

Safeguarding Policy

Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust (Registered charity no. 1166562)

1. INTRODUCTION

Who we are

The Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales, registration no. 1166562. The Trust exists to conserve and protect for future generations the historic Grade II* listed bellfoundry buildings at Freehold Street, Loughborough and operates a museum on the same site. The Trust provides education in, and promotes the celebration of, the art, science, and history of bellmaking, bellringing and related skills and heritage crafts.

Purpose of this policy

This policy outlines the safeguarding procedures the Trust has adopted to ensure the safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults who encounter our organisation, following the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. It is mandatory for everyone working for the Trust – whether in a paid, contracted, or voluntary capacity – to adhere to the safeguarding procedures outlined here. Any member of staff found not to be following these procedures may be subject to formal disciplinary action, and volunteers may be subject to alternative appropriate action.

2. AIMS

The Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust believes that no one should experience abuse or harm and is committed to the protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. To meet this commitment, we will:

- Follow best practice concerning the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers
- Adopt a safeguarding procedure for all staff and volunteers
- Provide effective management support for staff and volunteers
- Appoint a Designated Person for Safeguarding who will co-ordinate all child protection and child welfare concerns

Our Designated Person (DP) with responsibility for Safeguarding is:
Dr Chrissie Van Mierlo, Museum Director

Who is this document for?

The document applies to all staff and volunteers responsible for the welfare and supervision of children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst working for the Trust, either on or off site. All staff and volunteers, regardless of job title or job description, are expected to operate within the given procedures.

3. DEFINITIONS

Who is a child?

In England, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- living independently
- in further education
- a member of the armed forces
- in hospital; or
- in custody in the secure estate

they are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (Department for Education, 2018a).

Who is a vulnerable adult?

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person who, for any reason, may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. Safeguarding vulnerable adults involves reducing or preventing the risk of significant harm from neglect or abuse, while also supporting people to maintain control of their own lives.

What is abuse?

Abuse can come in many forms, and the Care Act 2014 identifies 10 main types of abuse or neglect:

- *Physical abuse*
Physical harm to an individual's body from, for example, hitting, restrictive practices and medication
- *Domestic abuse*
Threats, violence, and abuse between individuals who are family members or in an intimate relationship
- *Sexual abuse*
Sexual relationships or activities that an individual does not or cannot consent to.
- *Emotional/psychological abuse*
Threats, humiliation, controlling behaviour, blaming, verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation

- *Financial/material abuse*
Use of an individual's money or possessions without permission, including theft, fraud, scamming, coercion, self-serving involvement in an individual's financial affairs
- *Modern slavery*
Individuals being forced into a life of slavery, human trafficking, domestic servitude or forced labour
- *Discriminatory abuse*
Individuals being treated differently due to personal traits such as age, gender, race, sexual orientation etc.
- *Institutional/organisational abuse*
When an organisation's needs are put above the needs of the individual
- *Self-neglect*
An individual being unable to see to their own basic needs, such as nutrition or hygiene
- *Neglect by others*
Those responsible for an individual not seeing to their basic needs such as nutrition or hygiene either deliberately or inadvertently

An individual may suffer more than one category of abuse.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Who is responsible for safeguarding?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; not responding to a safeguarding concern is not an option. The Trust and everyone who works within it endeavours to safeguard vulnerable people by:

- Adopting safeguarding procedures for all that minimise any opportunity for abuse and establish appropriate treatment of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for everyone by applying Health and Safety measures in accordance with legislation and regulatory guidance.
- Sharing information about the principles of safeguarding and good practice.
- Creating and maintaining an environment that promotes and respects dignity at work.
- Taking allegations seriously and responding fairly, swiftly, and appropriately.
- Ensuring any accompanying individuals (parents, guardians, teachers, etc.) are aware of their own responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents/carers as appropriate.
- Ensuring that safeguarding risks are considered in all activity risk assessments.
- Reviewing our policy and practice at regular intervals.

5. CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

Good practice measures are designed to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults. They are standards that aim to ensure that all who encounter the work of the Trust enjoy a safe environment.

Ensuring a safe environment

The Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust will ensure that Health and Safety legislation is adhered to provide a safe environment for visitors to site and anyone who participates in our programme of activities.

Interpersonal dealings

Everyone participating in the work of the Trust will be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should use appropriate language and tone of voice and consider the effect of body language. Staff should avoid any inappropriate physical contact with children and young people.

Projects

All projects involving children will be planned in accordance with the procedures in place and risk will be monitored.

6. CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

6.1 Recruitment, Selection and Training

As a Trust, we ensure that everyone working with children as part of our organisation is safe to do so. The Disclosure Service is administered in compliance with Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice. This states that Enhanced Disclosures are required for all employees and volunteers where **the post has substantial unsupervised access to children and/or vulnerable groups**. Character references are requested for all new employees and volunteers.

Please note that the Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust does not routinely request DBS checks for our tour guides, as this role does not entail unsupervised or regular contact with children or vulnerable adults. Visiting school groups must ensure that their party includes the mandatory ratio of supporting adults as laid out below, and children must be supervised by those adults at all times.

6.2 School visits

The Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust can provide a standard Risk Assessment to visiting schools covering the areas and activities typically undertaken during a school visit. Visiting schools are encouraged to carry out their own Risk Assessments in accordance with their internal procedures.

To ensure that children are appropriately supervised by adults, our recommended ratios of child to accompanying adult for organised group visits are as follows:

Age 2-3 years 1:4 | Age 3-8 years 1:8 | Age 8-11 years 1:10 | Age 11 and over 1:15
School visit organisers should note that guardianship and responsibility for the children remains with the school.

6.3 Dealing with a lone child

The following guidance is designed to help you should you encounter a lone child in the museum or elsewhere on site, or as part of offsite heritage engagement activities. Advice is as follows:

- Avoid being alone with the child and do not leave the child alone with anyone else
- Establish whether the child has permission from a parent or carer to visit the museum alone; ask whether the child is waiting to be collected
- Consider: Does the child exhibit signs of nervousness? Do they understand your questions? Is the child physically capable? Is the child clear about where he or she lives? How far and how safe is the journey?
- If there is any doubt, ask the child for details so that you can contact a parent or carer; alternatively try and contact a family friend or relative
- Do not release the child into the care of anyone other than police or social services without the direct permission of the parent or carer

6.4 When abuse is suspected or reported

If a situation gives you cause for concern you should:

- Inform the Designated Person of your concerns; if it is felt that a vulnerable person is in imminent danger of significant harm the Designated Person may decide to contact Social Services and/or the Police straight away.
- Make a brief written note of any incident, conversation, dates, times, names, and other relevant information.
- Record the details on an incident form (this should be passed immediately to the Designated Person, who will follow up the matter with the school/contact the relevant authorities).
- Where emergency medical attention is necessary then this should, of course, be sought immediately and the Designated Person informed.

If a child or vulnerable adult volunteers information, do not:

- Ask leading questions.
- Promise to keep what is said a secret or confidential.

You should:

- Listen to what they say and communicate with a child in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Take brief notes if possible, recording dates, times, names, and other relevant information.

- Inform the Designated Person of the incident.

6.5 Allegations against staff and volunteers

If you are concerned about a colleague's inappropriate behaviour towards children or young people, the matter must be referred to your line manager, volunteer supervisor, or to the Designated Person. Any complaint involving allegations relating to child protection issues or vulnerable adults will be discussed with Social Services before any investigation takes place. Procedures are in place to protect the confidentiality and integrity of all parties.

If you are subject to an allegation, you must inform your manager and the Designated Person immediately. If an allegation is made about you to your manager or another member of staff, you will be informed of this as soon as possible but with due regard to protecting evidence and disclosure of information. An investigation into the allegation will be launched.

6.6 Sharing information

Keeping children safe from harm requires information to be shared about any possible risks to the child. Where there are concerns that a child is or may be at risk of significant harm, the needs of that child must come first, and the overriding objective must be to safeguard the child. The safety of the child takes priority over issues of confidentiality, but the terms of the Data Protection Act still apply.

The Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information. DBS disclosure information is passed only to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties, and all information disclosed as part of a DBS check will be treated as confidential. It is an offence for information in a Disclosure to be passed to anyone who does not need it in the course of his/her duties. The Trust maintains a record of those to whom disclosures or disclosure information has been revealed. The photocopying of any Disclosure is strictly forbidden by the DBS.

7. Record Keeping

It is important to keep detailed records of any incidents or information about child protection issues. This must be done carefully and keeping in mind confidentiality and data protection issues. The information recorded should use clear and straightforward language and be factually accurate.

8. CONTACTS

Designated person for safe guarding

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