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See differently

RNIB Safeguarding Policy

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1. Purpose

This document sets out the RNIB safeguarding policy for children and adults at risk and underpins every aspect of RNIB work and the services it provides.

RNIB, its staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders are committed to safeguarding and making it integral to all our work which is completed by them.

RNIB believes the understanding of safeguarding throughout the organisation, and the actions RNIB takes together promote and maintain a safer environment and culture, whilst respecting an individual's dignity, privacy and appropriate confidentiality.

RNIB believes that a corporate approach to safeguarding is required. This commitment means that there will be a consistent approach throughout RNIB to safeguarding which makes it the responsibility for all staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders to identify and embed safeguarding in all the work it completes.

This policy supports RNIB values of inclusion by providing the support to the widest group of people to participate in its services.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all RNIB locations, voluntary activity and services provided in England, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

This policy applies to all RNIB staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders as well as other third parties who are employed or contracted by RNIB.

RNIB recognises the importance of safeguarding all its staff and volunteers from harm when at work or in providing a service. The safeguarding policy and processes take due recognition of this factor in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy.

3. Review

This policy is due for review every 12 months or following any legislative changes, whichever comes first.

Next review date: November 2019

The policy will be reviewed by the Regulatory Services and Safeguarding Committee.

4. Definitions

Child

In England, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland and Wales a child is defined as 'any person under the age of 18, whether living with their families, in state care or living independently'. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, p.7 & The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995).

In Scotland, 'a child is generally defined as any person under the age of 18'. However, there may be circumstances where people aged 16 and 17 years are classed as adults and advice should be taken on a case by case basis on which laws apply in Scotland. (National guidance for child protection in Scotland, 2014).

Safeguarding Children

1. 'Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment;
2. Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
3. Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
4. Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes'.
(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

Adult at risk

In England, Isle of Man and Wales an adult at risk is defined as a person over the age of 18 whom:

- 'Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect'. (Care Act 2004, section 42).

In Northern Ireland an adult at risk is defined as a person over the age of 18:

- 'Whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal circumstances and/or life circumstances'. (HSCB Northern Ireland).

In Scotland an adult at risk is defined as a person over the age of 16 whom:

- 'Are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights and or other interest;
- Are at risk of harm; and
- Because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected'. (Adult Support and Protection (Act) 2007, S.3(1)).

Safeguarding Adults

'Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances'. (Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2018 s.14.7).

5. Safeguarding Commitments

RNIB values are underpinned by these safeguarding policy commitments.

RNIB Board of Trustees are committed to ensuring a continual improvement in safeguarding practice and to support this have endorsed 6 policy commitments:

Promoting a safe and trusted environment and a culture that prioritises safeguarding.

All RNIB staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders will respect children and adults at risk and promote their well-being first and foremost.

RNIB will strive to create and maintain environments which are safe for everyone who has dealings with RNIB. This will be achieved by:

- Staff and volunteer training;
- effective communication;
- organisational learning, and;
- monitoring through effectively implemented quality assurance arrangements that ensure consistency and compliance throughout the organisation.

RNIB will train all staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders in working to this policy by challenging poor practice and reporting all safeguarding concerns and abuse.

Safely recruiting and supporting all people within RNIB

RNIB will have specific procedures in place to select and carry out the required vetting for all people (staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders) involved within it, in accordance with legislation and government guidance. See RNIB Recruitment and Selection Policy.

RNIB will provide appropriate and effective training to all staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders working within the organisation.

Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Anyone who reports any safeguarding concerns or allegations to RNIB will be treated with respect. All safeguarding concerns and allegations will be dealt with in accordance with statutory child and adult safeguarding guidance and RNIB safeguarding procedures ([hyperlink to process](#)).

All RNIB staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders will cooperate fully with the statutory authorities in all cases.

Treating with respect, care and dignity, the victims of abuse and other safeguarding concerns:

Whenever a safeguarding concern, including any poor practice issue or allegation of abuse is raised, RNIB will offer support to all those that have been affected. People will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously. RNIB will respond to any disclosure of a safeguarding concern, including poor practice or abuse in accordance

with its policy and practice guidance. Where appropriate, this will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies.

Treating with respect, care and dignity, those that are subject of concerns or allegations

In responding to safeguarding concerns, or allegations of abuse, RNIB will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal and civil law of an accused person. A presumption of innocence will be maintained during any RNIB process.

RNIB will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect people when any person is considered a risk to others through a mitigation process.

In addition, RNIB recognises people who are subject to safeguarding concerns are vulnerable during any RNIB or statutory agency process. RNIB will take all reasonable steps to support people through this process.

RNIB will encourage a culture of learning throughout the organisation

RNIB commits to doing the right thing every time for all the people involved in safeguarding concerns. However, RNIB recognises that processes and outcomes, on occasions, can and must be improved. RNIB commits to being transparent about learning from these situations through a robust and effective quality assurance system and compliance process which is checked through independent external scrutiny.

This policy will ensure RNIB puts its customers first who all have a right to be safe from inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive or harmful behaviour when using our services or sites.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone involved with RNIB has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this safeguarding policy and the processes that support it. RNIB will support this responsibility through a structured rollout of training to staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders.

RNIB trustees have the final responsibility to ensure this safeguarding policy is implemented and working effectively. The trustees, by ensuring effective quality assurance, compliance and reporting retain overall responsibility, but delegate the safeguarding work to all staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders who are accountable for their decisions and actions they take within their own role. The trustee's full responsibilities are listed in Appendix B below.

Roles and responsibilities for other positions are recorded in the safeguarding practice guidance.

Training

All staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders will receive safeguarding induction training which will outline the fundamentals, their core responsibilities and RNIB processes.

Depending on the individual's role further training, including regular updates, will be provided to enhance their knowledge of safeguarding to enable them to complete their responsibilities.

7. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is underpinned by a detailed practice guidance 'Managing safeguarding concerns and allegations'. Other RNIB policy documents and Government legislation across the UK support this policy, which are listed in Appendix A. All these documents are underpinned by Human Rights Act 1998 and UN Convention on the rights of the child, 1992. This list does not exclude other relevant legislation or guidance that may be applicable to specific settings, locations or services.

8. Version Control

Version	Date	Author & Job Title	Status & Level of Approval	Changes
0.1	08-02-19	Duncan Shepard – Interim Safeguarding Lead	Signed off by Regulated Services and Safeguarding Committee and ELT	Authoring

Appendix A

RNIB Policy documents

- Anti-Bribery & Fraud policy
- Code of conduct
- Health and Safety policy
- Information Governance framework
- Information Security Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Serious Incident Policy for Trustees
- Whistleblowing (Public Interest Disclosure) policy

Legislation and guidance across all jurisdictions

- General Data Protection Regulations, 2018
- Human Rights Act, 1998
- UN Convention on the rights of the child, 1992
- Prevent Duty Guidance (for England, Scotland and Wales)

England

- Care Act, 2014
- Care and Support statutory guidance, 2016
- Children's Act 1989
- Children's Act 2004
- Children and Families Act, 2014
- Children and Social Work Act, 2017
- Education Act 2002
- Education Act 2011
- Equalities Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018
- Mental Capacity Act, 2005
- Safeguarding disabled children practice guidance, 2009
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- SEND code of practice, 2014
- Working Together to safeguard children, 2018

Isle of Man

- Safeguarding Act 2018

Northern Ireland

- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order, 1995
- Cooperating to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland, 2017
- Mental Capacity Act (NI), 2016 Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and protection in partnership, 2015
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order, 2007
- Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

Scotland

- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Adult Support and Protection Code of Practice, 2014
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act, 2000
- Children (Scotland) Act, 1995
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, 2014
- Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Act 2016
- Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014.
- Protecting Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Standards (2014).
- The Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act 1991 (c.50).

Wales

- Children's Act, 1989
- Children's Act, 2004
- Children and Social Work Act, 2017
- Social Services and Wellbeing Act, 2014
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act -Working together to safeguard people, volume 1, 2016
- All Wales Child Protection procedures, 2008
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- Mental Capacity Act, 2005

Appendix B

Trustees: Safeguarding role and responsibilities

Trustees must take reasonable steps to protect those connected with RNIB from harm. This includes:

- people who benefit from RNIB work and services;
- staff;
- volunteers and;
- other people connected to RNIB activities.

‘Any failure by trustees to manage safeguarding risks adequately would be a serious regulatory concern to the Charity Commission who may consider misconduct and/or mismanagement in the administration of RNIB and may be a breach of trustee duty’¹. Trustees can be held responsible for any consequences or loss that RNIB incurs if they have not followed their duties.

RNIB Trustees will ensure:

- there is a clear line of responsibility for and reporting to them safeguarding matters;
- that safeguarding practice complies with statutory and national guidance, and local best practice;
- the safeguarding policy and process guidance is accessible to people both internally and externally to RNIB and in their preferred format;
- the reporting procedures to deal with safeguarding concerns and allegations are implemented consistently, efficiently and effectively;
- clear roles and responsibilities are explicitly outlined and clear for staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders;
- Any failures by any person connected with RNIB to follow the safeguarding policy and procedures will be dealt with as a serious matter;
- there is a culture of learning from poor practice;
- there is a safer recruitment procedure in place which is linked to the wider safeguarding process;
- clear arrangements for support and/or supervision for staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders;

¹ Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities, Charity Commission for England and Wales, 6th December 2017 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities/strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities>

- Effective and ongoing appropriate safeguarding training for all RNIB staff, volunteers, trustees, governors, independent advisors, committee members, contractors and leaders is provided;
- Ongoing and effective working with statutory and voluntary sector partners;
- complaints and whistleblowing procedures are well publicised;
- effective information sharing with all statutory and voluntary partners;
- Effective and accurate record keeping in accordance with GDPR 2018 and;
- serious incidents are reported to the Charity Commission in accordance with their statutory obligations.

Document ends.