

Use this guide from our Sustainable Volunteering Officer, Eleanor Moore, as a suggestion of what to consider first before you begin working with young volunteers in your museum.

First step:

Look at your Safeguarding Policy and make sure that all trustees have read it. If it is due to be reviewed, make time to do this.

Before any volunteering starts:

How old will the young person be?

It's recommended that young volunteers should be 16 or older, as they can work alongside other adult volunteers and staff without the need for DBS checks. Neither is it a requirement to get parent or carer consent for their volunteering if over 16; however, potential volunteers between the ages of 16 and 18 should be encouraged to discuss the volunteering opportunity with their parents/carers before they start volunteering.

Who will supervise them?

Make sure that there is one 'named contact' for the young person at the museum. That person will need to be on-site when the young person is at the museum. Make sure this person is suitable and has received Safeguarding training.

Where will they work?

Plan for the volunteers to work in spaces that are open, rather than tucked away, and which have more than one person working in them.

What will they do?

A clearly defined task, which they can feel ownership of, can work well. Write a short, clear description of the tasks involved in the project; this will be helpful for the volunteer and will help you to plan the practicalities before the young volunteer starts.

How might they work best?

Try to find two young volunteers who can work together and suggest tasks that they can do in pairs.

How will you know that they are in the Museum and where they are?

Make sure the young volunteer signs in and out of the building, and ensure you are aware of their whereabouts.

Cont.

Top tips:

- Your safeguarding policy needs to be read and understood by all staff and volunteers, not simply sit on the shelf.
- To find out more about reviewing your safeguarding policy, read our guide: [Working with young volunteers- your safeguarding policy and safe working procedures](#)

Before any volunteering starts (cont.)

How will you make sure that what they are doing is safe?

As with any volunteer task, you need to carry out a risk assessment and be ready to share this with the young person's parents and school/college if asked.

Have you got a parent 's contact details?

Make sure you are ready to provide young volunteers with a full induction and to collect all necessary information, including next of kin details and any access needs, to ensure safe working. Remember, you will need to store personal and sensitive information in line with your policies for data protection.

How will the young person find out about the Museum?

Use your existing museum information to create a simple young person's Welcome Pack with information about the Museum.

How will you know that the rest of the team understands their responsibilities for keeping young people safe?

It's worth making sure your Safeguarding policy is part of **everyone's** induction and that there is a simple summary of 'Good Practice' ('Top Tips for Safeguarding Young People' perhaps?) on the front desk.



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During the volunteer placement:

- Make sure you show the young person round the museum and introduce them to the rest of the volunteer team. Don't forget the basics like loos and refreshments!
- Maintain a professional relationship. Don't ask for personal details or personal ways of contacting them. Make sure you remain open and include other people in any contact.
- Is their workspace open and public? Keep doors open.
- Check in on the young volunteers roughly every hour just to see how things are going. Keep in regular contact.
- Young volunteers must use museum computers, phones, tablets and equipment, not their own devices.
- Set clear guidelines for volunteers around use of social media and computers. Keep an eye on your search engine history and social media sites. Take action if you need to, including contacting parents.
- Don't offer young volunteers a lift home or suggest meeting out of work time.
- If you have any concerns about your young person, contact their school and speak to their parents if possible.

After the volunteering placement has finished:

Be prepared to provide a reference if asked.

Show your appreciation for the young person's contribution. Say thank you!

Make sure they know how to access information about the Museum in future.


Looking for more guidance?

See [our resources archive](#) for more guides and templates to support you with volunteer management in your museum.

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