

The Moray Society (Elgin Museum)

Protecting Children and Vulnerable Groups Policy (including Learning and Outreach Policy) 2026

The Moray Society, a membership organisation, owns and manages Elgin Museum. The purpose of Elgin Museum is to conserve and display the objects and archive in its care, to act as a focus for learning and enjoyment for all and to support the appreciation of the natural history, culture and heritage of Moray and to maintain the buildings in its ownership.

Elgin Museum aims to attract a broad range of visitors. We are therefore committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our visitors and particularly children and adults at risk of harm, referred to in this document as vulnerable adults, whether they visit with a school group, for an organised activity, with parent/guardian or carer, through another organisation (e.g. Scouting UK) or in any other capacity.

For the purposes of this policy the definition of a child/young person is anyone who has not yet attained the age of 18. In Scotland where a young person aged 16-18 requires protection Adult Support and Protection legislation may apply (Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007). The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 came into effect on 1st April 2025, implementing the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme. PVG Scheme Records, PVG Scheme Record Updates, Standard and Enhanced disclosures will be referred to as Disclosure Records¹. Adults at risk are those, aged 16 years of age and over, who are unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests; are at risk of harm; and are more vulnerable because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity. An adult is at risk of harm if another person's conduct is causing (or likely to cause) the adult to be harmed, or the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.

¹ <https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-scheme>

Legal Context:

The Museum and its staff, both paid and voluntary, operate within a clear legal framework and with reference to other relevant government guidelines:

The Protection of Children Act 1999 provides a framework for employers to check the suitability of employees seeking to work with children.

The Children Act 2004 establishes clear requirements and guidance relating to the protection of children, their welfare and developmental needs.

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

The UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018

The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020

Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme

The Moray Society Protecting Children and Vulnerable Groups Policy (including Learning and Outreach Policy) 2026 (SHo/AW) v2.0

The Equality Act 2010

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which sets out the necessity of all children having access to basic human rights.

1. Protecting Children and Vulnerable Groups Policy

The Moray Society aims to ensure that all children and protected adults are kept safe from harm while they are with staff or volunteers from this organisation. In order to achieve this, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

Selection

- All applicants to our organisation will complete an application form. The applicant also signs the Volunteer Agreement which outlines the commitment of the Museum and the applicant to one another and the expectations that apply to each of the parties. This includes appropriate behaviour on the part of the volunteer.
- Short listed applicants for both voluntary and paid positions will be asked to attend an interview. All applicants will be asked to provide photographic ID.
- Short listed applicants for paid employment will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment.

The job description for staff and volunteers will be assessed by the Convenor of the Elgin Museum Management Committee (EMMC) who will decide if the role is regulated (as defined in the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020) and thus requires disclosure. For a paid position, the successful applicant will be offered the post subject to a PVG Disclosure Certificate being issued before the appointment is confirmed. Volunteers requiring disclosure as determined above, will need to have a certificate issued before carrying out PVG designated duties. This disclosure process will be administered by the Convenor of the EMMC as lead signatory, supported by the Volunteer Mentor as an additional signatory. The Moray Society's Secure Handling of Disclosure Information Guidance and Policy describes how applicants' personal data will be handled and stored.

Legal issues

It is an offence for an individual who is barred to undertake the type of regulated work from which they are barred.

It is an offence for an organisation to offer regulated work to someone who is barred or fail to remove a person from regulated work if the organisation has been notified that they are barred.

It is an offence for an organisation not to refer an individual to Disclosure Scotland where the grounds for referral have been met.

Training

All staff and volunteers attend a general training session during their induction which includes indicators of appropriate behaviour when working in the Museum as set out in the Child Protection Procedures at Section 3 of this policy. Induction training will

also include an overview of the organisation to ensure that they know its purpose, values, services and structure. Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis and will cover information about their role and opportunities for practising skills needed for the activities that they are undertaking. Training on specific areas such as Health and Safety procedures, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers and will be regularly reviewed.

Volunteers and staff must be aware of the 4Rs of Protection:

- Recognise any concerns for a young person/adult at risk that you are working with, this may be welfare/wellbeing or child/adult protection.
- Respond appropriately to any concerns about a child/young person/adult at risk within this policy and procedures.
- Refer to the Named Person (see below).
- Record the information on the Museum Incident form (forms are held in the cabinet opposite the Service Room in the Staff Corridor).

Supervision

Paid employees will attend an annual appraisal, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed. At annual reviews minutes will be taken and copies made available to the member of staff. All paid staff will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support in conjunction with their line manager if this is not the same person. Disciplinary procedures for employees are outlined in their contract. Insufficient capacity means that, at present, there is no appraisal procedure for volunteers. The post of Volunteer Mentor is currently held by Stephanie Horner and she is the first point of contact for a volunteer with a grievance or against whom a grievance has been raised. If this post is vacant, a named member of the Moray Society Board will carry out the Volunteer Mentor's duties.

Named Person

The Convenor of the EMMC is the designated Named Person responsible for the management of the Protection of Vulnerable Persons Scheme. If any staff member or volunteer feels that a safeguarding issue has arisen when there is any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has been physically, sexually or emotionally abused in Elgin Museum, they should report this to the Named Person at the earliest opportunity. The Named Person will have the support of the EMMC and the Board of the Moray Society. Should the Named Person be unavailable, the matter should be raised in the first instance with the (paid) Learning and Outreach Officer, if in post, or The Moray Society Vice-President.

Reporting Abuse

The Moray Society understands that in addition to making a referral (a written report) to Disclosure Scotland, child protection issues concerning staff and volunteers, children and young people must always be referred to the child protection agencies (i.e., social services and/or police) for appropriate investigation. Any issues of a criminal nature will be reported to the police.

The Moray Society will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment, training and supervision, are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.

2. Learning and Outreach Policy

Statement of Purpose

The Learning and Outreach Policy aims to support the Museum's Forward Plan Policies & Procedures documentation by endeavouring to safeguard the collections, to make them accessible for study and enjoyment and to preserve them for future generations. It seeks to embed the Museum's core educational role and its commitment to education and learning.

Elgin Museum is committed to ensuring physical and intellectual access to its collections through research, teaching, display, programmes of education and events for a wide variety of audiences, interpretation and publications both in print and electronically. It is committed to promoting and advancing knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the history and culture of Elgin and the wider community of Moray by supporting learning and enjoyment of the objects, buildings, archives and knowledge in our care.

Education lies at the centre of all the Museum's activities. Elgin Museum aims to support lifelong learning through involvement with schools, colleges, universities and other education groups and organisations in the ways set out in the Forward Plan 2026. The implementation of the Learning and Outreach Policy is a shared responsibility of all staff and volunteers in the Museum, and the Museum is committed to providing training and support to deliver education and enjoyment to all.

Elgin Museum will endeavour to consider the wide range of interests, needs and learning styles of the very broad variety of visitors who access the collections and information about them. Learning and Outreach sessions will be available to all schools in the local area and within Moray generally, led by a member of the Museum staff or a volunteer with the relevant experience and training. Resource boxes focussed on our collections will also be made available for a variety of subjects that can be accessed by schools and other interested groups to support learning across the wider curriculum. Elgin Museum will work in partnership with other providers of life-long learning to develop and expand the range of provision for adults through formal and informal educational opportunities including outreach where appropriate, temporary exhibitions and access to the permanent collections.

Membership of the Moray Society includes categories for families and Junior members. All details of children and young people will be kept in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), including Elgin Museum's Photographic Policy and associated Photo/Video Consent Form. Staff and volunteers must ensure that consent is given by parent/guardian before any photo or video is taken or by the lead member of staff for school or other group visits.

To safeguard Museum staff and visitors, no unaccompanied children under the age of 16 will be allowed entry unless for a pre-arranged event or activity organised by the Learning and Outreach Coordinator and/or Learning and Outreach Activities Volunteers. It is expected that all children under the age of 16 will be accompanied by teaching staff, recognised group organisers, or by a parent/guardian or other responsible adult over the age of 16. All family events will usually be drop-in and not drop-off, even though such events will be run by staff and/or volunteers who hold disclosure certificates.

The GDPR defines personal data as any information related to an identified or identifiable natural person, including data that can be assigned to a person such as a telephone number. There are 7 key principles, Lawfulness, fairness and transparency; Purpose limitation; Data minimisation; Accuracy; Storage limitation; Integrity and confidentiality (security) and Accountability. For further information see GDPR policy and <https://www.mygov.scot/sharing-personal-information>.

3. Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Procedures

Statement of Intent

The Board of The Moray Society will endeavour to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm while they visit Elgin Museum or attend an activity organised by The Moray Society.

We will do this by:

- Making sure our staff are carefully selected and that staff or volunteers in regulated roles will be PVG checked prior to carrying out that role. See <https://www.mygov.scot/list-of-regulated-roles> for further details of regulated roles.
- Providing adequate training for staff in issues of child protection.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child or vulnerable adult in contact with the Moray Society.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that no child or vulnerable adult in contact with the Moray Society is physically, emotionally or sexually abused.
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any staff member or volunteer, any other persons working for us or member of the public from putting any child or vulnerable adult in a situation where there is an unreasonable risk to their health and safety.
- Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any staff member or volunteer, any other persons working for us or member of the public from physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child or vulnerable adult.
- Reporting to the designated Named Person any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused in contact with the Moray Society.
- Implementing this policy in conjunction with our Health and Safety guidelines.
- Ensuring any personal details are held in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation.

Definitions of abuse

Abuse is when a child or vulnerable adult is intentionally harmed by another adult or child – it can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. It can be

physical, sexual or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/help-from-social-services-and-charities/abuse-and-neglect-vulnerable-adults/>

Safety and welfare guidelines for children and vulnerable adults

These guidelines apply to:

- Any situation involving children and young people up to and including age 16, whether or not accompanied by adults over the age of 16. The Moray Society also recognises that vulnerable people of any age will benefit from similar safeguards therefore, whenever the guidelines refer to children, this broader meaning applies.
- All staff, volunteers, contractors and consultants working in or on Elgin Museum. The Convenor of the EMMC is responsible for ensuring that contractors and consultants are made aware of these guidelines if they are in the Museum when it is open to the public or when activities are taking place.

General Duties of all Moray Society Staff and Volunteers in regard to the safety and welfare of children and other vulnerable people:

- To take all reasonable steps to protect from hazards.
- To take appropriate action if an accident occurs.
- To strictly observe the code of behaviour given here.
- To take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children and vulnerable adults in contact with the Elgin Museum.
- To report any incident or suspicion of abuse.
- To be mindful of GDPR requirements when dealing with personal data of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Code of Behaviour for all Moray Society Staff and Volunteers

All people working with The Moray Society must observe the following requirements where children, young people or similarly vulnerable people are concerned, at all times.

You should always:

- Uphold the spirit and specific provisions of the Statement of Policy and these Guidelines.

- Do your best to behave in an open and friendly manner but avoid being over-familiar in word or action.
- In so far as possible, avoid situations in which you are alone with children or similarly vulnerable people. If necessary, move to a place where you can both be seen by other colleagues or other adults.
- If a child is hurt or distressed, do your best to comfort or reassure them without compromising their dignity or doing anything to discredit your own behaviour.
- Try to avoid physical contact or behaviour that could be unwelcome or misconstrued. Physical touch should only be in response to a child's need and should respect their age and individual stage of development. It may be appropriate to hold a child's hand, to put a comforting arm around their shoulder. However, you should first explain what you have in mind and ask directly if that is what they want. Otherwise, it may be unwelcome or misinterpreted.
- Where you have to rely on your own judgment, always treat the child's welfare as paramount.
- Be aware of Health and Safety requirements in the policy and risk assessment at all times. For example, awareness of hazardous substances, reckless physical behaviour, sharp implements (e.g. scissors; antlers), stairs and hot liquids.
- No foodstuff should be offered as a prize or reward during any Museum activity in case of unknown allergies or intolerances.

You have a strict duty never to subject any child or vulnerable adult to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to honour this will be treated as gross misconduct. Forms of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Causing distress to a child by shouting at them or calling them derogatory names.
- Slapping a child.
- Holding a child in such a way that it causes pain.
- Shaking a child.
- Physically restraining a child to protect them from harming themselves or others should only be carried out by accompanying adults over the age of 16 or anyone who is currently trained in restraint techniques for children.
- Taking part in horseplay or rough games.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any kind.

- Doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or that an accompanying adult can do for them; this includes going to the toilet with a child unless another adult is present.
- Allowing or engaging in sexually suggestive behaviour within a child's sight or hearing or making suggestive remarks to or within earshot of a child.
- Showing anything to a child that could be construed as pornographic.
- Seeking or agreeing to meet children anywhere beyond normal visitor areas of The Moray Society property without the full prior knowledge and agreement of their parents or guardians.
- Accessing personal data without good cause or authorisation.

Supporting the Policy

Confidentiality

We recognise that it is important that any information about alleged or actual child abuse will only be disclosed where it is in the best interests of the child to do so. Furthermore, we have a responsibility to protect the identity of anyone reporting suspected or actual abuse. No such disclosure will be made without careful consultation at directorate level. In the unlikely event that a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure to a member of staff or volunteer, no promise of non-disclosure should be made.

The role of the designated Named Person

The designated name person is the Convenor of the Elgin Museum Management Committee.

The role in this context is twofold: to serve as a centre for information and guidance on child welfare issues and to support managers and staff in dealing with any suggestion of misconduct or need for expert advice.

Disseminating information about this policy and procedure

Everyone working or applying to work or volunteer for The Moray Society is to be made aware of our policy for the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. These guidelines will be issued to all staff, volunteers, and other people who are likely to have contact with children and vulnerable adults as part of their work with us.

This policy will also be made available on Elgin Museum's website:

<https://elginmuseum.org.uk/policies/>

Review

The Protecting Children and Vulnerable Groups Policy including Learning and Outreach Policy and associated documents will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain up to date, relevant and take advantage of any changes, developments, and/or initiatives launched by other interested groups.

History: original policy approved 2023; updated 2025 to reflect changes to Disclosure (Scotland) regulations; updated 2026 to remove formatting and make information more accessible.

Agreed EMMC: 29/1/2026 (by email)

Agreed MSB: 30/1/2026

Date for next review: not more than 12 months: 30/1/2027