

Huguenot Museum: Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Policy

The Huguenot Museum welcomes visitors of all ages and abilities.

We define children as persons under 18 years of age. Those aged under 14 years are regarded as needing a higher degree of protection than those aged 14-17. We define a vulnerable adult as someone aged 18 or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Most children and vulnerable adults visit in school groups or with a responsible adult such as a relative or youth group leader. (We refer to this adult in this document as the carer).

We consider that:

- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount
- All children and vulnerable adults have a right to protection from harm irrespective of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity.
- The primary responsibility for the care of children and vulnerable adults in the museum rests with the carer.

We:

- Ensure that the Huguenot Museum and our online spaces are safe and secure and promote enjoyable and positive experiences.
- Take seriously all suspicions and allegations of harm and respond to them speedily and appropriately.
- Make all our staff (both paid and voluntary) and trustees aware of their responsibilities to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. This includes a responsibility to raise any concerns or suspicions that may arise.
- Have in place a safe recruitment process to ensure that our people do not pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults.
- Never take the place of the child or adult's carer. Children aged under 14 are not allowed on the premises without a carer in attendance unless in a supervised session.
- Seek to ensure that our activities afford as much protection as is reasonably practical to enable the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults.

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We will ensure that this protection is effective by the following measures:

- Volunteers and staff who are recruited specifically to work with children are selected with care and caution and their references are checked. DBS checking is used in the case of those working in the field of education, who are mainly working with children.
- We work in open spaces, avoiding work in unobserved secluded locations or situations.
- We obtain the carer's, parent's, or guardian's consent in writing prior to taking photographs of children in the museum.
- We treat children and vulnerable adults with dignity and respect.
- We do not conduct education of any sort on a one-to-one basis.
- All our dress-up costumes are designed that visitors can put them on without assistance. All costumes would be worn over every day clothes.
- Where first aid treatment is administered it is wherever possible carried out with more than one adult present except in the rare situation of serious injury where any delay in providing urgent first-aid pending the arrival of medical aid would be harmful to the child or adult.
- We have designated our Learning Officer as responsible for child protection issues, reporting to the Director who in turn accepts responsibility for ensuring that child protection issues are taken seriously and any incidents or suspected incidents are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action taken.
- We involve teachers, parents and carers whenever possible in the museum's work with children and vulnerable adults.
- We require our staff and volunteers to be good role models and they may not use offensive language, make sexually suggestive comments, smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of child visitors.
- We require staff to report any incident relating to child protection to an adult who is in a position to act on it for the protection of the child. (e.g. a teacher) and to follow the museum's reporting procedure.

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- We avoid the following unacceptable practices both for the protection of children and vulnerable adults and the safeguarding of our own staff and volunteers:
 - Spending excessive time with individual young people or vulnerable adults
 - Taking children or vulnerable adults home (theirs or the adult's) or in a private vehicle.
 - Engaging in rough play, horseplay, or games of physical contact.
 - Being closeted in a toilet or any private room with an individual child or vulnerable adult.
 - Doing things of a personal nature that the child or adult can do for his or her self or with the assistance of a carer.
 - Physical restraint, other than to prevent danger to the child/adult or others, damage to property, or to prevent a criminal offence or serious anti-social behaviour.

Signed

Approved by

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Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy: Appendix 1 – Procedure for Unaccompanied and Lost Child or Vulnerable Adult

The Huguenot Museum cannot accept responsibility for unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults

- Try to obtain the child's name, address and telephone number and age.
- Call the parent/carer to come and collect the child
- Ensure that the child remains with a member of staff in clearly visible public place. If possible 2 members of staff.
- If the child does not know their address get their name and school. If in term time contact the school.
- If the parent/carer fails to collect ask the child how they came to the museum - e.g. if they just live next door it is ok to send them home, depending on age/maturity. However if they have a difficult journey then you should call social services. If the parent cannot collect then you should call social services (01634 33 44 66 or 0845 76 26 777). If unable to contact the social services contact Kent Police (101)
- Keep a written record of everything you did/who you spoke to/ times/addresses/names etc. You should get the parent/social services/police to verify themselves when they collect.
- The child/vulnerable adult is your responsibility until you hand them over to another responsible adult.

If someone reports that a child is missing inform the member of Museum staff responsible for child protection 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 member of staff should inform the Police.

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Reassure the parent/guardian that action is being taken to locate the child.

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 the member of Museum staff responsible for child protection 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 member of Museum staff responsible for child protection will be responsible for contacting social services or 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 member of Museum staff responsible for child protection 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.

Important Numbers:

Medway/Kent Social Services: 01634 33 44 66 or 0845 76 26 777 out of hours

Kent Police: 101