

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Protecting children, young people, adults at risk and everyone who comes into contact with Right First Time UK.

Right First Time UK Ltd | Company No. 17493370 | Incorporated: 3 October 2026

Updated: 13 October 2026 | Previous policy date: 16 June 2026 | Next review: 3 September 2027 or earlier if needed

IMMEDIATE DANGER? CALL 999. Do not wait for RFTUK permission or an internal meeting.

Recognise. Respond. Record. Report. Refer or escalate where necessary. Do not personally investigate.

1. Purpose, Scope and Core Commitment

Right First Time UK (RFTUK) works to protect children, young people, adults at risk and anyone who comes into contact with its services, campaigns, events, members or representatives. Concerns can involve abuse, neglect, exploitation, domestic abuse, homelessness, distress, threats of self-harm, discrimination or unsafe organisational conduct.

This policy applies to Founders, Directors, Campaign Leaders, Campaigners, Volunteers, employees, contractors, advisers, event helpers and authorised representatives. Public Members, Subscribers and visitors may report concerns, but do not acquire the duties or authority of an RFTUK representative merely by joining or subscribing.

Safeguarding responsibilities remain with the organisation as personnel change. Safety, dignity and accountability take priority over fundraising, publicity, campaign objectives, reputation and internal loyalty.

2. Safeguarding Standards

RFTUK will listen respectfully, take genuine concerns seriously, act promptly and proportionately, maintain safe role boundaries, limit access to sensitive information, make appropriate referrals, and learn from safeguarding incidents.

Everyone acting for RFTUK must treat people respectfully, raise concerns promptly, avoid unnecessary risks and cooperate with lawful safeguarding processes. Safeguarding is everyone's concern, although specific responsibilities depend on a person's role.

3. UK Safeguarding Law and Organisational Limits

Safeguarding law and official procedures vary between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Relevant frameworks may include the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, Care Act 2014, Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance in England; the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Wales Safeguarding Procedures; Scotland's child-protection guidance and Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007; and the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and Northern Ireland safeguarding guidance.

UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, applicable data-law amendments, equality, harassment and other relevant laws may also apply. Not every statutory duty listed here applies automatically to RFTUK: the applicable law depends on the activity, the nation and the organisation's legal role.

RFTUK can provide information, signposting, appropriate advocacy within its role, protective steps and lawful referrals. It is not an emergency service, statutory safeguarding authority, police force, social-work service, medical provider or automatically a provider of regulated legal or professional advice.

4. Children and Young People

For this policy a child is generally a person under 18. Contact with children requires age-appropriate supervision, boundaries, communication arrangements, consideration of parental or other lawful authority, safe records, and assessment of whether any particular role is eligible for a criminal-record check.

RFTUK must not identify a child publicly simply to strengthen a campaign. Photographs, recordings, stories and family-court material require separate privacy, consent, reporting-restriction and safeguarding checks. Possessing a document or having one adult's consent does not automatically permit publication of another person's information.

5. Adults at Risk and Vulnerable Circumstances

People may face heightened risk through disability, care needs, illness, communication barriers, homelessness, coercive control, financial dependency, isolation, distress, bereavement, exploitation, trafficking or modern slavery. Legal definitions of an adult at risk differ across the UK.

Vulnerability must not be assumed from disability, autism, dyslexia, neurodivergence or mental-health conditions alone. Safeguarding action should protect a person's rights, voice, independence and choice, as well as their safety.

6. Types of Concerns We Recognise

Concerns may include physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial, discriminatory or organisational abuse; neglect or self-neglect; domestic abuse and coercive control; grooming; trafficking; child sexual or criminal exploitation; stalking; online abuse; harassment; bullying; abuse of trust; threats of serious violence; suicide or serious self-harm risk; and acute mental-health crisis.

A concern is assessed on its facts. A disclosure or allegation must not automatically be treated as proven, but lack of proof is not a reason to delay a necessary safeguarding referral.

7. Responsibilities of Founders and Directors

Founders and Directors must ensure that workable safeguarding reporting and independent escalation routes exist, oversee risk controls, protect records, arrange proportionate training and role supervision, consider safeguarding in recruitment, and review serious incidents.

An allegation involving a Founder or Director must not be shielded by their position. No Founder or Director is above this policy. Internal escalation must not require a person to report only to the person complained about.

8. Responsibilities of Campaign Leaders, Campaigners and Volunteers

Campaign Leaders must identify foreseeable risks, establish clear boundaries, protect sensitive evidence, brief Volunteers and Campaigners, plan safe activities and report serious concerns. They must not personally investigate allegations.

Campaigners and Volunteers must follow role instructions, protect confidentiality, avoid coercing people to disclose experiences or participate in publicity, make no promises beyond their authority, and report concerns instead of trying to resolve serious safeguarding matters alone.

Volunteers are not expected to enter dangerous situations or act as safeguarding professionals. They may seek guidance and should not be expected to handle a serious concern unaided.

9. Members, Subscribers and the Public

People participating in RFTUK spaces must respect others, avoid threats, harassment, discrimination and sharing another person's confidential identifying information, and follow reasonable safety arrangements.

Membership, donations and subscriptions do not authorise someone to represent RFTUK, investigate another person, access confidential evidence, or exercise organisational safeguarding powers. Anyone may report a concern through RFTUK or an appropriate statutory authority.

10. Children's Communication Boundaries

Unnecessary secret or private contact with children is not acceptable. Representatives must not create personal social-media relationships arising from an RFTUK role without a legitimate, approved and safeguarded reason.

Collect a child's or family's contact details only when necessary. Respect lawful parental, carer, professional or organisational arrangements and promptly escalate any safeguarding concern.

11. Adults at Risk, Financial Boundaries and Exploitation

No representative may exploit someone's distress, disability, finances, trust or dependency. Do not pressure anyone into campaigning, publicity or disclosure, and do not create inappropriate personal or financial dependence.

Without proper authority, representatives must not take control of a person's bank account, request PINs or passwords, borrow from people they support, request personal payment for voluntary campaign help, or collect RFTUK funds outside approved arrangements.

Suspected financial exploitation must be treated as a safeguarding concern and may also warrant fraud or police reporting.

12. Home Visits, Lone Working and Events

Before a home visit, isolated meeting, public event, lobbying activity or outreach, consider necessity, location, attendees, accessibility, transport, supervision, known risks and an emergency or check-in plan. Another authorised person should attend when justified.

No person should be sent into an unsafe setting for RFTUK. Higher-risk activities require appropriate advance planning and, where needed, a written risk assessment under the Health & Safety, Events & Lone Working Policy.

13. Photographs, Case Studies, Campaign Evidence and Online Activity

Before publishing identifying information, assess consent or another appropriate legal basis, understanding, potential harm to others, family-court or court-reporting restrictions, and whether redaction or anonymity would reduce risk.

Use authorised systems, protect accounts and records, avoid insecure transfer of highly sensitive information, and report account compromises, online grooming, intimidation or credible threats. Campaign benefit never overrides safeguarding.

An online disclosure must be treated as seriously as an in-person disclosure. Do not publicly identify children or present disputed allegations as established facts.

14. Responding to a Disclosure — What to Do

Remain calm. Listen without judgement. Let the person explain in their own words. Take the concern seriously, record relevant facts faithfully where appropriate, explain the limits of confidentiality, and report or refer promptly.

Do not interrogate, use unnecessary leading questions, demand proof before acting on credible risk, confront a suspected perpetrator when this may increase danger, promise secrecy, discuss the matter casually or publish allegations on social media.

Use the process: Recognise → Respond → Record → Report → Refer or escalate. Do not personally investigate.

15. Immediate Danger and Crisis Situations

IF SOMEONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL 999. Do not wait for RFTUK permission, an internal meeting or a completed form. Where urgent police help is needed but danger is not immediate, use the appropriate local police route.

For an urgent health, suicide or mental-health crisis, contact emergency services when there is immediate danger; otherwise use appropriate NHS or specialist crisis support. Report the matter internally afterwards when safe and relevant. RFTUK does not replace emergency or crisis services.

16. Reporting and Statutory Referrals

Raise safeguarding concerns promptly through the published RFTUK contact or safeguarding route. If the allegation concerns that route, use an appropriate alternative organisational lead or contact the relevant authority directly. You never have to report an allegation solely to the person complained about.

Depending on the concern and UK nation, appropriate bodies include local authority children's social care, adult safeguarding services, police, healthcare, a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where applicable, other regulators or statutory agencies.

RFTUK must not attempt to prove an allegation by its own investigation before referring a credible concern to an appropriate authority.

17. Safeguarding Records and Accurate Reporting

Where a record is justified, note dates and times, people involved, direct observations, significant words disclosed, immediate risks, protective actions, who was told, and any referrals made. Clearly distinguish what someone reported from what RFTUK directly observed or assessed.

Avoid speculation, unnecessary identifiers and duplicate sensitive records. Restrict access, store securely, follow the Records Retention & Destruction Policy, and respect legal holds or regulatory requirements.

18. Confidentiality and Sharing for Protection

Information sharing must be lawful, necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure. A promise of absolute confidentiality must not be made.

UK data-protection law does not prohibit justified safeguarding sharing when a proper legal basis and any additional necessary conditions are satisfied. Protect the privacy of children, victims, witnesses and people accused.

19. Allegations About People Connected to RFTUK

Concerns about a Founder, Director, Campaign Leader, Campaigner, Volunteer, Member, employee or contractor must be assessed without favouritism. Where justified, RFTUK may temporarily alter duties, restrict access, suspend unsupervised contact, pause public work or seek specialist advice and referral.

Temporary safeguards are protective steps, not an automatic finding of guilt. The matter must be handled fairly while prioritising safety and evidence preservation.

20. Safer Recruitment, Criminal Record Checks and Role Allocation

Before authorising activities, use proportionate descriptions, role checks, references, identity verification, supervision, safeguarding information and training. Do not assume every role is eligible for Standard, Enhanced or barred-list checks.

Check the actual duties and current DBS rules for England and Wales, Disclosure Scotland rules for Scotland and AccessNI rules for Northern Ireland. Only obtain the level of criminal-record information legally justified for that role, and protect the results.

21. Training, Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

Training and guidance should reflect role risk and cover recognising harm, disclosures, reporting routes, recording, privacy, online conduct, boundaries, emergencies and publication risks.

Provide reasonable adjustments where applicable, including written information, accessible formats, different communication methods and additional processing time. Disability and neurodivergence must not automatically be treated as safeguarding concerns.

22. Protective Measures, Misconduct and Fair Process

Protective steps may include guidance, supervision, restricted access, temporary suspension, role reassignment or referral to relevant authorities. Serious or repeated misconduct may lead to removal from an activity or lawful ending of a role, contract or membership.

A genuine good-faith safeguarding report must not result in retaliation simply because it is ultimately unsubstantiated or mistaken. Deliberately fabricated allegations may be dealt with fairly where there is clear evidence; fear of fabrication must never be used to suppress genuine reports.

23. Whistleblowing and Cooperation with Authorities

No person should suffer retaliation from RFTUK for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith, including a concern about senior personnel or organisational practices.

RFTUK will cooperate appropriately with police, social care, healthcare, LADO arrangements, regulators and courts where lawful and relevant. Do not destroy or conceal material evidence to protect individuals or RFTUK's reputation.

24. Parent Contribution Service (PCS)

PCS is a service operated by Right First Time UK Ltd, not a separate legal entity. It supports voluntary parent-to-parent calculations, communications, agreements and records; it has no statutory child-maintenance enforcement powers and does not receive, hold or transfer parent-to-parent contribution money under the described model.

PCS must not be used to force unsafe communication between parents. Users should have access to the stated safety-pause route when direct messages feel unsafe. PCS does not investigate domestic abuse: it signposts to appropriate specialist or statutory help and restricts access to sensitive child and family records.

25. Governance, Review and Related Documents

RFTUK will keep an organisational safeguarding reporting route, maintain role-appropriate procedures, oversee serious risks and review this policy at least annually or sooner after a material incident or relevant change in law, guidance or activity.

This policy must be read with the Data Protection & GDPR Policy, Privacy Notice, Confidentiality arrangements, Whistleblowing Policy, Complaints Policy, Equality and Accessibility Policy, Volunteer and Campaign Leader conduct documents, Information Security Policy, Records Retention & Destruction Policy, Evidence and Publication Policy, and Health & Safety, Events & Lone Working Policy.

Approval and governance arrangements remain subject to the registered Articles of Association. The present policy replaces outdated pre-incorporation references without changing the registered Articles.

Quick Safeguarding Action Guide

- 1. Recognise:** Identify the disclosure, signs of harm, exploitation, serious distress or other safeguarding concern.
- 2. Respond:** Listen calmly. Avoid leading questions, confrontation and promises of absolute confidentiality.
- 3. Emergency?:** Where there is immediate danger, call 999. Do not wait for RFTUK approval.
- 4. Record:** If a record is appropriate, write facts, timing, important words and action taken; separate observation from allegation.
- 5. Report / refer:** Use the RFTUK reporting route or an appropriate statutory service directly, particularly where internal reporting is unsafe.

IMMEDIATE DANGER? CALL 999. No internal process delays emergency help.

Official guidance and further information

- England: [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)
- England: [Care and support statutory guidance](#)
- [DBS eligibility guidance](#)
- [Wales safeguarding](#)
- Scotland: [Child protection guidance](#)
- Northern Ireland: [Safeguarding](#)
- [ICO information sharing](#)

Contact and legal information

For a concern relating to RFTUK, use the [Contact Us page](#). For complaints about RFTUK: complaints@rightfirsttimeuk.com. Neither replaces emergency services. In a safeguarding emergency, call 999.

Right First Time UK Ltd | Private company limited by guarantee | Company No. 17493370 | Registered office: 82A James Carter Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7DE, England.

PCS is an RFTUK Ltd service; it is not a separate legal entity. RFTUK supports voluntary parent-to-parent contributions but does not hold or transfer those contributions under its described model.

[Registered Articles of Association](#) | [Policy library](#) | [Contact Us](#)