



RGBI Protection Policy – Advice for Christmas Activities

Introduction

The Rotary Family – Rotary, Rotaract, Inner Wheel, Probus, Interact – is the ‘number one’ service organisation in Great Britain and Ireland. As such it must take the lead in the important matter of child and vulnerable adult protection. We recognise that there is a moral and legal responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, and that there is a need to demonstrate that an organisation such as Rotaract is doing everything possible to protect those with whom we work.

Where Rotaract clubs provide a service to children and vulnerable adults, it is important that Rotaractors plan and provide service to the community in such a manner that the reputation and interests of Rotaract or of individual Rotaractors cannot be brought into question.

Background

1. In February 2006, RGBI published the ‘RGBI Protection Policy’, guidance to Rotaractors involved in projects with children and vulnerable adults. This was in response to changes in legislation and was carried out in consultation with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

2. The introduction of the policy has involved the appointment of an RGBI Protection Officer and a Protection Officer in each Rotaract district. These are in place. Rotaract clubs are in the process of appointing Club Protection Officers.

3. An aspect of the new arrangements for protection is the strengthening of the requirement to carry out criminal record checks. RIBI is an organisation registered to carry out these checks and the arrangements are explained in detail in the policy document. This requirement may apply to some Rotaract activities and projects providing service to children and to vulnerable people.

4. Christmas is a time when many Rotaract clubs work with children and the vulnerable; Appendix K of the policy document provides some general guidance. At this time when the arrangements are still being put in place, it was considered appropriate to provide some generally available guidance at this time of year.

Advice: General Issues

5. This advice is not and cannot be a substitute for the detailed advice contained in the RGBI Protection Policy. A Rotaract club working with children needs to:

- Have a policy
- Provide training
- Plan so that abuse is less likely to happen
- Have a procedure for dealing with allegations
- Use a professional approach when selecting employees or volunteers.

6. At Christmas, in addition to child protection issues, a club should be mindful of:

- Health and safety regulations
- Traffic regulations
- Food hygiene regulations
- Insurance.

Advice: Santa

7. It is common practice for Rotaractors to act as Santa. This may take place on a sleigh, in a grotto or by visiting a children’s group.

8. If there is to be any contact with children, even if it is not physical contact, Santa must be accompanied by at least one other person at all times: this is in addition to any adult that accompanies the child. If that level of support cannot be maintained Santa should ‘go off duty’. The arrangements must be such that there cannot be any possibility of Santa being placed in unaccompanied ‘one-to-one’ contact with a child in a ‘private’ place such as a ‘grotto’.

9. Santa should be located in a place open to the view of the public rather than be placed in an enclosed ‘grotto’.

10. It is recommended that children stand when talking to Santa or sit on a seat placed along side Santa. Santa, and his assistants, should not invite children to sit on Santa's knee. Some children may wish to sit on Santa's knee and even clamber on: if it is the child's wish it may be allowed with the parent's consent. Sometimes parents place a 'kicking and screaming child' on Santa's knee: that should be strongly discouraged. Parents should remain with their child at all times.

11. Santa or assistants should not actively invite children to 'kiss' Santa. If a child wishes to kiss Santa this should be on the cheek. Parents should be discouraged from making their children kiss Santa or assistants. It is preferable for children to shake hands or 'blow' a kiss.

12. The standard CRB check is recommended for people acting as Santa on a regular basis ('regular' is defined as twice in a month or four times in any six month period)

13. Occasionally it may not be possible to complete CRB checks by the desired dates: or a club may not have a Club Protection Officer in place for example, the following action should be taken.

- Whenever possible, clubs should invite those Rotaractors who have undergone CRB checks through their employment or profession to act as Santa and his assistants.
- Rotaractors who have acted as Santa in the past may continue to do so, but may wish to complete an application form: Form A from the RGBI Protection Policy
- Rotaractors who are new to the role or who have 'broken service' of one or more years should be asked to complete an application form: Form A
- Other non- Rotaractor volunteers should also be asked to complete an application form: Form A
- If the Rotaract Club Protection Officer has not been appointed, the Club should consider whether that could be done. If it proves impossible, a Rotaractor, preferably with a background in child protection matters should be charged with the responsibility of ensuring the applications are completed, checked and the records kept securely. This Rotaractor should not disclose any information from the application form, simply the judgement that the information does not debar the person from fulfilling the role.

Advice: Pantomime Outings

14. Pantomime outings may be by coach or by private car. If by private car or minibus the driver should drive and the supervision of the passengers be the responsibility of a second adult. A sole adult should not carry a single unaccompanied child. If, in an emergency, that is unavoidable the problem must be shared with a third party before the journey is undertaken. An explanation should be given as to why they are going to be alone with the child, the estimated journey time, and destinations. Ensure parents are aware of the arrangements being made for the safety of their children.

15. If the trip is by coach, an appropriate adult to child ratio should be maintained. The ratio will be determined by:

- The age and nature of the children
- The experience of the organisers
- The location and nature of the event.

A wise organiser will err on the generous side. All supervisors must be briefed on the details of their role.

If boys and girls are in the party the supervisors must include men and women.

Ensure parents are aware of the arrangements being made for the safety of their children.

It is unlikely that CRB checks will be necessary for such events that are not regular and should not involve any person being in sole charge or having 'one-to-one' contact.

Advice: Parties

16. At a party an appropriate adult to child ratio should be maintained. The ratio will be determined by:

- The age and nature of the children
- The experience of the organisers
- The location and nature of the event.

A wise organiser will err on the generous side.

All supervisors must be briefed on the details of their role.

If boys and girls attend the party the supervisors must include men and women.

Ensure parents are aware of the arrangements being made for the safety of their children.

Criminal record checks will be not necessary for such events unless some children require intimate attention, with toileting, for example. If that is the case, it is recommended that the parent or carer be approached to accompany the child or to recommend a person who can fulfil that duty.

17. Any party game involving adults and children should not involve physical contact.

18. There should be no opportunities for single adults to meet or to undertake activities with single children in private. All activities should be public and open.

19. If entertainers are hired their credentials should be checked as should those of any volunteers.

20. If transport to and from the venue is organised, the advice of 'pantomime outings' applies.

Rotaract in Great Britain and Ireland has adopted this statement of policy for its work with children, the elderly, the vulnerable and those with disability.

- The needs and rights of the child, the elderly, the vulnerable and persons with disability take priority.
- It is the duty of every Rotaractor to safeguard to the best of his or her ability, the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of all children, the elderly, persons with disability or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact in their Rotaractors duties.

Rotaractors should refer to the detailed "RGI Protection Policy" when planning events and activities.



Rotaract in Great Britain & Ireland



Form A: for use with Rotaractors and volunteers – disclosure not needed

Rotaract in Great Britain & Ireland Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection

You have a right of access to information held on you and other rights under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003 set out data protection responsibilities in the UK and Ireland, respectively.

Rotaractors are committed to ensuring that all those in positions that require contact with children or vulnerable adults are suitable to do so. In accordance with the policy of Rotaract in Great Britain and Ireland (RGI)/District _____ of Rotary International (the District)/The Rotaract Club of _____ (the Club) any person who has contact with children and/or vulnerable adults must complete this application form, prior to appointment.

Personal details

Title	First name(s)	Surname
All previous names by which you have been known		
Current Address		
Post Code – must be included		
Other addresses where you have resided at the last 5 years		
Telephone	Day	
	Evening	
	Mobile	

Current and previous club(s)

Club name	Position/Responsibilities	Start and Leaving Dates

Present, or most recent, employment/role/responsibilities

Name of employer
Job title
Dates of employment (month and year)
Principal responsibilities

Reason(s) for leaving

Qualifications and previous experience of working with children or vulnerable adults

(include name of organisation, responsibilities/duties, length of time involved and reason(s) for leaving).

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Referees

Please provide details of 2 referees, who should not be related to you. At least one should have knowledge of your previous work with children and/or vulnerable adults. The referees may be contacted for the purposes of verifying the information contained in this form.

Name	Name
Organisation	Organisation
Address	Address
Telephone	Telephone
Relationship to applicant	Relationship to applicant

Additional information

Please provide details of relevant experience, principal achievements, personal skills and qualities, voluntary work, and explain how you might use them in this post. Use an additional sheet if necessary.

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Please continue overleaf

Declarations

Declaration of applicant

I am aware that in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003 in the UK and Ireland, respectively, information provided on this application form will be stored for the purposes of processing the data for recruitment and monitoring the recruitment process. If appointed, I am aware that the information will be stored for the purpose of enabling relevant procedures.

I have completed this form accurately, truthfully and to the best of my knowledge.

Signature :

Date:

Declaration of designated person

I confirm that I have seen the following documents relating to

_____ :-
(Insert Applicant's Name)

I confirm to the best of my ability that the identification documents are accurate.

Signature:

Date:

Print Name: _____