



Gladstone's Library Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

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1. Purpose and Scope

This policy is intended as guidance for staff and Trustees at Gladstone's Library ('the Library') in their interactions with children and vulnerable adults. These include those resident at the Library as well as Readers, Researchers, and any visiting individual or group. The purpose of this policy is to protect children and vulnerable adults during their visit to the Library, and to give the Library staff a clear system of reporting and disclosure.

This policy is reviewed by the Warden and Trustees once per year, or as part of the reporting process of an incident

2. Statement

The Library's mission is to welcome all visitors. As part of this, our staff and Trustees are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who may visit, stay, or use the Library. All children and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe within the Library building, as well as during its events and activities.

The Library provides:

- free access to the public across the ground floor restaurant (Food for Thought), conference rooms and common room (the Gladstone Room), as well as the gardens, from 8am-5pm each day;
- open access to residents across the Reading Rooms and residential bedrooms;
- open access to the Reading Rooms for Readers and Researchers over 16, as well as invited visitors;
- Restricted access to the Reading Rooms is granted to those under 16 via the Library's 'Young Researcher' passes.

The Library is committed to caring for all visitors, particularly children and vulnerable adults. The Library recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable

adults, and is committed to the necessary training, policies and procedures to ensure that the Library actively safeguards visiting children and vulnerable adults by recognising that:

- the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount;
- that all children and vulnerable adults are entitled to equal protection from all types of harm, abuse, and exploitation regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity;
- staff and Trustees must be provided with training and guidance on this policy, as well as the procedures to be followed if they suspect that a child, young adult or vulnerable adult is at risk of, or is experiencing, harm.

3. Definitions

A 'child' or 'young' person is anyone under 18. Anyone under the age of 18 should be considered a child, as defined by both the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child .

A 'vulnerable adult' or 'adult at risk of harm' is anyone over 18 whose ability to protect themselves from abuse, harm, or exploitation may be limited due to living with age, disability, mental illness, or other types of mental and physical impairment. Adults at risk of harm may be directly in the care of social care services or may be in need of special care, support, or protection.

4. Responsibility

This policy applies to all staff, Trustees, volunteers and contractors of the Library. The Library's Senior Team are responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied across their areas and teams.

Most of the Library activities and areas mean that Library staff are unlikely to undertake unaccompanied care of children or vulnerable adults. All staff are aware of this policy and have received basic guidance as to their responsibilities.

However, certain areas or activities increase the likelihood of unaccompanied care or supervision of children or vulnerable adults, affecting staff in the following teams who may receive extra training as appropriate:

- Engagement and Learning Officers
- Members of the Reading Room team, including Director of Collections and Research
- Members of Senior Team,
- The Warden

The Library Trustees have ultimate responsibility for the Library's commitment to safety and protection from harm. As such all Trustees will undertake appropriate safeguarding training, as outlined in the Charity Commission's guidance on [Safeguarding for Charities and Trustees](#). The Lead Trustee for Safeguarding is Llyr Williams who is the point of contact on the Trustee Board.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is the Library's Warden, Andrea Russell. In the event that the Warden is offsite, the DSO is Louisa Yates, Director of Collections and Research or Sam Mantache, Operations Manager. The Warden has the responsibility of ensuring the regular review and updating of this policy.

The chain of communication for reporting an incident is:

Line Manager/SMT – DSO – Lead Trustee for Safeguarding – Chair of Trustees – Board of Trustees

5. Recruitment of Staff

The Library's Warden is responsible for the recruitment and employment of all Gladstone's Library staff and ensures that the Library's recruitment process includes:

- Access to an Enhanced DBS certificate for staff who are eligible and who work in teams whose areas or activities may bring about unsupervised care of children or vulnerable adults;
- Verifying references of previous employment for all recruited staff.
- Ensuring the employee is made aware of this policy and understands their own responsibilities regarding safeguarding.

6. Managing Risk in Areas and Activities

All areas and activities at the Library are subject to a risk assessment. Children and vulnerable adults are a mandatory element to be included in all relevant risk assessments.

Safe working practices are adopted as standard across the Library. Examples include:

- Visiting school groups supervised at all times by the school's group lead as well as Library staff;
- On becoming a Reader those aged 16-18 and their parents and/or guardians are made aware that we are not offering a supervision service but a suitably qualified, checked and trained member of staff will be on duty in the Reading Rooms from 9am-5pm each day.

If staff are visiting another organisation, e.g. a school or youth organisation, the following provisions apply:

- Supervision of children lies with the organisation.
- At least one member of staff from the organisation that is being visited should be present at all times.

Any concerns a Library member of staff has about a child during an off-site visit must be reported to the DSO of the organisation that is being visited. The Library's DSO should be made aware that a concern has been reported as soon as possible.

7. Photography and Filming

The Library is a semi-public site and all visitors should be aware that the public and visitors are all able to take photos of the Library building and grounds, which may include anyone visiting the Library.

Any Library activities are eligible to be photographed, audio recorded or video recorded by the Library and, if this is the case, this will be made clear to all participants in advance of any activity or event. Signs will be posted at the event, which will include the procedure to be followed for those who do not wish to be photographed or videoed. Any photographs identified by Library staff to contain children under eighteen or those whose consent is in doubt will not be publicly shared.

No event or activity where the majority of attendees are children or vulnerable adults (unless the activity or event is covered by the visiting organisation's own parent of guardian permissions) will be photographed or video recorded without consent forms being completed and signed:

- The taking and use of an image for a child under thirteen must have the permission of either the child's parent or guardian.
- The taking and use of an image of a child over thirteen but under eighteen must have the permission of the parent or guardian and the child.

As with all data consent obtained by the Library, consent must be clear, explicit and retractable. All purposes for which the image is to be used must be stated on any consent form, and the image used for no other purpose. Anyone who wishes to retract their consent regarding images of themselves should contact the Library's data contact: louisa.yates@gladlib.org

8. Procedures for Managing Concerns and Disclosures

Any concern or incident concerning or about a child or vulnerable adult must be reported to a staff member or directly to the Warden who will follow the chain of communication for reporting laid out in Section 4. If the Warden is not available then the procedure outlined in section 4 above should be followed.

If a staff member has a concern then please follow the procedure set out in Section 4.

Any concern or disclosure from a child or vulnerable adult follows the same chain of communication but the initial approach is different and will need to be adjusted depending on the circumstances. Full guidance is contained in Appendix A.

Call the police (999) directly in an emergency or if a crime has been committed.

Flintshire Social Services - Children

- During office hours contact Social Services on: 01352 701000
- Outside of office hours, please telephone the Duty Social Worker on: 0345 053 3116

Flintshire Social Services - Adults

- During office hours contact Social Services on: 03000 858858

- Outside of office hours contact 0345 053 3116

Contacts taken from: <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Diversity-and-Equality/Safeguarding.aspx>

9. Safeguarding Allegations

Library staff are expected to behave in a professional and appropriate manner at all times, as laid out in the Library staff handbook.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the Library will conduct an investigation.

If an allegation is made against another Library residential guest or visitor, then the police will be contacted.

10. Safeguarding Reporting Log

In line with the Library's HR and data protection policies, a record of all reports of safeguarding is kept by the Warden, and reviewed at least once per year by the Warden and Lead Trustee for Safeguarding.

APPENDIX A: Procedure for Managing a Concern or Disclosure from a child or vulnerable adult

Any incident or disclosure concerning a child, or vulnerable adult must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The purpose of accurately recording such occurrences aids decision making, reduces the possibility of further harm to the victim and provides evidence to other agencies if appropriate. The recommended actions for handling a concern or a disclosure from a child or vulnerable adult are similar. However, the approach needs to be adjusted depending on circumstances. At all times staff should ensure that they are not alone with a child or vulnerable adult and should not go into a private room unless accompanied by a parent or another adult.

Actions to be taken:

- Find a suitable location to discuss e.g. an office. Ensure that you are not behind a closed door, or you are with another staff member.
- Listen carefully, take seriously what is being said, let the child or vulnerable adult describe what happened at their own pace, only asking questions for clarification.
- Remain calm and caring and avoid interpreting information.
- Reassure but do not make promises of confidentiality or secrecy. Tell the child or vulnerable adult there will be a need to share this information but make it clear that only people who need to know and who can help will be told.
- Reassure them that they did the right thing in telling you.
- Keep appropriate confidentiality (i.e. do not share or discuss with colleagues).
- Using the child's or vulnerable adult's own words, make a note of what was said using the safeguarding report form as soon as possible after the disclosing conversation and sign and date this record.
- As soon as possible, inform the DSO
- Actions to avoid:
 - o Do not dismiss the concerns, or allow any shock or distaste to show.
 - o Do not probe, over pressure or attempt to conduct an inquiry into what has happened.
 - o Avoid cross-questioning, excessive or leading questions.
 - o Do not speculate, make assumptions or make negative comments about the allegation or promise confidentiality.
 - o Do not suggest any actions that may be undertaken in response to the disclosure.

APPENDIX B: Procedure for Lost Children and Vulnerable Adults

A lost child or vulnerable adult is a priority situation until they have been reunited with their parent, guardian, or carer. It is important to keep calm and reduce stress or worry to either the lost person, or the missing person's parents, guardian or carer.

Call the emergency services directly in an emergency or if you suspect a crime has been committed. If there are injuries that the person cannot explain, for example, or if they are telling you they are not safe to go home you should call the police. If they are too agitated to respond to you, wait ten minutes, and if they are still unable to respond, call the police and the ambulance service.

If a child or vulnerable adult is reported as missing or lost:

- Explain to the reporting person that the Library has a procedure. Explain what it is and what steps staff will now take.
- Establish the missing person's full name as well as the name they are most likely to respond to (e.g. John Smith and 'Jonny').
- Get a description of the missing person, and where they were last seen. Establish that the missing person is able to respond to their name, or to someone who is a stranger to them (see additional info, below)**
- If possible, send 8 individuals, working in pairs, to search (if possible, aim for one of every pair to be safeguarding trained):
 - o The grounds. Work from the farthest point (e.g. the front gates, the boundary edge of the wooded section of the rear garden) back to Reception.
 - o The conference rooms, including all exits and entrances you pass on the way.
 - o The residential block, including all exits and entrances.
 - o The Reading Rooms and Annex.
- While the search is being conducted, and if the child or vulnerable adult is part of a visiting group with their own reporting procedures, ensure that parents, guardians or carers are being notified by the group leader if that is required.
- Once found, establish as quickly as possible that there is no first aid element, e.g. in shock or any injury.
- If the search is unsuccessful, call 999.

- ****If the missing person is unable or unlikely to respond to verbal calls, or to strangers:**
 - o They may need to communicate in a non-standard way – consider emailing or texting them.
 - o The searching pairs may need to be taught the best way to communicate – this may be basic sign language, given a paper and pen, etc.
 - o pairs should also be listening out for unusual sounds, such as repetitive banging or other methods that may be used to attract attention.

If a child or vulnerable adult is suspected to be lost, or reports themselves lost:

- Remember that best practice is to never be alone with a child or vulnerable adult. Library staff should work in pairs. Ideally at least one of the two should be safeguarding trained.
- If working in a pair or more is not possible, then staff must remain in a public place with the child or vulnerable adult. The Gladstone Room or Food for Thought are the only truly public places (e.g. with no doors, or a single door – the Reading Rooms has too many doors, as do the upstairs offices).
- If staff are working in pairs, and the child or vulnerable adult requires more privacy, then use the Operations Office – but do not close the door.
- Remember that it's important to reduce stress or worry. A glass of water and 'we're just going to have a drink and a calm two minutes' is a good way of getting off to a calm start.
- Ask them their full name and what they like to be called.
- Ask them 'who is your grown-up?' (best for very young children) or 'who is your responsible adult?' (for older). If they know, ask if they have the contact details. In the case of vulnerable adults, the best thing to ask is 'who is your emergency contact?' – they may turn out to have that saved in a mobile phone, for example.
- If they don't know, try to find other identifiable markers: where do you go to school, where do you live, etc.
- This should solve most cases of lost people.
- In most cases, particularly with small children, it will be immediately apparent that they are glad to see one another and they want to go together. If you have any doubts or do not feel confident, you have the option of calling 999.
- You also have the option of asking the adult if they have photos of the person they're collecting on their phone.
- If the lost person has not been reunited and there has been no contact established with a parent, guardian or carer, and a significant period of time has passed, then you call 999.