A RAILWAY OWNED BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY

A Community Benefit Society (No 8486)

AVCR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

INTRODUCTION

a) Alford Valley Community Railway (AVCR) is a registered charity. The organisation has been formed to benefit the communities of Alford and Donside, which comprise all of the geographical area covered by the AB33 Postcode (the "community") with the following purposes:

- To promote and maintain the Station and Railway together with the collections held within it.
- To advance the tourism, heritage and culture of the area.
- To advance citizenship or community development, including rural regeneration.

In such a way that the charity shall do so following principles of sustainable development.

b) AVCR is based at Alford Railway Station, Alford, AB33 8AD

c) Charity Number: SC 051076

d) AVCR has adopted this Safeguarding Policy and expects every adult volunteering at AVCR to support and comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all directors, volunteers, or anyone working on behalf of AVCR.

1. PURPOSES

a) This Policy is intended to protect children and young people who receive a service from us, including those who are the children of adults who may receive a service from us.

b) AVCR believes that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and are committed to the protection of children and young people. This Policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles of child protection and safeguarding to those who represent us as volunteers.

c) Where children attend events as part of a supervised school or educational visit, the safeguarding policies of that institution will also apply and be monitored by the person supervising the group.

2. RISKS TO CHILDREN

Most children grow up in a safe and happy environment and it is important not to over estimate or exaggerate the dangers. Nevertheless, there are situations where children need protection, including, but not limited to:

- Sexual abuse
- Grooming
- Physical and emotional abuse and neglect
- Domestic violence
- Inappropriate supervision by volunteers
- Bullying, cyber bullying, acts of violence or aggression
- Victimisation
- Self harm
- Unsafe environments and activities
- Crime
- Exploitation

3. UNIVERSALITY OF PROTECTION

AVCR recognises that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children regardless of race, gender, religious belief, disability, age, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from harm
- Some children are more vulnerable to harm as a result of their circumstances, prior experiences, communication needs or level of dependency
- Working with children, young people, their parents, guardians, carers or other agencies is essential to protect everyone's wellbeing.

4. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AT EVENTS OR ACTIVITIES

a) There are three kinds of events/activities:

1. Those open to adults and accompanied children of all ages
2. Those for children from School/Nursery or similar organisations
3. Work experience for older students (Volunteers)

b) At events open to all ages, children under 16 must be accompanied throughout by an adult over the age of 18 who not only brings the child, but also takes the child home again afterwards. Young people aged 16-17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring written consent and a mobile telephone number of one of their parents/guardian who will be contactable. At larger open public events such as outdoor fairs, rallies and sales it may not be possible to effectively regulate the attendance of young people aged 16-17 and in this event the organiser will highlight this on the risk assessment and advise volunteers on duty.

c) At events and activities for children accompanied by a Parent/Guardian, children under 16 must be supervised throughout the event by an adult over the age of 18 who not only brings the child, but also takes the child home again afterwards. If a lone adult brings more than one child, then the children will have to stay together, so that adult can supervise them. Young people aged 16-17 may attend unaccompanied if they bring written consent, and a mobile telephone number of one of their parents/guardian who will be contactable.

d) During work experience for older children, such as 16 and 17 year olds, there will be no occasions when the child is alone with a volunteer or member of the Board.

e) Events are to be defined broadly to include any occasion when AVCR will be providing a service.

5. DISCLOSURE AND BARRING

a) The AVCR offers the following events for accompanied children:

- Museum experience - small group sessions for schools
- Pre-School and School visits
- Duke of Edinburgh/Saltire Award opportunities
- Outdoor fairs and events for families

b) For these activities it will be assumed that the adults/leaders accompanying the children will hold a Disclosure Scotland certificate.

c) AVCR will take very seriously any allegation of impropriety on the part of any AVCR volunteer. Any AVCR volunteer who discovers anything amiss should get in touch immediately with the following:

CHAIR OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS (at present Gloria Malcolm)

d) Allegations regarding a likely risk to a child/children will be investigated and, if appropriate, the Board will consider disciplinary action and/or barring the volunteer from AVCR.

6. PREVENTION OF BULLYING

We will not tolerate the bullying of children either by adults or by other children. If any incident of child-on-child bullying should arise at an AVCR event, those involved will be separated immediately and the accompanying adult of the children involved will be asked to deal with the matter. The Board will review all incidents of child-on-child bullying and assess the likely future risk to children. If appropriate, the Board will consider banning a child from future events, but only in full accordance with the rules and procedures of AVCR. Allegations of Adults bullying children will be dealt with in accordance with this Policy.

8. PHOTOGRAPHING OF CHILDREN

Photos may be taken on site, in the station building, train and general environs. If anyone would prefer not to have photos or videos taken of their party, they should inform AVCR volunteers.

If any person has any concerns regarding anyone taking photographs or videos on AVCR premises, they should contact AVCR immediately.

9. MANAGING BEHAVIOUR, DISCIPLINE AND ACCEPTABLE RESTRAINT

a) Adults supervising children at AVCR events must never use any form of corporal punishment. If physical restraint is absolutely necessary to prevent injury to any person, or to prevent serious damage to property, then the minimum necessary restraint may be used – but for that purpose only.

b) Unacceptable behaviour at AVCR events for unaccompanied children will generally be stopped by separating the children from each other and from the group. The individual(s) concerned will be suitably supervised and will be returned as soon as possible to the care of their parents/guardians.

c) AVCR may apply a further disciplinary sanction; namely the banning of the individual(s) concerned from one or more future events over the following 18 months.

d) A parent/guardian who is aggrieved by this ban may appeal to AVCR who will hear the views of all relevant persons. The decision of AVCR is then final.

10. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- General Data Protection Regulations
- Data Protection Act 2018
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Scottish Government 2014)
- Getting it right for every Child (GIRFEC) (Scottish Government 2018)
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; national guidance on part 12: Service in relation to Children at risk of becoming looked after etc. (Scottish Government 2016)

This Policy is approved and robustly endorsed by Alford Valley Community Railway (AVCR) and is due for review every year.