

# LEATHERHEAD RDA SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY



There has been an increasing awareness over recent years that some individuals who want to harm and abuse children will use charitable organisations, such as Riding for the Disabled, as a vehicle to gain access to children.

Leatherhead Riding for the Disabled Association (Leatherhead RDA) fully accepts its legal and moral obligation to protect children in the course of its work and it is our policy to make every reasonable safeguard to protect those who are involved in any aspect of our work.

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

- The welfare of children is paramount,
- All children are able to participate in a fun and safe environment,
- All children have the right to protection from physical, sexual and emotional harm and from neglect and bullying,
- All reasonable and practical steps are taken to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment; respecting children's rights, wishes and feelings,
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately,
- All trustees and volunteers have a responsibility to report any concerns with regards to child protection matters. **It is the responsibility of experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is *everyone's* responsibility to report any concerns,**
- Leatherhead RDA will appoint a trustee or delegated volunteer as Group Safeguarding Officer,
- The Safeguarding Officer, Coaches and other relevant volunteers attend a recognised face to face safeguarding workshop with refresher training taken every 3 years,
- All new volunteers will receive a copy of our Code of Conduct and E-Safety Code of Conduct,
- All new volunteers will require 2 references,
- Safeguarding Officers and all volunteers aged 16 years or over will have an enhanced DBS check on joining the Group which will be renewed every 3 years (unless they are exempt - see below). Coaches and Group Organisers will also be checked against the Child Barred List.

As defined in the Children Act 1989, for the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered a child.

The policies and procedures apply to everyone within Leatherhead RDA, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity. Everyone should be aware of the child protection procedures and best practices and ensure they are implemented.

Who is exempt from DBS checks?

- Volunteers aged under 16
- Volunteers who are not actively involved at Group sessions, for example trustees who are never involved with sessions, administrative staff/office support staff
- Volunteers on a short-term work experience or volunteer placement (less than 2 months)