



Safeguarding Policy for volunteers at Romsey Signal Box (including protection for Children and Vulnerable Adults)

Friends of Romsey Signal Box (FoRSB), Romsey, Hampshire, UK
(part of the Romsey and District Buildings Preservation Trust)

To be read by all volunteers

'Good child protection practice protects not only children but also the staff and volunteers who have responsibility for them.' (NSPCC)

Introduction

We wish to keep things very simple and safe at Romsey Signal Box, and the guidance below is provided to ensure young and vulnerable people* are safe at all times on the site.

*eg: People with learning difficulties

Our Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is **Byron Horne** (safeguarding@romseysignalbox.org.uk). The Deputy DSO is **Dick Hewett** (chairman@romseysignalbox.org.uk).

1. Actual or immediate safeguarding concerns

If you have a safeguarding concern for the safety/welfare of someone at Romsey Signal Box, please contact the DSO or Deputy DSO.

If someone is in immediate or imminent danger, call 999 and ask for the police or ambulance service.

2. DBS checks

We meet the criteria relating to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as follows:

- We work with children under 18
- We are teaching them (but not in a school or other established location).

Although generally our contact is generally less than 3 times per month, this nevertheless entitles us to ask those volunteers who have contact with our younger volunteers to complete an Enhanced DBS check, which will confirm whether there should be any concerns about that volunteer as regards working with children.

However, a DBS check is only a record of someone's criminal record or other reported concerns at the time the check is undertaken, and gives no guarantee of anyone's background or behaviour. It also does not record any concerns about working with vulnerable adults. For that reason, it is particularly important if any volunteer has a concern about a colleague or a young or vulnerable person, that they bring it to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Officer or their deputy, if necessary through another committee member, and a course of action will be chosen to address the issue as necessary and appropriate.

3. A Code of Behaviour for everyone

This applies equally to all volunteers on the site. You may not think that your role brings you into contact with children/vulnerable adults sufficiently often for it to matter, but it is better to be safe

than sorry. There are some general principles to follow, and some further suggestions to avoid difficulties.

a) General principles

- Treat all young people, children and vulnerable adults with respect
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight and/or hearing of others
- Be aware that any physical contact with a child/young person/vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.

b) Open Days, group visits, and events

- Unless there is an emergency, (eg: danger of falling) *never* catch hold of a child/vulnerable person.
- Should you ever have to in emergency circumstances, make clear why by what you say/shout – ‘keep away from the edge’; ‘look out, danger!’
- Always ask before assisting a child or vulnerable adult – ask the child if old enough, or ask the parent/carer if they would like your help. Never assume.
- Offer a hand or arm - don't pick a child up unless absolutely necessary, even if requested to do so by a parent/guardian/carer.
- Don't allow an unaccompanied child visitor into the signal box or other working area.
- If you are staffing the signal box or other building, don't lift children in/out unless strictly necessary even with the agreement of parent/guardian/carer. If needed, ask them to move, don't move them yourself.
- Don't allow children to sit on your lap.
- Keep your hands in view at all times.
- If you are in costume for an event, where children may approach you, ensure you do any meeting and greeting in full view of the public, mindful of the comments above.
- If a child or vulnerable adult is in the toilets unaccompanied, wait until they come out before going in.
- Err on the side of caution: remember that the public will do so too.

c) Working with young volunteers and vulnerable adults

Much of the advice above applies. But also:

- Don't work alone with a child or group of children in an isolated position out of view/sound of others. This includes all buildings on the signal box site, and “hidden” areas of the site. In particular, do not take children into the locking room of the signal box without another adult being present, or aware and within hearing (from upstairs).
- Ensure that any children or vulnerable adults are clear why you are working with them, what the task is and what you are going to ask them to do. Don't detour from the agreed plan.
- Maintain a professional distance in your dealings with children, and avoid any physical contact with them – even when ‘showing them how’....
- If your own child is in the group, that shouldn't alter your practice.
- Avoid unrelated ‘helpers’, unless the parent/guardian/carer or other relative is present and has agreed.
- Young members working in the signal box or Cowley Bridge building need an official supervisor who will ensure they are working safely, with which adults, and on clearly defined tasks in appropriate settings (avoiding lone working etc - see above.)
- If you are in charge of a group of children, you are also responsible for ensuring their safety from other adults who they might come across in their duties.

- If you have any concerns or questions relating to the safeguarding practices of anyone on site, contact the DSO (or Deputy) as soon as possible; you are welcome to clear plans or air ideas with the DSO (or Deputy) over email or text if you are unsure.

d) School and other group Visits

If you assist as a Guide on a school or group visit, much of the above guidance applies. Ensure you know who the Group leader is, and clarify with them exactly what you are going to do and what you expect the children to do, especially if visiting an enclosed area where the group may be divided.

- You are not in charge of the party: intervene only if there is a safety issue
- Do a briefing first to avoid situations where you might otherwise have to touch a child
- Don't offer to take individual children to the loo/buffet/shop however hard pressed the group leader may appear to be. They should have adequate adult helpers, under their own regulations.
- Be aware that whilst you may not be fully responsible for all the children/vulnerable people in a party you should still be vigilant for any concerning practices and should not be afraid to speak out (or report your concern to the DSO (or Deputy), or other agency if you have concerns for a child/vulnerable person's safety/security/welfare.

3. Parental/guardian/carer agreement

To protect both young people and vulnerable adults volunteering on the site, we ask all parents/carers to complete and sign the **consent form (below)**, and return to the membership secretary. Note that as part of this protection, and for insurance purposes, any volunteers working on the site must be paid-up members of the Friends of Romsey Signal Box.

Conclusion

We all want to encourage the next generation – and the one after that – to get involved with the museum, to enjoy visiting the site, and to promote it so that it can thrive in the future. We must therefore ensure that everyone who comes to the museum, visitor or volunteer, of whatever age, can be confident that they are safe from abuse and accusations of abuse in a society where this is an increasingly sensitive issue.

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Date approved: Issued 4 September 2023

Signed (by DSO):

Signed (By Deputy DSO):

Review date: 4 September 2026 (3 years) or earlier if required



**Parental/Guardian/Carer Consent for Children and Vulnerable Adults volunteering at
Romsey Signal Box**

Name of member:

Date of birth: Age:

Any disability or medical conditions (if relevant):

.....
I, the undersigned, as parent/guardian/carer of the member named above, have received a copy of the Romsey Signal Box "Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy", and understand and accept its contents.

I am content for the child/young adult named above to be a volunteer at Romsey Signal Box, and understand that the members of the Friends of Romsey Signal Box will supervise his/her/their activities.

For children under 16: I am willing to leave my child as a volunteer at the signal box without me being in attendance: Yes / No.

Name of parent/guardian/carer:

Relationship to child/young adult:

Address:

.....
Phone number (for emergencies):

Email:

Any other parent/guardian/carer/relatives authorised to deliver/collect the young person or vulnerable adult, or to act on their behalf (names and relationship):
.....

Signature:

Date signed:

Return form to the 'Person-in-Charge' or a member of the Friends of Romsey Signal Box Committee.