



SAFEGUARDING POLICY



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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Safeguarding of under 18s, vulnerable adults, persons with disabilities and elderly people.

1. Overarching Principles

- 1.1. The Bluebell Railway values and encourages the involvement of people of all ages and circumstances. It is committed to promoting their well-being and enjoyment, and protecting their health, safety and welfare.
- 1.2. We can all help to provide a welcoming, safe and enjoyable experience. This document is relevant to all staff, whether employees, volunteers or others working with the Bluebell Railway and supplies basic reference to good practice when in the company of under 18s (these guidelines also should be taken into account when dealing with older vulnerable adults, such as people of any age with learning or physical difficulties).

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to provide for the safety of children and vulnerable people who are visiting or volunteering at the Bluebell Railway.
- 2.2. Particular provisions for members of the 9F Club, Education and Museum teams and Departmental mentor schemes are set out at appendices A, B and C respectively. Further provisions regarding staying overnight are set out in appendix D. The overarching principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed provisions within these appendices.
- 2.3. Procedures to deal with any suspicions, concerns and allegations are set out in appendix E

3. Legal Framework

- 3.1. This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance. Particularly;
 - Children Act 1989 and 2004
 - United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
 - Data protection Act 1998
 - Sexual Offenders Act 2003
 - Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

4. Background

- 4.1. For legal purposes, someone is a child until their 18th birthday; children are the legal responsibility of their parents or carers even if they are not present. A vulnerable person is someone who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness, and is or may be unable to take care or protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

4.2. Children under 12 must be accompanied to the railway by an adult. Children and vulnerable people visit in family groups, with carers or in school or similar groups with responsible adults. Primary responsibility for their care rests with their parent or other responsible adult. The Bluebell Railway seeks to make sure that its activities and policies also afford as much protection as is reasonably practicable. This is achieved by;

- Treating children and vulnerable people with dignity and respect.
- Making sure employees and volunteers are selected, trained, supervised, supported and protected.
- Requiring our employees and volunteers to be good role models and not use offensive language. Failure to meet minimum standards is dealt with by disciplinary procedures.
- Complying with legal requirements for the employment of young people under 18 years old.
- Providing clear procedures for parents, guardians, supervising adults and children to voice their concerns if they are unsure or unhappy about anything.

5. General Operating Procedures

Do

- Remember that you are a role model for young people and always provide an example you would wish them to follow.
- Bear in mind that some actions no matter how well intentioned may easily be misinterpreted.
- Allow for the fact that people with learning difficulties or special educational needs may have behaviours which, whilst quite harmless, do not conform with social norms.
- Respect a person's right to privacy unless you feel they are at risk of harm.
- Avoid being left alone with young/vulnerable people.
- Where one to one contact is unavoidable, keep it short, be accessible and make sure someone is informed where you are going, what you are doing and why.
- Use your common sense and take great care if you are left alone with young/vulnerable people – e.g. lone car journeys, even short ones, should be avoided. Unless it is an emergency get parental or carer approval before taking someone home. If a person must be transported in a vehicle alone with the driver they should be asked to occupy a rear seat rather than sit alongside the driver.
- Carry out any first aid procedures with more than one adult present wherever possible except in rare cases of serious injury requiring immediate treatment.

Do not

- Rely on your good name to protect you.
- Show favouritism or get drawn into inappropriate, attention-seeking behaviour (e.g. tantrums or crushes).
- Allow or engage in suggestive remarks, gestures or touching which could be misinterpreted.
- Do anything to undermine the Railway's reputation for providing people with a safe environment.
- Jump to conclusions without checking the facts.
- Physically touch any unsupervised child.

6. Other Matters Relevant Generally to Activities at the Railway

- Plan activities carefully and be alert to potential harm.
- Make sure young/vulnerable people are accompanied by their own adult carers and that they take direct supervisory responsibility.
- Arrange for an appropriate number of adults to be present – try to have at least two at all times.
- Inform young/vulnerable people about any safety issues associated with their visit and how to cope.
- Be alert to potential harm or inappropriate behaviour by others to the people in your care.
- Provide access for young/vulnerable people to talk to another adult about any concerns they may have.
- Plan activities carefully so that there is maximum protection at all times.
- Attend to health and safety requirements, seeking advice where necessary and referring to the Bluebell Railway's Health & Safety Policy document as appropriate.
- Make sure that young/vulnerable people are accompanied by their own adult carers (e.g. parents, teachers, youth leaders, carers etc.) and that these adults are directly responsible for those in their care.
- Make sure you know which young/vulnerable people are in your charge, the extent of your responsibility, where they are and what they are doing.
- Have male and female helpers if practical, especially if the group is of mixed gender.
- Use your common sense and take great care if you find yourself left alone with young people – for example, don't escort a young child to the toilet; offer to stay with the group whilst a carer does so. Alternatively, check the toilet for safety, then remain outside whilst the child uses it.

- All child entertainers used at railway activities shall be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Where third party entertainers are sub contracted proof of checks shall be obtained.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks shall be carried out by the Personnel & Admin Manager who will retain detailed records.
- DBS checks will be regularly re-performed and employees and volunteers are encouraged to join the DBS update service so periodic checks may be performed by the Safeguarding Officer or the Personnel & Admin Manager.
- Where employees and volunteers have joined the DBS update service periodic rechecks online shall be carried out annually. Where they have not joined the update service further DBS checks shall be carried out bi-annually.
- Bluebell Railway shall appoint a suitably qualified Welfare Officer to carry out the roles identified in this policy and may also appoint a suitable number of deputies to assist in the role. The names and contact details of the Welfare Officer and any deputies shall be published by Bluebell railway.

7. Train Services (open to the general public)

- Train crews, station staff and other volunteers will seek the permission of parents, guardians or carers before assisting children or vulnerable adults on and off trains or around stations. Except in an emergency, a good approach will usually be to enquire from the person being provided with assistance how that help can best be given.
- There is no requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to be carried out for employees or volunteers that are not directly involved in a regulated activity.
- Young people remain the responsibility of their parents, carer or teachers when attending the railway as visitors.

8. Photography

Whilst there is no outright restriction on the photography of children or other members of the public, in the case of pictures where individuals form a major part of the subject it is a courtesy that such images are not published for wider consumption without first seeking the agreement of the person(s) depicted or, in the case of children or vulnerable adults, their parent, guardian or carer.

9. Training

- Training will be provided by the company to make sure all Bluebell Railway employees, volunteers and contractors recognise the issues involved in Safeguarding including where the appropriate guidance may be located.
- Where Bluebell Railway employees, volunteers or contractors work in the areas of regulated activities the specific training shall be given appropriate to the activities being undertaken.

- Responsibility for the delivery of training shall vest with the Safeguarding Officer.

APPENDIX A - 9F CLUB ACTIVITIES

This appendix applies to the 9F club officers, leaders and members. The 9F Club recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding its members.

Procedures

- The 9F Club is a Club associated with the Bluebell Railway under Rule 15(a) of the Rules of the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society, East Sussex and gives an opportunity for children and young people aged 9 to 16 to volunteer at the railway in a safe and supervised manner and to provide education and training to facilitate their transition to become an adult volunteer in due course if they so desire.
- It is a requirement of this safeguarding policy that the Officers and Officials of the 9F Club see that that the Club has its own suitable policies and procedures that are approved by the Board of the Bluebell Railway PLC.
- All volunteers who act as supervisors for 9F Club activities must submit to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and the 9F Club shall maintain records of all checks carried out.
- The 9F Club is responsible for recruiting its own Welfare Officer to make sure that both the Railway's and the 9F Club's safeguarding policy is followed.

APPENDIX B – EDUCATION AND MUSEUM GUIDES

This appendix applies to the Education and Museum team members, whether they are employees or volunteers. These teams recognise their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils. The Education Manager is responsible for maintenance of safeguarding procedures and policies.

Procedures

- Where educational visits are made to the railway by local schools, colleges and similar groups the responsibility for the welfare of young person's remains with the appropriate teachers, carers and leaders. It remains entirely the responsibility of the school, college or similar group to make sure they comply with best practice.
- There is no requirement for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to be carried out for Bluebell employees or volunteers in the circumstances above.
- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check shall be carried out for Bluebell employees or volunteers were it is the requirement of a successful lottery application or similar grant providing to carry out a check is lawful.
- Where educational visits are made to the railway by local schools, colleges and similar groups where the responsibility for the welfare of young persons is handed over to the Railway's volunteers or employees and teachers are not present, then a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check shall be carried out for all such staff.
- Where other regulated activities are undertaken where the responsibility for the welfare of young persons is succeeded to the railways volunteers or employees and teachers or parents are not present then a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check shall be carried out for all staff involved in any such activities. For such activities the NSPCC guidance on the ratios of children to supervisors shall be followed which suggests appropriate ratios of 1 adult to 4 children to age 5 ,1:6 for ages 6 to 8 , 1;8 for ages 9 to 12 and 1;10 for 13 and over.
- Make sure that all education and museum guides are selected and recruited by going through an appropriate recruitment process.

Make sure that all employees and volunteers understand that there is a procedure to be followed in dealing with child protection allegations against employees and volunteers. All staff must be aware of this process.

- The education and schools department shall provide continued appropriate training to its employees and volunteers.

APPENDIX C – DEPARTMENTAL MENTORING SCHEMES

This appendix applies to the operational departments of the Railway that have set up a mentoring scheme to allow young people aged 14 to 16 to volunteer under certain conditions. Each department must carry out the appropriate risk assessments before allowing young people to volunteer. Volunteers under 16 years old may not be placed on the volunteer rotas but may be allowed to volunteer where the appropriate mentors are rostered and available to supervise.

Young people aged 17 to 18 may be placed on the departmental rotas at the discretion of the appropriate Manager.

Procedures

- Parental consent must be obtained for all attendances at the Railway.
- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check shall be carried out for Bluebell employees or volunteers who agree to act as Mentors.
- No young person aged 16 or under may stay overnight at the Railway.
- Make sure all young people work in appropriate groups directly supervised by an employee or volunteer.
- Make sure that all mentors are selected and recruited by going through an appropriate recruitment process.
- Make sure that all employees and volunteers understand that there is a procedure to be followed in dealing with child protection allegations against employees and volunteers. All staff must be aware of this process.
- See that appropriate processes are in place to review the competencies of young people and vulnerable adults to identify and minimise risk.
- Managers responsible for mentoring schemes shall provide continued appropriate training to their employees and volunteers.

APPENDIX D – OVERNIGHT STAYS

This appendix sets out the arrangements for safeguarding groups staying overnight on the Railway's premises.

- No volunteers under the age of 16, or classed as vulnerable adults, may stay overnight in accommodation located on the Railway's premises. This includes that owned by the Railway and any private accommodation sited with permission on its land, including camping or private caravans.
- This policy does not affect commercial customers who use the field at Horsted Keynes as a camp site, for whom no responsibility is accepted beyond the normal requirements devolved upon the operators of camp sites.
- Young people aged 16 or over may stay overnight, but the Bluebell Railway does not accept the delegation of parental responsibility in such cases. Thus they must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, or another who is appointed for the purpose by the parent or guardian. The Railway cannot recommend or attest to the suitability of anyone selected by the parent or guardian to assist them in this matter.
- Arrangements for the depositing of responsibility for the young person to someone other than a parent or guardian must be evidenced in writing to the Operations Manager before the overnight stay(s) commences.

APPENDIX E – REPORTING ANY SUSPICIONS, CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS

How to find out about a possible case of abuse;

- Child or parent makes direct allegation.
- Child or parent expresses discomfort, short of allegation.
- Another volunteer or member of BRPS reports concern.
- A member of the public reports concern.
- An employee or volunteer witnesses an incident.
- An employee or volunteer has suspicions an incident has occurred.

Reporting procedures

- Act immediately without delay
- Where any Bluebell Railway employee, volunteer or contractor becomes aware of a matter of concern or suspects that any form of child abuse, abuse of vulnerable adults or bullying has taken place it must be reported promptly to the respective Manager or station staff as appropriate to that persons duty.
- All individuals have a right to report any concerns or suspicions in confidence and free from harassment, being treated unfairly or being penalised.
- The Manager or station staff should consider whether it is appropriate to take immediate action to escalate the matter forthwith to the Safeguarding Officer, the General Manager or the Personnel & Admin Manager.
- All matters reported should be brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Officer even where any escalation is not considered to be appropriate.
- The Safeguarding Officer shall retain all such reports in a confidential manner.
- The matter may be escalated to appropriate authorities if necessary.
- All Bluebell Railway employees, volunteers or contractors involved shall promptly make a written report of the circumstances and suspicions which shall be passed to the Safeguarding Officer, or Personnel & Admin Manager where no Safeguarding Officer is in position.
- The Safeguarding Officer will decide whether the matter requires further investigation and may escalate the matter for formal investigation or deescalate the matter if no further action is appropriate. If the matter is deescalated the reports made shall still be retained for future reference.
- Where a formal investigation is to take part it shall be undertaken by appropriate senior members of staff or Board Directors along with the Safeguarding Officer who shall chair all proceedings. All written reports of the incident shall be taken into account including witness

statements. All matters shall remain confidential within the investigation and the result shall only be made known to those involved.

- Nothing in the foregoing shall over-ride the normal responsibility of a citizen to involve the police and / or other emergency / statutory services or local authority where there is an immediate apprehension of danger.
- Nothing in the foregoing will over-ride the company's existing reporting procedures for accidents and incidents.

Note

The term 'staff' shall include any employee, volunteer worker or contractor whilst carrying out their duties for the Bluebell Railway.