

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2025

**STATUS:** APPROVED

**Policy Owner:** Designated Safeguarding Officer

**Date approved:** 23 September 2025

**Next Review Date:** September 2026

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### 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, Ri ambassadors, or organisations or individuals who undertake relevant work on behalf of the Ri.

A **child** is anyone under the age of 18, regardless of any other status.

**Ri activities** are any activities which are organised by or on behalf of the Ri, no matter where they are located or if they are online. Some activities may fall under alternative safeguarding arrangements, as is outlined in Section 2.

A **disclosure** is when a child or adult reports abuse or concerns to you.

## 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 wellbeing<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to all individuals acting on behalf of the Ri who may come into contact with children, referred to as "Ri representatives" in this policy.

2.2. This policy applies to both in-person and online activities, regardless of location.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

- 2.3. This policy does not cover:
- Safeguarding adults (please see the Ri's Adult Safeguarding Policy)
  - Organisations or individuals who use the Ri purely for hire
  - Organisations or individuals where it has been contractually agreed that activities will fall under alternative safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.4. 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

### **3. Purpose**

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The accompanying 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. Child Safeguarding principles and commitments**

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

#### **4.1. The welfare of children is paramount**

- 4.1.1. Safeguarding takes precedence over other considerations across all Ri activities.
- 4.1.2. We are committed to nurturing a culture of safeguarding and ensuring that poor practices are challenged. This includes, but is not limited to, providing the appropriate support and supervision for all Ri representatives, proportionate to their role, to help ensure that they are clear about their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.
- 4.1.3. We will follow safer recruitment and selection practices, in line with our Safe Recruitment and Selection policy, including background checks relevant to the role and a relevant assessment of a candidate's safeguarding knowledge and experience.
- 4.1.4. Vetting checks will be carried out at an appropriate level, with repeat checks undertaken regularly and any changes in role reassessed.
- 4.1.5. All Ri representatives will be offered regular safeguarding training suitable to their role and experience.
- 4.1.6. Ri representatives are expected to:
- 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
  - Follow the relevant Safeguarding Procedures to recognise, respond to and report any concerns proactively and swiftly, no matter how minor or who is involved.

**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. 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. 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. 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.

**4.4. All concerns or allegations relating to safeguarding or abuse must be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately**

- 4.4.1. 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. If abuse is disclosed or safeguarding concerns are raised, this information cannot remain confidential and must be shared with the appropriate responsible people at the Ri so that action can be taken to protect everyone.
- 4.4.3. The Ri will take all concerns, allegations and disclosures seriously and will respond according to the safeguarding principles outlined in this policy:

Recognise	Respond	Refer	Record
We will recognise all concerns, reports and allegations, taking them seriously and determining the action required in line with safeguarding best practice and our duties as a charity	We will respond appropriately and proportionately  This may include (where appropriate) liaising with the person who raised the concern and/or the child and/or their parents/carers	We will refer concerns to external agencies as appropriate	We will record all the relevant information  This will include clear records of all decisions taken over referral, including any input from the child and/or their parents/carers

- 4.5.4 The Ri’s Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) and/or Directors, as appropriate, will assess whether a concern meets the criteria for referral under safeguarding legislation and what actions need to be taken in order to safeguard the welfare of the child(ren) in question.
- 4.5.5 Poor practice is not in itself abuse but can create environments where abuse or harm can more easily take place. Concerns of this nature can be discussed with the DSOs but depending on circumstances may fall under alternative reporting arrangements, such as the Ri’s Whistleblowing Policy.
- 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. 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, to better protect the child it will not be appropriate to engage with parents and carers.

- 4.5.2. We expect professionals to act on our concerns and we will consider escalating 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.
- 4.5.4. The Ri will comply with its legal duties to make relevant referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (or equivalent) where the threshold is met to do so<sup>2</sup>, and will determine any steps necessary to protect everyone during any pending enquiries.
- 4.5.5. The Ri will additionally comply with its legal duties to consider any action it may take if a person is considered for barring in line with Protecting Vulnerable Groups Act 2007, in line with the [\\*Barred and Under Consideration for Listing \(PVG\) policy.](#)
- 4.5.6. As a charity the Ri also has a duty to report serious incidents to the Charity Commission. This includes (but is not limited to) any incident which is serious enough to warrant referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service and/or Disclosure Scotland.

## 5. Context

- 5.1. This policy and the associated Child Safeguarding Procedures are underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:
  - [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#)<sup>3</sup>
  - [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees \(2022\)](#)<sup>4</sup>
  - [Safeguarding and child protection standards for the voluntary and community sector: children, young people and young adults aged 0-18 \(UK\) \(2019\)](#)<sup>5</sup>
  - Disclosure Scotland Act 2020
- 5.2. 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.
- 5.3. It is an offence to carry out regulated activity in Scotland without the person having completed a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check. Any staff planning regulated activity in Scotland must report immediately to the DSO or Lead Signatory.

## 6. Working with partner organisations

- 6.1. Partner organisations working with children are expected to:
  - 6.1.1. Have robust child safeguarding policies and procedures in place for all partnership activities, to protect children in line with safeguarding good practice and adhering to all current safeguarding legislation;

\* Please note: This link is only available to Ri staff.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs#what-is-the-harm-test>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> - HM Government

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees> - The Charity Commission

<sup>5</sup> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2019/safeguarding-child-protection-standards> - NSPCC

6.1.2. Use staff and volunteers for partnership activities who have been appropriately trained and vetted according to their role.

6.1.3. Safeguarding expectations of partner organisations that work with children will be included in contracts or other agreements as appropriate.

## 7. Consent for Ri activities

7.1. In line with safeguarding good practice, we require parent/carer consent for children to take part in Ri activities, as follows:

Type of activity	Age of child	Consent required
<b>Attendance at large-scale events</b> (including public or family theatre events; excluding CHRISTMAS LECTURES)	12 and under	Children must be accompanied by an adult throughout the event, in line with Ri Event Terms and Conditions <sup>6</sup>
	13 and above	Tickets should be booked by an adult, in-line with Eventbrite Terms of Service <sup>7</sup>
<b>Attendance at workshops</b> (including holiday and YSC workshops and Masterclasses)	15 and under	Children must have parent/carer permission to attend; if the children are accompanied by a teacher (or equivalent), consent can be confirmed by the school (or equivalent)
	16 and above	Children can give their own consent to attend
<b>CHRISTMAS LECTURES</b>	Special Terms and Conditions apply to all aspects of attendance, filming and photography. Children aged 10 and under are not typically permitted to attend.	

7.2. Please see the Ri's Social Media Policy for details on the consent needed for children to feature in photography or video when taking part in Ri activities. Even if parent/carer consent is given, all children have the right to opt-out from inclusion in photographs, audio or video recordings.

7.3. Please see the Ri's Data Protection Policy<sup>8</sup> for details on the consent needed to process and store children's data.

## 8. Safeguarding data storage and retention

8.1. All personal and special category data relating to safeguarding will be processed, stored and shared in line with relevant Data Protection legislation and guidance<sup>9,10</sup> and the Ri Data Protection Policy; in particular:

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.rigb.org/terms-and-conditions>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.eventbrite.com/help/en-us/articles/251210/eventbrite-terms-of-service/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.rigb.org/sites/default/files/attachments/7.%20Data%20Protection%20Policy%202024.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/data-sharing/a-10-step-guide-to-sharing-information-to-safeguard-children/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/child-protection-records-retention-storage-guidance>

Type of data	Storage
Records of safeguarding incidents or concerns relating to children	Until the child is 25; If the concern is historical and relates to someone who was a child at the time of the incident, but it is reported after the individual is an adult, the information will be retained for six years; If the concern also relates to an Ri representative as a perpetrator, records will be stored according to the timeframe outlined below
Records of accusations or concerns relating to the behaviour of an Ri representative	Until the Ri representative reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years (whichever is longer)
Information revealed by vetting checks	Until a decision over recruitment for a role is made and recorded; if there is a dispute over the results, a check certificate may be retained until the dispute is resolved up to the maximum of six months
Records of vetting checks being performed: date check was completed and verified; check reference number (and/or vetting scheme membership number if applicable); level and type of check; employer requesting the check; name and date of birth; decision regarding recruitment	In line with the Ri Data Protection and HR policies

- 8.2. In some cases, information relating to safeguarding concerns may be required to be retained for longer than the above periods, for example if legal proceedings are ongoing.

## 9. Governance and Responsibilities

- 9.1. The Ri Trustees have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and delegating responsibilities to staff.
- 9.2. The Audit and Risk Committee monitors safeguarding arrangements, risk controls and reports. It reports quarterly to the Board of Trustees.
- 9.3. 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.
- 9.4. 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. The Safeguarding Working Group is chaired by the DSO with executive oversight provided by an Ri Director; terms of Reference are approved by the Ri Directorate. DSO duties include:
- Receiving reports of safeguarding concerns and disclosures and making and overseeing safeguarding referrals to external agencies, as required
  - Providing safeguarding advice and support, including being the first point of contact for enquiries
  - Promoting a culture of safeguarding and accountability
  - Overseeing safeguarding vetting and training

- Maintaining a good working knowledge of relevant safeguarding legislation and good practice, and working to develop and maintain the Ri's practices in-line with these
  - Writing, reviewing and disseminating the Ri's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- 9.5. 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.
- 9.6. This policy and the associated Ri Safeguarding Procedures should be reviewed annually or when legislation changes, whichever is more frequent.
- The Audit and Risk Committee are responsible for reviewing the policy and procedures.
  - The Board of Trustees are responsible for approving the policy.

## **10. Monitoring**

- 10.1. All safeguarding incidents are reported anonymously to the Audit and Risk Committee quarterly.

## **11. Relevant policies, procedures and forms**

- 11.2. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Ri policies, procedures, and forms:
- Ri Safeguarding Procedures
  - Child Safeguarding Report Form
  - Data Protection Policy
  - EDIA Policy
  - Modern Slavery Policy
  - Social Media Policy
- 11.3. 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
- 11.4. 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
  - Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy