



Company No: 07058666

Charity No: 1179433

## SIGBI LTD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

***For the purpose of this document, references to SIGBI Limited and Sorooptimist International will be written as "SIGBI" and "SI" only.***

Policy owner	Director of Governance
Policy lead	SIGBI Designated Safeguarding Officer
Audience	Members and volunteers
Legislation	See pages 2 and 3 of this document
Formally endorsed by	SIGBI Limited Board 8 January 2021
Endorsement date	January 2021
Review Date	December 2021

## Introduction

This policy applies to all members of [Sorooptimist International Great Britain and Ireland \(SIGBI\) Limited](#) or anyone volunteering and working on behalf of SIGBI. In countries outside the UK and Ireland members also have the responsibility to protect themselves and their volunteers against any possible claim of abuse. We all have a responsibility to promote the UN Declaration of Human Rights and to be familiar with the legislation protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk.

## Purpose and aims

This policy supports our efforts to safeguard and protect people who come into contact with us, across all our member clubs throughout the whole Federation, to ensure that the high standards of behaviour we expect of our people are clear; and that we meet internal and external standards.

## Scope

This policy applies to all of our people (staff, volunteers and all working on our behalf); and to our work worldwide.

SIGBI believes that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult at risk should never experience abuse of any kind. In keeping with our aims and vision, we are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

This policy should be read in conjunction with related SIGBI policies detailed therein.

## Legal Framework

Note: Legislation listed as an example of English and Welsh Law. These will be similar in other countries in our Federation.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people, and adults at risk namely:

- [The Children Act 1989](#) - The Children Act places the welfare of the child as of paramount concern in making decisions about children in public and private law family matters. It sets out orders and principles for children deemed to be at risk and is the foundation of safeguarding children
- [Human Rights Act 2018](#) – This gives effect in UK domestic law to rights under the European Convention on Human Rights
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)—This includes offences against children and persons with mental disorders (terminology used in the Act)
- [Children’s Act 2004](#)—This makes provision for services provided to and for young people and establishes the offices of the Children’s Commissioner in England and in Wales to ‘represent the views and interests of children’.
- [Mental Capacity Act 2005 \(Amended 2019\)](#)—This makes provision relating to persons who lack capacity and establishes principles to be applied when a person makes a determination as to what is in the best interests of a person lacking capacity
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)—This Act makes provision to protect children and vulnerable adults, including identifying specified activities involving contact with children and vulnerable adults as regulated activities and barring certain persons from being involved in regulated activities.
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)—This Act makes provision about children, families and people with special educational needs or disabilities.
- [Care Act 2014](#) - This includes making provision to safeguard adults who are at risk of abuse or neglect.

- [Domestic Abuse Bill 2019 - 21](#)– places a legal duty on councils to offer secure homes for those fleeing violence and their children.
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and [General Data Protection Regulation May 2018](#) (GDPR)—The Act and Regulations regulate the processing of information relating to individuals. There is provision within the data protection legislation to allow information to be shared when this is necessary for safeguarding purposes.
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) –This makes provision to protect people against being drawn into terrorism.
- [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)-This makes provision to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking and to protect victims
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989](#)—Drawn up by member states of the United Nations and has been ratified by the United Kingdom

### **Safeguarding Policy Statement**

We recognise that:

- all people should be treated with respect and dignity.
- all children, young people, and vulnerable adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- some people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- an adult may be at risk permanently or for a period of time due to mental or other disability, age, illness or another situation.

We seek to keep children, young people, and vulnerable adults who are at risk safe by:

- valuing them, listening to them, and respecting them.
- by appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at Federation and other officers at Regional level for safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know.
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against members or volunteers appropriately.
- creating and maintaining a respectful environment for all and ensuring that we have appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children, young people, adults at risk, members, and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures.
- Ensuring all members and volunteers are provided with safeguarding awareness training and regular safeguarding updates of significant changes.

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated by the relevant organisation/agency. Information should only be shared on a “need to know” basis and in line with GDPR compliance requirements. It can be helpful to have a planned media response (e.g., an agreed press release), in case of a breach in confidentiality.

## Resignations and Compromise Agreements

The fact that a person tenders his/her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, must not prevent an allegation being followed up. It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations, including those where the person concerned refuses to co-operate with the process.

'Compromise agreements', whereby the member or volunteer agrees to resign and SIGBI agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, **must not be used in these cases.**

## Record Keeping

If a disclosure or allegation is made to a safeguarding officer at Region/ National Association/Network or SIGBI Designated Safeguarding Officer [DSO]), they must record events and report on the appropriate form taking the following into consideration:

- allow the person to recall significant events in their own words
- do not question the person to tell more than they wish
- record the conversation as soon as possible
- record the date, time and location of conversation and anyone else present, and the information passed on to the relevant authority. Obtain a reference number from the police or contact details for any other authority/agency.
- these records are confidential, and the person or organisation should not be identifiable, and information should only be shared with people who need to know.
- it is **NOT** the responsibility of the volunteer or member of SIGBI, Region or Club to investigate allegations of abuse.

It is important that the DSO keeps a clear and comprehensive summary of:

- any serious allegations made,
- any allegations about a Soroptimist or volunteer associated with SIGBI
- details of how allegations were followed up and resolved
- any action taken
- decisions reached

If the allegation is made against a member of SIGBI or a volunteer, these details should be kept on record and a copy should be given to the individual. Such information should be retained on file for 10 years, including people who leave the organisation.

## References

[Department for Education \(2016\) Keeping children safe in education; statutory guidance for schools and colleges.](#)

(London): Department for Education.

[Department for Health \(2016\) Co-operating to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland \(Belfast\):](#)

Department of Health.

[Disclosure Scotland: The PVG Scheme: guidance: information for organisations.](#)

[Gov.UK: DBS checks: guidance for employers.](#)

[HM Government \(2015\) Working together to safeguard children; a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. \(London\): Department for Education.](#)

[Scottish Government \(2014\) National guidance for child protection in Scotland 2014/ Edinburgh: Scottish Government.](#)

[Social Services Improvement Agency \(2008\) All Wales Child Protection Procedures \(Cardiff\) All Wales Unit.](#)

Children's Commissioner in Wales - <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/our-work/policy-positions/>