

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND (ROTARY GB&I)

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN POLICY

Applicable to all Clubs and Districts in Rotary GB&I

Policy Statement

The Clubs recognise that the services it provides are used by children in both a physical and online environment.

The Clubs believe that children have the right to be secure from abuse, and Rotary GB&I are committed to protecting all the children in their care from harm.

The Clubs will appoint a Rotarian as the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officer. This Officer will have suitable experience, training and expertise, and will be responsible for liaising with appropriate outside agencies and Rotary GB&I in any child protection matter.

The Clubs have a duty to ensure the welfare of all children who may be at risk, including when engaging with children in online Rotary activities. This duty involves reporting the risk to an appropriate agency and Rotary GB&I and by promoting a safe environment within the Club.

The Clubs will take every possible action to prevent abuse and to deal with it as promptly and effectively as possible if it occurs.

Aim of the Policy

The central aim of Rotary GB&I's Safeguarding Policy is to inform all Rotarians of:

- Rotary GB&I's approach to the Safeguarding of children
- ways in which the Clubs do this, both in a physical and online environment
- the steps taken to avoid abuse taking place
- the actions that will be taken by the Clubs to deal with abuse if it occurs

Definition of Abuse

Abuse of children may take any of the following forms:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

Responsibility

Rotary GB&I has a duty to ensure that all Clubs working with children adopt safe practices.

The Clubs will undertake Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)* checks where regulations deem it necessary for the activities being undertaken and will undertake regular education of its members to minimise any risks to children posed by Rotarians or others who may be supporting Rotary activity involving children.

The Clubs have a duty to report serious concerns relating to abuse to appropriate agencies including the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)* and the Rotary GB&I Compliance Officer.

Rotary GB&I will:

- Set out and inform Rotarians of the procedures for responding to suspicions or evidence of abuse
- Incorporate material relevant to issues of abuse on the Rotary GB&I website
- Maintain vigilance concerning the possibility of abuse of children from whatever source
- Encourage a climate of openness which enables Rotarians to pass on concerns about behaviour that might be abusive
- Produce and regularly revise policies and procedures to minimise the risk of abuse
- Ensure that all Rotarians are aware of the main indicators of child abuse
- Investigate any allegations of abuse quickly and thoroughly in conjunction with appropriate agencies
- Implement improvements to procedures if an investigation reveals deficiencies in the way in which Rotary GB&I operates
- Collaborate with other relevant agencies in combating abuse and improving the protection of children

Districts will:

Appoint a Rotarian as the Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officer. This Officer will have suitable experience, training and expertise.

Ensure that all Club Safeguarding Children/Child Protection Officers within their District receive regular education to minimise any risks to children posed by Rotarians in their District

The Clubs expect its members to:

- Refrain from any abusive action in relation to children
- Report to the Club anything they witness which is or might be abusive
- Co-operate in any investigation into alleged abuse
- Refer to the Rotary 'Safeguarding Manual' and 'Communicating Online with Children' guidance documents

Rotarians should be aware of who they may turn to for advice if they become aware or suspect that abuse is occurring.

Failure by Rotarians to report incidents or suspicions of abuse may lead to disciplinary and/or legal action.

**** or relevant state authority***