

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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Contents

1. Policy statement	1
2. Scope	2
3. Purpose	2
4. Safeguarding principles and commitments	2
5. Context.....	4
6. Governance and Responsibilities	4
7. Relevant policies, procedures and forms	5
8. Monitoring.....	5

1. Policy statement

1.1 The Ri believes that safeguarding children is paramount and should be at the heart of all that we do. Child safeguarding is:

- Protecting a child’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect
- People and organisations working together to prevent and stop abuse or neglect and reducing the risks of this happening
- Making sure that the child’s wellbeing is promoted; including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

1.2. We require all individuals associated with the Ri to:

- Share this commitment
- Understand that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility
- Safeguard the welfare of children and promote their wellbeing¹
- Work together with other Ri representatives, children and their families and relevant external organisations to help achieve the best possible outcomes for children and to protect them from harm
- Know what to do and who to speak to if they have any safeguarding concerns relating to a child or an Ri representative
- Be aware of and follow the guidance in this policy and the Ri’s Child Safeguarding Procedures to recognise, respond to and report any concerns proactively and swiftly, no matter how minor or who is involved.

¹ Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

2. Scope

- 2.2. This policy applies to all individuals associated with the Ri. These individuals will be referred to as "Ri representatives" throughout this policy.
- This includes staff, contractors, volunteers, contributors to public and educational programmes, Trustees and Committee members, and any other person who may come into contact with children through their work for or with the Ri, such as supporters of or ambassadors for the Ri, or those linked with other organisations who undertake work with the Ri involving children
 - This policy does not include organisations or individuals who use the Ri purely for hire.
- 2.3. For safeguarding purposes, a child is anyone under the age of 18, regardless of any other status. This includes:
- Any child who comes into contact with the Ri or takes part in Ri activities in any location, including online
 - Children of adults who come into contact with the Ri or who are associated with the Ri in any way, regardless of whether an Ri representative has any direct contact with those children.
- 2.4. This policy encompasses all activities run by or in association with the Ri, including face-to-face activities in any location and online activities.
- 2.5. This policy does not cover adult safeguarding – please refer to the Ri's Adult Safeguarding Policy.

3. Purpose

- 3.2. This policy outlines the Ri's commitment to safeguarding children. It aims to ensure that all Ri representatives have a clear understanding of both the principles involved and their own responsibilities in safeguarding children and protecting them from harm.
- 3.3. The accompanying Child Safeguarding Procedures include guidance on identifying and responding to concerns, good practice involved in safeguarding children and how to record and report concerns and disclosures.

4. Safeguarding principles and commitments

The following principles underline the Ri's approach to safeguarding:

4.1. The welfare of children is paramount

- 4.1.1. This means that child safeguarding takes precedence over other considerations across all Ri activities.
- 4.1.2. We are committed to nurturing a culture of safeguarding throughout the Ri and ensuring that poor practices are challenged. This includes but is not limited to:
- Ensuring safer recruitment, selection and vetting practices
 - Providing the appropriate training, support and supervision for all Ri representatives, proportionate to their role, to help ensure that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding.
- 4.1.3. Ri representatives will undergo criminal record checks and/or checks against the barred list for children where appropriate to their role. These checks will be repeated at set intervals or if changes to their role requires a higher level of check. Further details are included in the Child Safeguarding Procedures.

- 4.1.4. The Ri is committed to funding all required safeguarding checks and training, and any other costs required to ensure that the safeguarding of children can be properly undertaken across the Ri and Ri activities.
- 4.2. All children have a right to protection from harm or abuse, regardless of any factor which may impact on their risk level or access to support**
- 4.2.1. This means that we are committed to providing a safe environment where all children are included, listened to and treated with respect.
- 4.2.2. We recognise that some children are additionally vulnerable due to a variety of factors and commit to equitable treatment throughout our safeguarding practices and our work with children.
- 4.3. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**
- 4.3.1. This means that if anyone has a concern about a child, or is told about something which causes concern, they MUST report it to one of the Ri's Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) or an appropriate responsible person where this is not possible, as is outlined in the Child Safeguarding Procedures. They cannot assume that someone else has done so, or that it is not their place to do so.
- 4.3.2. No single person can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances, but for children and families to receive the right help at the right time, everyone has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information appropriately and taking prompt action.
- 4.3.3. In some cases, an Ri representative may have concerns relating to poor practice. Poor practice is not in itself abuse, but can create environments where abuse or harm can more easily take place. These concerns can be discussed with the DSOs but depending on circumstances may fall under alternative reporting arrangements, such as the Ri's Whistleblowing Policy.
- 4.4. All concerns or allegations relating to safeguarding or abuse must be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately**
- 4.4.1. This means that we commit to promoting a culture where abuse will not be tolerated, where reports are taken seriously and acted on appropriately, and where children can feel safe.
- 4.4.2. The Child Safeguarding Procedures give guidance for anyone who has any concerns or if concerns are shared with them. It also gives an overview of the processes which will be followed by the responsible staff members and/or Trustees when a concern is reported to them.
- 4.4.3. If abuse is disclosed, this information cannot remain confidential and must be shared with the appropriate responsible people at the Ri and the appropriate external agencies for action to be taken. Please note that reporting a concern can lead to a variety of outcomes suitable to the situation – making a report will not lead to disproportionate action being taken.
- 4.5. Working together with children, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential to promoting children's welfare and ensuring their protection**
- 4.5.1. This means that we are committed to supporting the timely sharing of information with relevant authorities when there are concerns about a child's welfare and contributing to effective partnership working between all those involved. In some limited circumstances, it will not be appropriate to engage with parents and carers to better protect the child.
- 4.5.2. We expect professionals to act on our concerns and we will escalate concerns where we are not satisfied that they have been taken seriously.

- 4.5.3. Data protection legislation is not a barrier to sharing information relating to a safeguarding concern; there is a legal duty to share information with the relevant people and organisations when a safeguarding concern arises.
- Confidentiality must be maintained so that information is handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.
 - Information held about individuals by the Ri will only be disclosed to others either with their consent or when there is a legal duty to do so.

5. Context

5.2. This policy and the associated Child Safeguarding Procedures are underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#)² (including 2022 factual updates)
- [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees \(2022\)](#)³
- [Safeguarding and child protection standards for the voluntary and community sector: children, young people and young adults aged 0-18 \(UK\) \(2019\)](#)⁴

5.3. Where Ri representatives are undertaking activities outside of England, the relevant regional or national legislation will also apply. They should contact the DSO for advice on any inconsistencies between the applicable regional guidance and this policy.

6. Governance and Responsibilities

6.2. The Ri Trustees have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding, even though certain aspects of the work are delegated to staff. The Audit and Risk Committee monitors safeguarding activity, training, vetting checks and risks, and the Chair of this committee reports quarterly to the Board of Trustees.

6.3. In line with safeguarding best practice, the Ri has appointed a Lead Trustee for Safeguarding, a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and at least one Deputy DSO.

6.4. The DSO is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day safeguarding needs of the Ri, supported by the deputy DSO(s) and a Safeguarding Working Group which is chaired by an Ri Director. The Safeguarding Working Group Terms of Reference are approved by the Ri Directorate.

6.5. Appointment as DSO does not signify sole responsibility for providing a full service for child protection. This is accomplished through the totality of the Ri's safeguarding arrangements.

6.6. The DSOs are the first point of contact for anyone who needs advice or has concerns about the safeguarding and protection of children and are there to support everyone regarding safeguarding. There are robust reporting structures in place in case a DSO is not contactable for a particular concern – see the Child Safeguarding Procedures for more details.

6.7. This policy and the associated Child Safeguarding Procedures should be reviewed at least annually or when legislation changes.

- The DSO is responsible for writing, reviewing and disseminating the policy and procedures, alongside the Safeguarding Working Group.
- The Audit and Risk Committee are responsible for reviewing the policy and procedures.
- The Board of Trustees are responsible for approving the policy and procedures.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> - HM Government

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees> - The Charity Commission

⁴ <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2019/safeguarding-child-protection-standards> - NSPCC

- All Ri representatives are responsible for understanding and adhering to the policy and Child Safeguarding Procedures.

7. Relevant policies, procedures and forms

7.2. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Ri policies, procedures, and forms:

- Child Safeguarding Procedures
- Child Safeguarding Report Form
- Data Protection Policy
- EDIA Policy
- Modern Slavery Policy
- Social Media Policy

7.3. Those working with adults on behalf of the Ri, as well as staff members, Trustees, Committee members and contractors, should also read:

- Adult Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and accompanying report form

7.4. For staff members, Trustees, Committee members and contractors, the following policies are also relevant:

- Trustee Code of Conduct (Trustees and Committee members only)
- Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy including money laundering
- Computer Acceptable Use and Bring Your Own Device Policies
- Disclosures in the Public Interest (Whistleblowing) Policy
- Equal opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safe Recruitment and Selection Policy

8. Monitoring

All Ri representatives are asked to confirm that they have read this policy and share the Ri's commitment to safeguarding, with confirmations monitored by the DSOs.

Definitions:
An Ri representative is anyone who works for or with the Ri, including staff, contractors, volunteers, contributors to public and educational programmes, Trustees and committee members, and any other person who may come into contact with children through their work for or with the Ri, such as supporters of or ambassadors for the Ri, or those linked with other organisations who undertake work with the Ri involving children.
A child is anyone under the age of 18, regardless of any other status.
Ri activities are any activities which take place in association or partnership with or for the Ri, no matter where they are located or if they are online.
A disclosure is when a child or adult reports abuse or concerns to you.