

## RSPB's Safeguarding Policy

The RSPB recognises that children (and vulnerable and protected adults)<sup>1</sup> and the decisions they make in the future are vital to the sustainability of our environment. We want to encourage their interest in and understanding of nature conservation issues, and help them to connect to and take action for nature in the following ways:

- Through membership of RSPB Wildlife Explorers and RSPB Phoenix, individually or as families
- Through visits to nature reserves
- Through schools' outreach
- Through volunteering
- By participating in RSPB activities for children and families.

We want children to enjoy their involvement with the RSPB, and must operate safely, with safeguarding as the top priority. We also recognise that we may have incidental or targeted interaction with vulnerable and protected adults and their carers, and need to act and be seen to act appropriately at all times.

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable and protected adults. They are entitled to protection from physical, sexual and emotional harm and have the right to a safe, positive and enjoyable environment when involved with the RSPB.

This Safeguarding Policy is based on the following key principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children will have a positive, enjoyable and safe experience with the RSPB
- All allegations, suspicions of harm or abuse and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately
- Everyone will work in partnership to promote the welfare, health and development of children
- Our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and regulatory requirements wherever we operate as a charity
- In line with our [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) we aim to ensure that all staff<sup>2</sup>, partners, clients, contractors, members and the public are treated fairly. Unless it can be shown to be justified, this will be regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity, or national origin), disability, medical status, age, religion or belief, political opinion, social or economic status, or ex-offender status.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this document, child/children is used generically and includes [vulnerable and protected adults](#).

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this document, staff is used generically and includes, [all staff, including senior managers, board of trustees, employees, volunteers, seasonal workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of RSPB](#).

RSPB acknowledges that some children, including those who are disabled can be particularly vulnerable to abuse, and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

All staff regardless of their role (or anyone working on behalf of the RSPB) have a responsibility for understanding our policy and implementing our safeguarding approach.

*‘Everyone has a responsibility to keep children and young people safe.*

*All organisations that come into contact with children should have specific safeguarding policies and procedures in place.’*

**NSPCC**

### **As part of our Safeguarding Policy RSPB:**

- Promotes and prioritises the safety and well-being of children
- Ensures everyone working with children clearly understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and vulnerable and protected adults
- Ensures appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support is provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensures that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevents the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals to roles involving working with children
- Ensures robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- Has a Safeguarding Group chaired by the People Director that meets bi-monthly. The purpose of the group is to provide an overview and strategic direction for RSPB policies and procedures to protect children
- We have a team of ‘Safeguarding Advisers’ across the organisation whose role is to provide staff with training and advice on all matters connected with safeguarding children
- Offers opportunities for children and parents/guardians to contact us with their concerns on a dedicated safeguarding hotline

### **The purpose of our Safeguarding Policy is:**

- To provide protection for the children who undertake activities with the RSPB
- To provide staff with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm

The policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, board of trustees, employees, volunteers, seasonal workers, agency staff, students, or anyone working on behalf of RSPB.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved with the RSPB. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

### **We seek to safeguard children by:**

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection and vulnerable and protected adult guidelines through appropriate procedures and a code of conduct for staff
- Recruiting staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, carers and staff
- Sharing information about concerns with appropriate agencies who need to know, and involving carers, parents and children appropriately
- Providing effective leadership and management for staff working with children through supervision, support and training

### **Monitoring our approach to safeguarding**

Our Safeguarding Policy is reviewed regularly by our Safeguarding Group. Our Safeguarding Policy may also be reviewed in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance in England & Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland
- As required by the Disclosure & Barring Service, Disclosure Scotland and Access NI or other appropriate regulatory bodies
- As a result of changes in policy or guidance issued for Charities by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, Scottish Charity Regulator or Charity Commission for Northern Ireland
- As a result of any other significant change or event.

### **Prevention of bullying, harassment and abuse**

RSPB will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or sexually abusive or exploitative acts against adults or children being perpetrated by our employees, volunteers or anyone associated with the delivery of our programmes. Volunteers, employees and managers are bound to report people or incidents that they believe cause concern directly via their line manager.

RSPB managers have a duty to ensure that allegations are investigated in line with our safeguarding related policies including our [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#) and that appropriate disciplinary measures are taken in line with our [Disciplinary \(Conduct\) Policy and Procedure](#).

## Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

At the RSPB we believe all people have a right to live their lives free from sexual violence.

We recognise that there are unequal power dynamics across the organisation and that we face an inherent risk of some staff exploiting their position of power for personal gain

## Safeguarding & Our Supporters

RSPB fundraising is carried out in line with the latest guidance provided in the Institute of Fundraising Guide – '*Treating Donors Fairly – Fundraising with people in vulnerable circumstances*' covering:

- Always be respectful
- Treat your donors fairly
- Respond appropriately to the individual needs of your donors
- Take responsibility for your actions, ensuring that your fundraising is carried out in line with the Code of Fundraising Practice

The Institute of Fundraising Guide is found here:

<http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/treatingdonorsfairly/>

We provide training for our face to face fundraising and Supporter Services staff regarding vulnerable people or those in vulnerable circumstance.

We ensure that we do not send fundraising asks to donors that have been identified as vulnerable or in vulnerable circumstance. We always offer a refund to a donor that is either found to be or reports themselves that they are vulnerable or in vulnerable circumstance.

We ensure that agencies working on our behalf have a policy and training in place regarding vulnerable donors and donors in vulnerable circumstance.

**RSPB Safeguarding Group**

Last Reviewed: August 2020

Next Revision Due: September 2021