and monitored by sending certificates of completed training to the Departmental Administrator.

Safeguarding chain of communication

During standard opening hours, the chain of communication for safeguarding issues will be as follows:



The Relevant Activity lead or Event Organiser will be on the activity Risk Assessment, including contact information.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

1. To manage risk in activities involving children or adults at risk the Designated Safeguarding must ensure that the Activity lead/ Event Organiser has completed the following:
 - Carry out a risk assessment which considers how risks can be mitigated
 - make completed risk assessments available to all staff or volunteers involved in the activity

- Undergo required pre-employment or pre-activity checks
 - Ensure that those working with children and adults at risk are appropriately trained and supervised
 - Record training with HR
2. To ensure processes are in place to manage safeguarding concerns by:
 - Acting as, or designating a colleague as, the key contact within the risk assessment to whom any concerns should be addressed
 - Ensuring that the student, staff or volunteers who are running the activity, and the children or adults at risk who are participating in the activity, are advised on how to report concerns as part of their induction to the activity
 3. To report any allegations made against students, staff or volunteers to the relevant University Safeguarding Officer without delay.
 - Any such allegations may need onward referral to external agencies within one working day. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must not investigate the matter, and must refer as promptly as possible
 4. To undertake appropriate training themselves.

Dealing with Suspicions, Allegations and Complaints

Those working with children and adults at risk may:

- have alleged abuse disclosed to them
- suspect abuse is being carried out
- be accused of abusing those in their charge

It is essential that the safety and wellbeing of the child or adult at risk is always prioritised.

If such disclosures are made, the Event Organiser/Activity Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed.

Where a child or adult at risk discloses alleged abuse, or a member of the University suspects abuse, this should be referred to the designated safeguarding lead who will assess and, where appropriate, contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. University Safeguarding Officers should be informed.

Allegations against a member of staff, non-student volunteers or academic visitors, or suspicions of abuse involving a staff member who is considered to be an adult at risk or is under 18 years of age should be reported to the University's Director of HR. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub must also be contacted within one working day of the allegation being made.

In the event there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child or adult at risk, the emergency services must be contacted via 999.

University Director of HR

Dr Markos Koumaditis

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Recording Concerns and Information Sharing

University Safeguarding Officers will share information, as appropriate with relevant colleagues to ensure that the relevant authorities both within and outside of the University are involved and that any necessary processes can be followed (for example, depending on the nature of the allegations, it may be necessary to make a disclosure to the Disclosure and Barring Service.)

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Extensive Codes of Practice, Policies and Procedures are available at <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/section-5-academic-related-staff-handbook>

Those most relevant include:

- University Policy and Procedure on Harassment and Bullying
- Safeguarding Code of Practise
- Data Protection: University Policy

Guidance on GDPR and Photography

Obtaining consent

- Photographs where individuals are clearly identifiable constitute personal data and as such are protected by GDPR
- Written consent from every individual in the photograph must be obtained to use the photograph. For children under the age of 13, written consent must be obtained from the parents or guardians
- For any event where photos are being taken, you need to have consent forms in addition to perimeter notices
- Consent for photos must be kept separate from other forms, such as signing up to events.
- Information on the purpose of photographs, the storage of photographs and a retention schedule must be clearly outlined

Withdrawal of Consent

- Consent can be withdrawn at any time
- Once consent is withdrawn, you must stop using the image and ensure it is not being used by other people in the University. This means you must know who has access to the images and this information needs to be stored securely.

More information can be found here:

<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/university-guidance-on-gdpr-and-photography>

Where to go to find out more

[Oxford University Safeguarding Code of Practice:](#)

[Guidance for designated safeguarding leads:](#)

[Safeguarding resources, risk assessment \(including an example risk assessment\)](#)

Find out if you need an enhanced DBS check

<https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis. To be reviewed August 2026