

RSPB Safeguarding Policy Statement

The RSPB recognises that children 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.

Our 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 participants, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity, or national origin), religion and belief, gender, sexual orientation, ex-offender status or socio-economic background, have the right to protection from harm, abuse or exploitation
- 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 and vulnerable and protected adults
- Our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and regulatory requirements wherever we operate as a charity

RSPB acknowledges that some children or vulnerable and protected adults, 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 and volunteers regardless of their role (or anyone working on behalf of the RSPB) have a responsibility for understanding our policy and implementing our safeguarding approach.

“the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.”

[Working together to safeguard children \(HM Government 2013\)](#)

As part of our Safeguarding Policy RSPB:

- Promotes and prioritises the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable and protected adults
- Ensures everyone working with children and vulnerable and protected adults 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 or vulnerable and protected adults
- Ensures robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- Has a Safeguarding Steering 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 and vulnerable and protected adults
- We have a team of Safeguarding Advisers across the organisation whose role is to provide staff and volunteers with training and advice on all matters connected with safeguarding children and vulnerable and protected adults
- Offers opportunities for children and vulnerable and protected adults to contact us with their concerns on a dedicated safeguarding hotline

The purpose of our Safeguarding Policy is:

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

The policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, board of trustees, paid staff, 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 and vulnerable and protected adults 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 and volunteers
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, carers, vulnerable and protected adults, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with appropriate agencies who need to know, and involving carers, parents, children and vulnerable and protected adults appropriately
- Providing effective leadership and management for staff and volunteers working with children and vulnerable and protected adults through supervision, support and training

Monitoring our approach to safeguarding

Our Safeguarding Policy is reviewed regularly by our Safeguarding Steering 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 any other significant change or event.

Safeguarding & Our Supporters

RSPB fundraising is carried out in line with the latest guidance provided in the Institute of Fundraising Guide – ‘*TREATING DONORS FAIRLY: Responding to the needs of people in vulnerable circumstances and helping donors make informed decisions*’ including sections on:

- Identifying people who may be in a vulnerable circumstance
- When fundraisers shouldn't take donations
- Steps that fundraisers can take to help donors make an informed decision
- Whether donations can be returned
- Issues around mental capacity and power of attorney

The IOF Guide is found here:

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

We provide training for our face to face fundraising & 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.

Safeguarding Steering Group January 2016