



Northern Ireland Museums Council

Safeguarding Policy Statement

Background

The Northern Ireland Museums Council wishes to ensure that everyone gains the best possible experience from engaging with museums, and that such engagement by children and vulnerable adults happens in a safe and secure environment. Also it wishes to contribute to parents' and carers' confidence that the people who work in our museums are trustworthy and responsible, and that they will ensure that those who participate in museum activities are kept safe from harm. This document sets out the Council's commitment to these aims and the steps it will take to assist museums to meet their statutory obligations in this regard.

Statement

The Northern Ireland Museums Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults as they engage with museums. It recognises its responsibility to take appropriate and reasonable steps to establish and promote good practice in this regard by the Council and encourages the museums with which it works to do the same.

NIMC

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 has established new safeguarding arrangements aimed at strengthening protection for children and vulnerable adults in workplace situations. The legislation places certain duties and responsibilities upon employers and employees that work in specified positions with children and vulnerable adults. The specified positions are defined as 'regulated activity' and 'controlled activity'.

Currently the work of NIMC does not require its Board or staff members to undertake or participate in any 'regulated' or 'controlled' activity on its behalf. Consequently staff members are not required to register with the Independent Safeguarding Authority under the vetting and barring arrangements. Nevertheless, in light of the Council's role in providing advice and guidance to the museum sector, NIMC will ensure that staff members are provided with training on good practice in safeguarding reporting procedures and in associated recruitment and employment procedures.

Local Museums

Given the nature of their work, all local museums will have responsibilities under the safeguarding children and vulnerable adults legislation. Each will need to have in place an associated policy and procedures. NIMC will support local museums by providing advice, guidance and training.

A copy of NIMC's *Guidance to Museums on Safeguarding Children* (based upon the guidance received from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure) will be circulated to each museum upon the adoption of this policy by the Board of the Northern Ireland Museums Council.

All museums that seek funding from NIMC will be required to have robust and effective policies and procedures in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This requirement will be embedded within the application processes associated with the Council's various grant programmes and set out in the terms and conditions associated with every offer of grant assistance. Funded museums will be required to submit a copy of their safeguarding policy and procedures to the Council, and to review and update their policies and procedures in light of their experience and changes to legislation relating to safeguarding issues.

Adopted by the NIMC Board
December 2009

Reviewed by Audit Committee
January 2016

Ratified by Board
March 2016