

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with the primary policies and procedures:

1. Safeguarding Children Policy
2. Safer Recruitment Practices Policy
3. Managing Concerns Policy
4. Equality & Diversity Policy and Statement
5. GDPR Policy

## **Terminology**

- *RDA UK Safeguarding Team refers to the team based at National Office. Contact details available in Section 10.*

## **1. Safeguarding Policy Statement**

Riding for the Disabled Association UK (RDA UK) is committed to promoting and ensuring the safety and well-being of all adults who engage with the Charity. As part of our commitment, we believe the rights of adults to live a life free from harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect is paramount; and adults are entitled to take part in activity in a safe and supportive environment.

In pursuit of this, RDA UK is committed to ensuring that:

- A person-centred approach is taken in all interactions.
- Every individual, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, nationality, religious affiliation, size or sexual orientation, is entitled to be protected against harm.
- All allegations, concerns and suspicions of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Collaboratively, everyone across the organisation will strive to promote the welfare, safety and health of adults taking part.

RDA UK safeguarding policies and procedures are consistent with those of British Equestrian (BEF). For more information about BEF Safeguarding, [click here](#).

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Establish a safe and supportive environment for adults at risk associated with the Charity.
- b) Ensure the views and wishes of adults are respected and supported, unless there are overriding reasons not to (see Managing Concerns Policy).
- c) Set clear expectations for trustees, staff, volunteers, coaches and anyone affiliated with the organisation regarding their responsibilities in safeguarding adults.
- d) Provide clear guidance on identifying, reporting and responding to any allegations, concerns or suspicions of harm.
- e) Demonstrate and promote a culture of openness and accountability regarding safeguarding issues.

## **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals involved with RDA UK, including RDA Groups, Regional Teams, Accessibility Mark Centres, trustees, staff, volunteers, coaches, participants and their parents/guardians.

## 4. Definitions

- **Adult:** A person over the age of 18.  
*Note for Scotland: A person 16 and over is considered an adult in Scotland.*
- **Adult at Risk (England, Wales & Northern Ireland):** Any person aged 18 years and over who:
  - a) has needs for care and support (irrespective of whether the local authority is meeting those needs), and,
  - b) is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, and,
  - c) as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse and neglect.
- **Adult at Risk (Scotland):** Any person at risk of harm because they are:
  - a) unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests,
  - b) at risk of harm, and,
  - c) affected by a disability, mental health condition, illness, or physical or mental infirmity.
- **Protected Adult (Scotland):** An individual aged 16 or over who is provided with (and thus receives) a type of care, health support or welfare services.
- **Safeguarding:** The process of protecting adults at risk from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation while promoting their well-being and rights.
- **Safer Recruitment:** A set of practices aimed at ensuring that individuals who are selected for positions are safe and suitable for the role.
- **Disclosure Checks:** Also known as Criminal Record Checks: A process of verifying whether an individual has a criminal history or not that may affect their suitability for the role applied for.

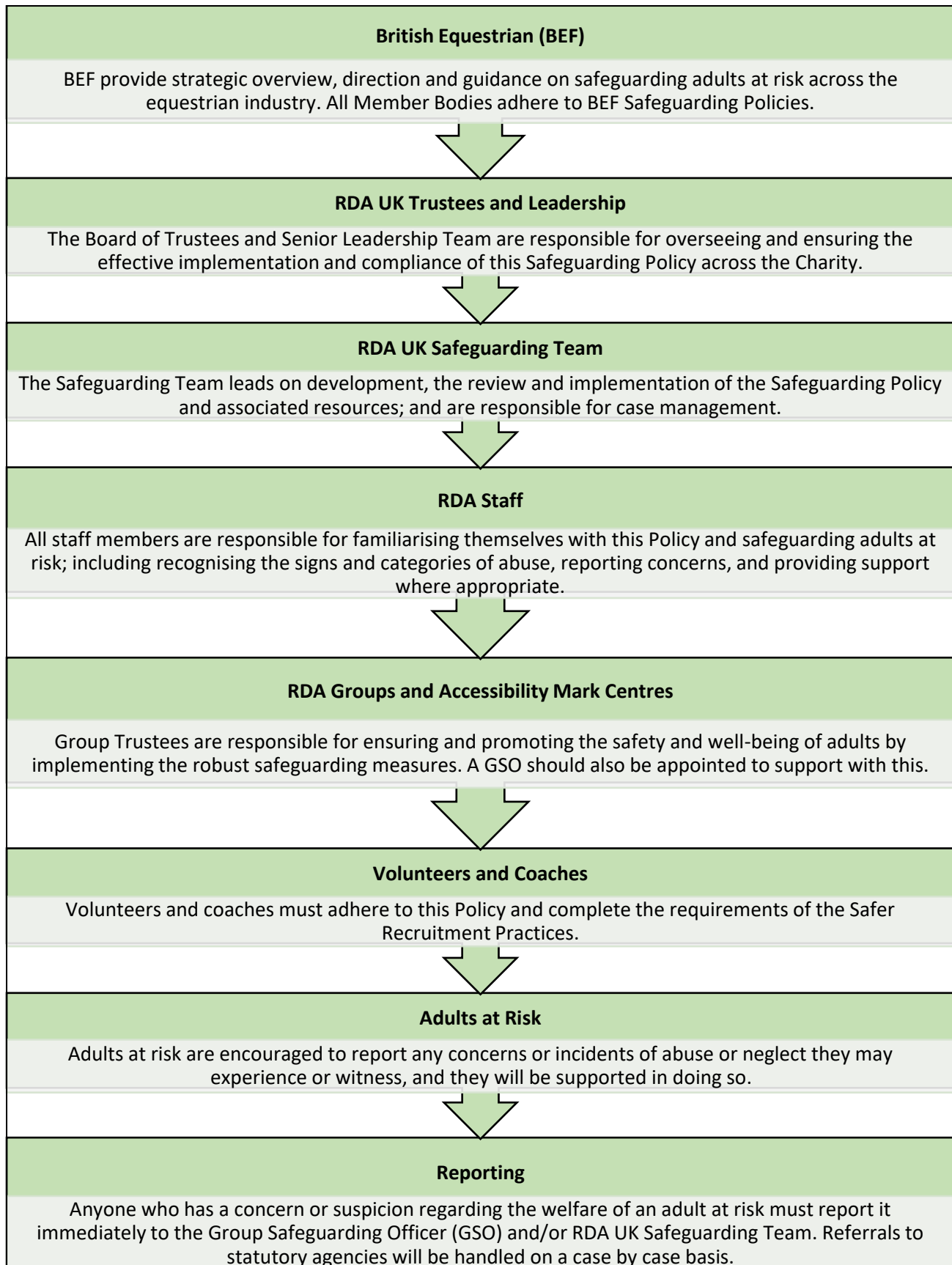
## 4. Principles

RDA UK adheres to the following principles:

- a) **Empowerment:** We will support adults at risk in making informed choices about their lives and respect their autonomy.
- b) **Inclusivity:** We are committed to making our programs and services accessible to all who might benefit from the Charity's offering.
- c) **Non-Discrimination:** We will not discriminate against any person based on their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability or any other characteristic.
- d) **Partnership:** We will work in partnership with adults at risk, relevant statutory agencies and organisations to protect a person effectively.
- e) **Proportionality:** Our response to safeguarding concerns will be proportionate to the level of risk and harm identified.
- f) **Confidentiality:** Information related to safeguarding matters will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, will only shared on a need-to-know basis and with consent of the individual involved, where possible.
- g) **Accountability:** Everyone is responsible for safeguarding adults at risk and have a duty to familiarise themselves with these responsibilities.

# Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities



# Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

## 6. Safer Recruitment Practices

RDA UK recognises the critical importance of robust safer recruitment practices to ensure that individuals who have contact with participants are suitable, trained and committed to safeguarding and promoting their welfare. To establish clear guidelines and procedures for the recruitment of staff, volunteers and other individuals involved in RDA activity, we will factor in:

- a) **Legal Compliance:** We will comply with all relevant laws, regulations and statutory guidance related to safer recruitment and adult at risk protection.
- b) **Proactive Approach:** We will adopt a proactive approach to safer recruitment by implementing robust procedures from the initial recruitment stage to ongoing monitoring and supervision.
- c) **Equality and Diversity:** We will ensure that our recruitment processes are fair, transparent, and free from discrimination, promoting diversity and inclusion.
- d) **Training and Awareness:** All individuals associated with RDA UK who work directly with adults at risk will receive appropriate training in safeguarding, including recognising signs of abuse, capacity to consent, responding to concerns, understanding their responsibilities and keeping themselves safe.
- e) **Vetting and Checks:** All applicants for roles involving contact with adults at risk will undergo necessary background checks and vetting procedures, including criminal record checks, references and identity verification.
- f) **Supervision and Monitoring:** Individuals in roles involving adults at risk will be supervised, and their performance will be monitored regularly. Any concerns will be addressed promptly, utilising the relevant code of conduct.
- g) **Whistleblowing:** We will have mechanisms in place for staff, volunteers and coaches to report concerns related to safeguarding matters and recruitment practices without fear of retaliation.
- h) **Record Keeping:** We will maintain detailed records of recruitment processes, including reference checks and vetting results, securely for the necessary duration.
- i) **Review and Evaluation:** Safer recruitment practices will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective and compliant.

Please refer to the [Safer Recruitment Practices Policy](#).

## 7. Managing Concerns

- a) **Reporting Concerns:** Any concerns or suspicions of abuse, neglect or exploitation of an adult at risk must be reported immediately to the Group Safeguarding Officer and/or RDA UK Safeguarding Team. Referrals to statutory agencies will be handled on a case by case basis.
- b) **Responding to Concerns:** RDA UK will respond promptly and appropriately to all safeguarding concerns, in accordance with the legal and statutory framework.
- c) **Assessing Concerns:** A person's capacity to consent will be considered when referring a concern to statutory agencies. Consent should be obtained, where possible, before making a referral.
- d) **Support:** Individuals affected by safeguarding concerns will be provided with appropriate support, including direction to support organisations, counselling support and medical services as needed.
- e) **Record Keeping:** Detailed records of safeguarding concerns, investigations and actions taken will be maintained in our case management system, while ensuring confidentiality.

Please refer to the [Managing Concerns Policy](#).

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## 8. Review and Monitoring

This document will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary, in line with the legal and statutory framework, to ensure it remains current and effective. Feedback from staff, volunteers and stakeholders will be considered in the review process.

## 9. Associated Resources

The [MyRDA website](#) hosts a [safeguarding resource library](#) including helpful documents, forms, process flows and guidance tailored to specific topics.

## 10. Contact Information

If you have concerns about the welfare of an adult at risk or need further information about this Policy, please contact the RDA UK Safeguarding Team.

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<b>Emma Wells</b> <i>RDA UK Trustee &amp; Safeguarding Representative</i>	<b>Lynda Whittaker</b> <i>National Safeguarding Lead</i>

# Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

## Appendix 1: Legal and Statutory Framework

### England & Wales

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 (Wales)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Information Sharing Advice (HM Government) 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2012
- The European Convention on Human Rights 1950
- Police Act 1997

### Scotland

- Adult Support and Protection Act 2007
- Adults with Incapacity Act 2000
- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007

### Northern Ireland

- Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership 2015
- Mental Capacity 2016