

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

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

Terminology

- Where “children” is referenced within this document, this also applies to young people.
- 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 ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children who engage with the Charity. As part of our commitment, we believe children are entitled to feel safe and protected from any form of harm, abuse and neglect, and to take part in activity in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment.

This Safeguarding Policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding children and provides guidelines for preventing and responding to any concerns regarding their welfare and wellbeing.

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

- A child-centred approach is taken in all interactions; the welfare of children is paramount.
- 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, health and development of children taking part in the offering.

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 protective environment for children associated with the Charity.
- b) Set clear expectations for trustees, staff, volunteers, coaches and anyone affiliated with the organisation regarding their responsibilities in safeguarding children.
- c) Provide clear guidance on identifying, reporting and responding to any concerns, allegations or suspicions of harm.
- d) Demonstrate and promote a culture of openness and accountability regarding safeguarding issues.

Safeguarding Children Policy

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

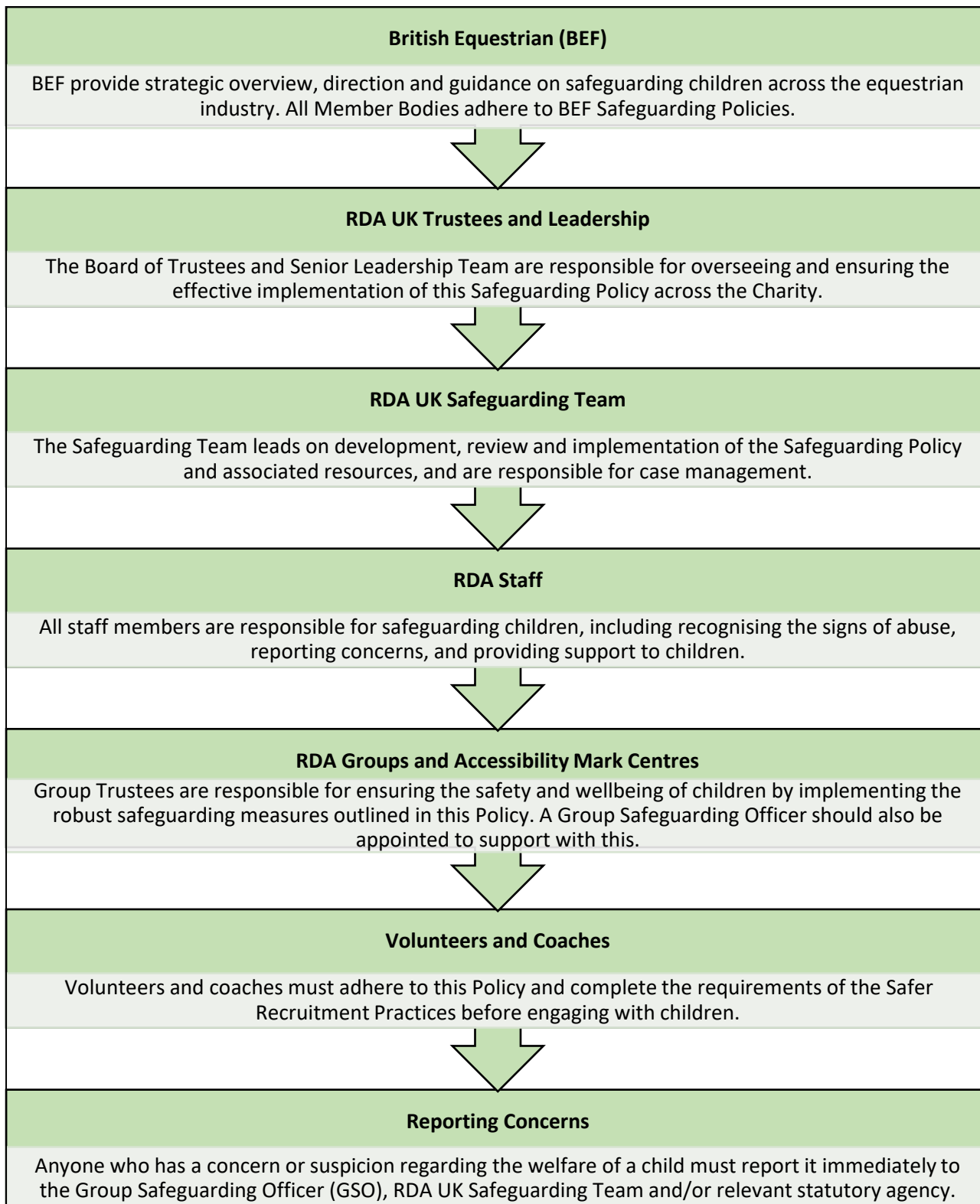
- **Child:** A person under the age of 18.
Note for Scotland: Most provisions which deal with parental rights and responsibilities apply only to children under the age of 16.
- **Safeguarding (England, Wales & Northern Ireland):** The process of protecting children from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation, and ensuring their welfare and wellbeing.
- **Child Wellbeing (Scotland):** The procedures and practices in place to promote the wellbeing of children and young people experiencing wellbeing concerns. These concerns do not always meet the threshold for a child protection referral, but do have an impact on the wellbeing of a child or young person.
- **Child Protection:** Part of the safeguarding process focusing on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm or abuse.
- **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) **Best Interest of the Child:** The best interests of the child will always be the primary consideration in all decisions and actions related to safeguarding children.
- b) **Non-Discrimination:** We will not discriminate against any child based on their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability or any other characteristic.
- c) **Inclusivity:** We are committed to making our programmes and services accessible to children.
- d) **Confidentiality:** Information related to child safeguarding will be treated with the utmost confidentiality, and only shared on a need-to-know basis.
- e) **Accountability:** Everyone is responsible for safeguarding children and have a duty to familiarise themselves with these responsibilities.

5. Roles and Responsibilities



6. Safer Recruitment Practices

RDA UK recognises the critical importance of robust safer recruitment practices to ensure that individuals who have contact with children are suitable, trained and committed to safeguarding and promoting their welfare.

Safeguarding Children Policy

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 child 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 children will receive appropriate training in safeguarding, including recognising signs of abuse, responding to concerns, understanding their responsibilities and keeping themselves safe.
- e) **Vetting and Checks:** All applicants for roles involving contact with children and young people will undergo necessary background checks and vetting procedures, including criminal record checks, references and identity verification.
- f) **Supervision and Monitoring:** Individuals in roles involving children 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 child safeguarding 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 child abuse or neglect must be reported immediately to the Group Safeguarding Officer, RDA UK Safeguarding Team and/or relevant statutory agency.
- b) **Responding to Concerns:** RDA UK will respond promptly and appropriately to all safeguarding concerns, in accordance with the legal and statutory framework.
- c) **Support:** Individuals affected by safeguarding concerns will be provided with appropriate support, including direction to support organisations, counselling support and medical services as needed.
- d) **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](#).

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.

Safeguarding Children Policy

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 safety or welfare of a child or need further information about this Policy, please contact the RDA UK Safeguarding Team.

Stef Brazier <i>Safeguarding Officer</i> Tel: 01926 476302 Email: sbrazier@rda.org.uk	Marisa Bretherton-Mackey <i>Membership Services Manager</i> Tel: 01926 405973 Email: marisa@rda.org.uk
Emma Wells <i>RDA UK Trustee & Safeguarding Representative</i>	Lynda Whittaker <i>National Safeguarding Lead</i>

Appendix 1: Legal and Procedural Framework

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children, RDA UK will act in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance. This list is not exhaustive.

England & Wales

- Childrens Act 1989 and 2004
- Child and Social Work Act 2017
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989
- The European Convention on Human Rights 1950
- Police Act 1997
- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE) 2018
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Information Sharing Advice (HM Government) 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2012

Scotland

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001
- Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014
- Children (Equal Protection From Assault) (Scotland) Act 2019

Safeguarding Children Policy

- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Scottish Government) 2021
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989
- Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998

Northern Ireland

- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2001
- Article 17 and 18 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007
- Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – a guide for schools (DfE) 2020
- How to identify and manage harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people (DfE) 2022