

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. Purpose and scope

The National Library of Scotland is the country's largest library. It preserves the memory of the nation with collections that span the centuries, from earliest times to the digital age. The Library is committed to providing easy access to its physical and digital content, and to delivering services that are open and available to all. Children, young people and vulnerable adults visit the Library to use the collections, to see exhibitions, to attend events, school study days or youth projects, or to use the café and shop.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who use the Library's services from harm.
- Set out the Library's principles on the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults and provide guidance for Library staff.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of the National Library of Scotland, including senior managers and the Board, paid staff, volunteers, interns, contractors and agency staff. It applies to both the Library's online environment, its physical locations in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and to Library activities carried out externally e.g. in schools, at book festivals.

2. Policy statement

The National Library of Scotland welcomes all members of the public and wishes to extend its facilities and services to as many people as possible. Children, young people and vulnerable adults are able to use the Library and it is our intention that they can do so safely. The key principles that underline this policy are:

- The best interests of the child, young person or vulnerable adult must always be a primary consideration
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect

- All children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Our staff will understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults who are visiting or undertaking any activity connected with the Library
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to express their views on matters that affect them.

3. Legal framework

3.1 The definition of children and young people varies according to different legal contexts. For the purposes of this policy, children and young people are defined as all those under the age of 18.

3.2 In Scotland, the relevant legislation regarding children and young people is the [Children and Young people \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#). This is supported by the [National guidance for child protection in Scotland, 2014](#).

3.3 The [Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#) provides the legislation around work with children and protected adults and established the [Protecting Vulnerable Groups \(PVG\) Scheme](#) managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland.

3.4 The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act defines protected adults as those over the age of 16 who are in receipt of services laid out in section 94 of the Act <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2007/14/section/94>

4. Organisational responsibilities

4.1 Human Resources

- Check the identity, recent employment history and criminal conviction statement of all employees and workers
- Maintain relevant records and storage of related documentation
- Ensure that new staff are fully aware of this policy by its inclusion in the policy sign-off induction sheet
- Liaise with managers on the appropriate level of disclosure for post holders liable to deal with children, young people or vulnerable adults, including the PVG Scheme
- Arrange the delivery of general training for all staff and specialist training for Safeguarding Officers, managers and Human Resources
- Liaise with the designated lead, managers and the Safeguarding Officer on the organization and delivery of training to staff

- Advise and assist managers, employees and workers in dealing with any suggestion of misconduct or need for expert help
- Act as the counter signatory for Disclosure Scotland.

4.2 Managers

- Ensure that their team members, whether employees, contractors, or volunteers etc., are aware of their requirements in terms of the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Seek advice from the Safeguarding Officer as part of the risk assessment process for any activities relating to children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Take appropriate action in the event of any reports of harm or suspected abuse of children and vulnerable adults
- Consider all posts within their area of responsibility, whether employees, contractors or volunteers and appropriately designate those under the PVG Scheme
- Ensure that those posts which will have contact with children or young people are informed of the requirement for appropriate checks and also ensure that no such person is permitted contact with children until the checking process is satisfactorily completed
- Supervise their staff's contact with children and vulnerable adults as appropriate and ensure that the provisions of this policy are adhered to.

4.3 All staff, contractors and volunteers

- Strictly observe this policy
- Understand and adhere to our procedures for admitting children and young people to the Library including under what grounds they can be allowed access unaccompanied by an adult i.e. under 12s in Edinburgh and under 8s at Kelvin Hall should always be accompanied¹
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children, young people or vulnerable adults from harm in the physical environment and give due consideration when curating or collecting online content
- Take appropriate action if an accident occurs
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults in contact with the Library
- Report any incident or suspicion of abuse to the line manager and Safeguarding Officer
- Ensure that appropriate adult to child ratios (as stated in Appendix 5) are applied when children are accompanied

¹ The Glasgow Life policy states age 8 for unaccompanied children at Kelvin Hall. It is 12 in Edinburgh as that is the age that unaccompanied children can use the reading rooms with the consent of a parent or guardian.

- Ensure that specific photographs or filming of children, young people and vulnerable adults are not taken without the consent of child/young person/adult and their parent or guardian.

4.4 Designated lead for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults (member of the Library Leadership Team)

- Act as the lead person on safeguarding and child protection matters across the Library
- Ensure that policy and procedure regarding safeguarding is regularly reviewed and that staff and Safeguarding officers are appropriately trained
- Act as the named contact in relation to external enquiries regarding the Library's policy and procedure
- Report any notifiable events which would have a significant impact on the Library to The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR)
- Make referrals to Disclosure Scotland in relation to harmful behavior by people in the Library's employment which affects their ability to work with children or protected adults
- Report to the Chair of the Board any new cases as they arise and make annual reports to the Library's Board regarding the number of incidences and cases.

4.5 Safeguarding Officer

- Advise and assist staff in dealing with any safeguarding concerns and where appropriate, refer such concerns to the Human Resources Partner or designated lead member of the Library Leadership Team
- Provide briefings as appropriate for managers in relation to the policy
- Act as the named contact for all communication relating to external Library activities involving children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Take appropriate action in the event of any reports of harm or suspected abuse of children and vulnerable adults
- Regularly review any incident reports and reports of alleged/suspected child abuse/abuse of vulnerable adults and recommend any changes to procedures & practice.

4.6 The Library Board

- Overall responsibility for the governance of this policy
- Appointment of a named safeguarding Board member
- Take note of the annual reports provided by the designated safeguarding lead and offer guidance as required.

5. Recruitment & training

- 5.1 All new staff are subject to pre-employment basic disclosure screening and reference checks. Staff that will come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults as part of their duties are also briefed on the contents of this policy as part of their induction process.
- 5.2 Employees who will be carrying out 'regulated work'² with children and vulnerable adults, as defined by the PVG Scheme will be required to be a member of the Scheme. The PVG Scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland.
- 5.3 **Under no circumstances** will an applicant be appointed to a post designated under the PVG Scheme until all clearances have been completed.
- 5.4 Staff are required, as a condition of employment, to disclose any convictions obtained while in the Library's employment. This policy restates and emphasises this requirement. Staff whose post is designated under the PVG Scheme and who commit an offence which would preclude them for employment with children or young people, may be dismissed.
- 5.5 All managers will undergo training so that they are able to discharge their responsibilities under this policy. Any posts designated under the PVG Scheme will receive the associated training.

6. Guidance and putting the policy in to practice

This policy is available to staff in the corporate policies section of the Intranet. Guidance on procedures for putting this policy in to practice is contained within a series of staff appendices.

² There are two types of regulated work — work with children and work with protected adults. Regulated work is usually jobs including:

- caring responsibilities
- teaching or supervising children and/or protected adults
- providing personal services to children and/or protected adults
- working directly with children and/or protected adults