



Gosforth Rugby Football Club

Safeguarding Young Persons Policy

RFU Guidance Document



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1. KEY PRINCIPLES

Anyone under the age of 18 is considered a child or young person for the purposes of this document.

The welfare of all children and young people is paramount.

All children and young people, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, religion, ethnic origin, nationality, social status or sexual orientation should be able to enjoy the game in an environment safe from abuse of any kind.

It is the responsibility of child protection professionals to determine whether abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility within the sport of Rugby Union to report concerns.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately as per Gosforth RFC Policy and Procedures.

Working in partnership with parents / guardians is essential for the protection of young people.

Gosforth RFC recognises the roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies in relation to safeguarding children / young people and promoting their welfare, and is fully committed to complying with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards.

Gosforth RFC has appointed a Safeguarding Officer to ensure that the appropriate procedures are followed.

2. RECOGNISING ABUSE IN RUGBY UNION

In order to provide young people with the best possible experiences and opportunities in the sport of Rugby Union, it is imperative that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrates exemplary behaviour. This not only ensures the game makes a positive contribution to the development of young people, safeguards them and promotes their welfare, but also protects all personnel from allegations of abuse or poor practice.

It is not always easy to differentiate poor practice from abuse. It is not the responsibility of employees or volunteers of Gosforth RFC to determine whether or not abuse is taking place. It is their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have a concern about the welfare of a child or young person. (See Section 8 – Good Practice in the Rugby Setting)

The Four Main Types of Abuse

1. Emotional Abuse

This occurs when individuals persistently fail to show young people due care with regard to their emotional welfare, when a young person may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, or be subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures. There may also be over-protection, preventing young people from socialising, or bullying to perform to high expectations. The young person may lose self-confidence and may become withdrawn and nervous.

In a Rugby situation, emotional abuse may occur when coaches, volunteers or parents / guardians:

-  Provide repeated negative feedback.
-  Repeatedly ignore a young player's efforts to progress.
-  Repeatedly demand performance levels above the young player's capability.
-  Over-emphasise the winning ethic.



2. Abuse by Neglect

This occurs when a young person's essential needs for food, warmth and care both physical and emotional are not met.

In a Rugby situation neglect may occur:

- 🏉 Young players are left alone without proper supervision,
- 🏉 A young player is exposed to unnecessary heat or cold.
- 🏉 A young player is not provided with necessary fluids for re-hydration.
- 🏉 A young player is exposed to an unacceptable risk of injury.

3. Physical Abuse

This occurs when individuals, including other young people, deliberately inflict injuries on a child or young person, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It includes injuries caused by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or using excessive force. It also occurs when young people are given alcohol, or inappropriate drugs, or there is a failure to supervise their access to these substances.

In a Rugby situation physical abuse may also occur when:

- 🏉 Young players are exposed to exercise / training which disregards the capacity of the
 - young player's immature and growing body.
- 🏉 Young players are exposed to over-playing, over-training or fatigue.
- 🏉 Any person exposes young players to alcohol and gives them the opportunity to drink
 - alcohol below the legal age or fail to supervise access to alcohol.
- 🏉 Young players are provided with or encouraged to take prohibited substance including
 - performance enhancing drugs.

4. Sexual Abuse

Girls or boys can be abused by adults (both male and female) or other young people. This may include encouraging or forcing a child or young person to take part in sexual activity.

In a Rugby situation sexual abuse may occur when:

- 🏉 An adult uses the context of a training session to touch young people in an inappropriate
 - sexual way.
- 🏉 Coaches, managers or volunteers use their position of power and authority to coerce
 - players into a sexual relationship.
- 🏉 Coaches or managers imply better progression of the player in return for sexual favours.

Bullying

Bullying is not always easy to define and will not always be an adult abusing a young person. It is often the case that the bully is a young person. There are three types of bullying: physical, verbal and emotional.

In a Rugby situation bullying may occur when:

- 🏉 A Coach adopts a win-at-costs philosophy.
- 🏉 A Player intimidates others.
- 🏉 An Official is over officious.

Gosforth RFC has in place an Anti-Bullying Policy (See Appendix F) to which all Players, Coaches and Parents must subscribe.



3. POOR PRACTICE

Poor practice includes any behaviour which contravenes any of the following:

- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Codes of Conduct.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Coaches Code of Ethics (See Appendix C).
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Gosforth RFC Equity Policy.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 RFU / RFUW Good Practice in a Rugby Setting (See Section 8 of this Policy).
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 RFU / RFUW Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People in Rugby Union.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Gosforth RFC Anti-Bullying Policy.

4. PROCEDURES TO MANAGE ALLEGATIONS

As a volunteer, coach, parent or member of Gosforth RFC the following guidelines should be followed where there is a concern relating to the welfare of a young person.

- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 If the young person is in immediate danger or has been physically injured, ensure they are safe and contact the Police or Social Services.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 If the young person is not in immediate danger but you have concerns either:
 - Discuss the concerns with the Club Safeguarding Officer or other Club Official who will advise on the correct procedure for referring your concern appropriately.
- OR**
- Contact the RFU Child Protection Helpline.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Make a note of what you have seen or heard but do not delay in passing on the information. Complete an RFU Incident Record Form as soon as possible.

Please remember that it is not the responsibility of those working in the sport of Rugby union to decide that abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to act on any concern. (Please refer to Sections 5 and 6 of this policy).

5. RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS

If you become aware of anything which causes you to feel uncomfortable you should talk to the Club Safeguarding Officer or CB Safeguarding Manager. This means being aware of the attitudes of staff, coaches and volunteers and of the interactions between them and the children and with each other. If the behaviour is contrary to the Clubs Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and young people are at risk then action must be taken.

Adults must also be alert to any unusual incidents or activities which take place where staff, coaches or volunteers are putting young people and themselves in a vulnerable position.

In all cases of reported Poor Practice / Abuse the following principles should be adopted:

DO

- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 **Stay Calm** - Do not rush into inappropriate action and react calmly in order not to alarm the young person.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 **Reassure the child** - That they are not to blame and confirm that you know how difficult it must be to confide.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 **Listen Sympathetically** - To what the child says and show that you take them seriously.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 **Keep questions to a minimum** - The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested. Only ask questions to clarify.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 **Ensure you clearly understand what the child has said** - In order that the information can be passed to the appropriate agencies.



- 🏉 **Consult with the** Club Safeguarding Officer or CB Safeguarding Manager ensuring that you communicate all the information accurately.
- 🏉 **Maintain Confidentiality** - All incidents will be treated with an open mind and handled in a fair and equitable manner. Information will only be shared on a need to know basis. Confidentiality must be maintained until a case is proven.
- 🏉 **Ensure the safety of the young person**
 - If urgent medical attention is required then call an ambulance, inform the Doctors of
 - the concerns and ensure they are aware that this is a Child Protection issue.

DON'T

- 🏉 **Panic** - or allow your feelings to be evident
- 🏉 **Make promises you cannot keep** – explain that you will need to tell other people.
- 🏉 **Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily**
- 🏉 **Delay**
- 🏉 **Speculate or make assumptions**
- 🏉 **Approach the alleged abuser**
- 🏉 **Take sole responsibility**

**In all cases, if you are not sure what to do you can obtain help from
NSPCC, 24-hour Helpline on 0800 800 5000 or
RFU Child Protection Line on 0208 831 6655**

6. TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION

1. Concerns about poor practice and possible abuse within the Rugby setting.

This relates to anyone working with young people in a paid or voluntary capacity and includes volunteer coaches within Gosforth RFC.

Allegations will often relate to **Poor Practice** where an adult's behaviour is inappropriate and is causing concern.

Poor Practice constitutes any behaviour which:

- 🏉 Contravenes RFU Codes of Ethics (Appendix C) and Codes of Good Practice
 - in a Rugby Setting (Section 8).
- 🏉 Infringes on an individual's rights.
- 🏉 Is a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care.

Poor practice is unacceptable in the sport of Rugby Union and will be treated seriously. Appropriate action in line with RFU / RFUW regulations will be taken.

2. Actions to take if a young person informs you that he / she is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them in the Rugby setting.

You should follow the principles set out in Section 4. In addition you should record the behaviour on the RFU Incident Record Form (See Appendix H).

Information passed to external agencies must be as helpful as possible. It will be necessary to make a detailed report at the time of disclosure.

The report should contain the following details:

- 🏉 The young person's name, address, date of birth and any disability.
- 🏉 The nature of the allegation.
- 🏉 A description of any injuries / bruising.



- 🏆 Any observations about the behaviour / emotional state of the young person
- 🏆 Times, locations and dates
- 🏆 The young person's account in their own words of what has happened
- 🏆 Actions that have been taken as a result of your concerns.
- 🏆 Whether the person writing the report is expressing their own concerns or those of
 - a third party.

Remember to:

- 🏆 Sign and date it.
- 🏆 Keep a copy
- 🏆 Keep a record of the name and designation of the Social Services member of staff or
 - Police Officer to whom concerns were passed.

You must not investigate yourself. You must:

- 🏆 Make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible.
- 🏆 Inform the Club Safeguarding Officer immediately. Who will report the matter to the
 - RFU Child Protection Officer and the CB Safeguarding Manager.

POOR PRACTICE

Following guidance from the RFU Child Protection Officer that the issue is Poor Practice then the Club Safeguarding Officer must:

- 🏆 Forward a written report to the CB Safeguarding Manager and RFU Child Protection Officer.

ABUSE

Following a decision that the issue is to be investigated as Child Protection / Abuse then the Club Safeguarding Officer must:

- 🏆 Refer the allegation to the Police or Social Services. They will give advice concerning who should contact the child's parents / guardians.
- 🏆 Inform the RFU Child Protection Officer, forwarding a written report utilising the Incident Referral Form (Appendix H) who will take the report to the RFU Child Protection Referral Management Group.

Non-Action is not an option. The welfare of the young person is paramount.

3. Actions to take if you become aware through your own observations or through a third party of possible abuse occurring in a setting other than Rugby.

If this happens you should:

- 🏆 Ensure the safety of the young person. If he / she requires immediate treatment, call an ambulance, inform the Doctors of concerns and ensure that they are aware that this is a Child Protection issue. If a young person is taken to hospital Social Services must be informed immediately.

RFU RFUW Procedures should then be followed:

- 🏆 Please refer to Section 6 of this Policy.
- 🏆 Report concerns to the Club Safeguarding Officer.
- 🏆 Club Safeguarding Officer will seek advice from RFU Child Protection Officer, CB Safeguarding Manager, RFU Child Protection Helpline or NSPCC Helpline 0800 800 5000.



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- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 If there is any delay in receiving advice contact must be made with Social Services.
 - 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 If a formal referral is made, make it clear to Social Services / Police that this is a Child Protection referral.
 - 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 All Police Forces have dedicated Child Abuse Investigation Teams (CAITs) which deal with allegations of abuse within the family setting and by people in positions of trust. If you believe that a child is in immediate danger or has come to physical harm, dial 999.
 - 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Parents / guardian should only be contacted following advice from Police or Social Services.

Non-Action is not an option. The welfare of the young person is paramount to every other consideration. Delay in acting can increase the risk to the child.

4. General Advice

In all cases please always remember the following:

It is often more difficult for some young people to disclose abuse than others. Previous experiences may lead them to believe that those in authority do not really care about their wellbeing.

Disabled young people may have to overcome additional barriers before feeling that they can disclose abuse. They may rely on the abuser for their daily care and not know of alternative sources of care. The abuse may be the only attention / affection they have experienced. There may be communication difficulties and they will almost certainly have to overcome prejudices which block our willingness to believe they may be abused or to use their medical condition to explain away indicators which in an able-bodied young person would concern us.

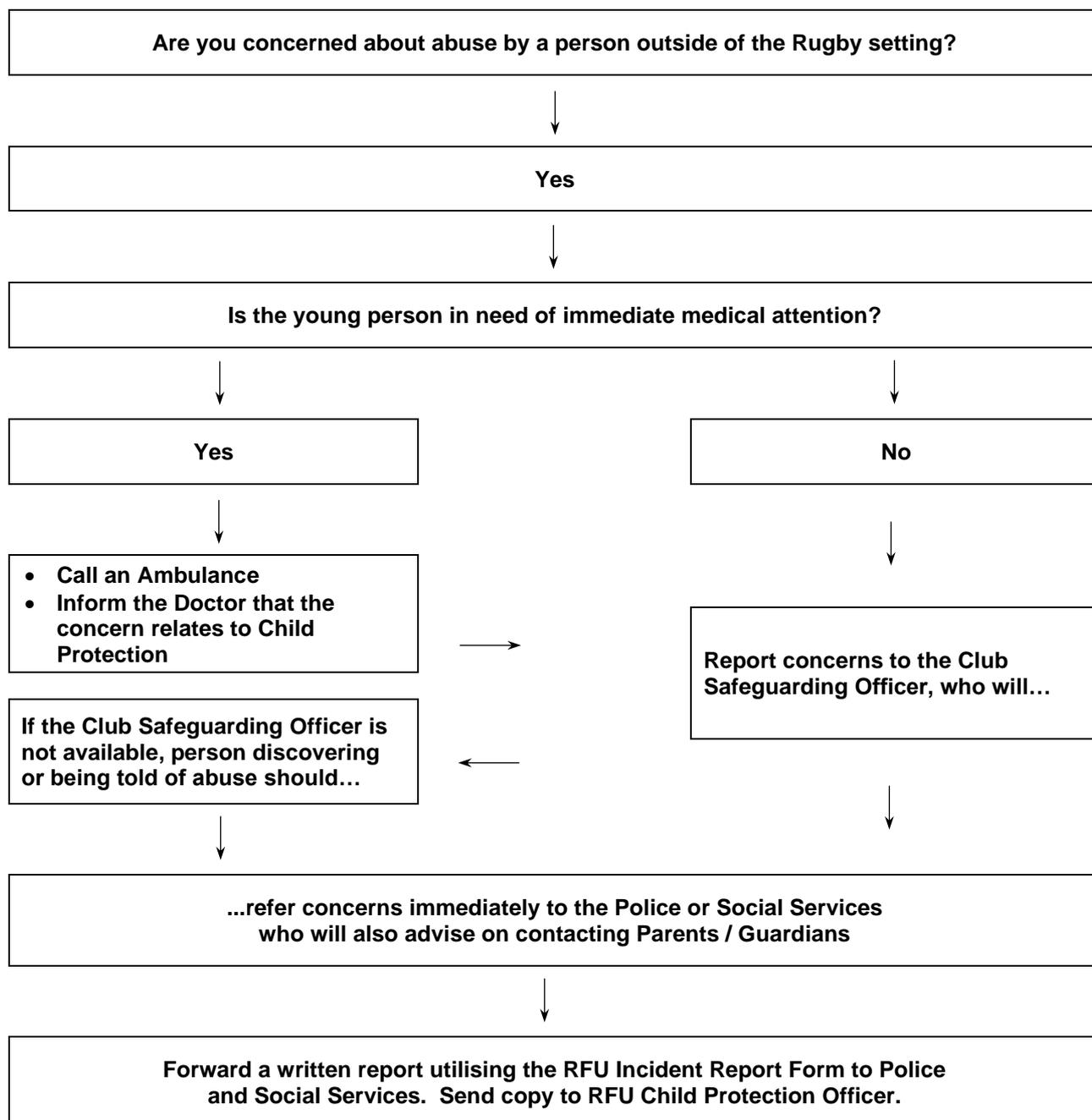
These groups of people need us to be extra vigilant and to give thought as to how we will respond.

Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only, following advice from Social Services / Police. This may include the following people:

- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 The Club Safeguarding Officer.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 The CB Safeguarding Manager.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Designated Officers within the RFU / RFUW.
- 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿 Parents / Carers of the young person alleged to have been abused.

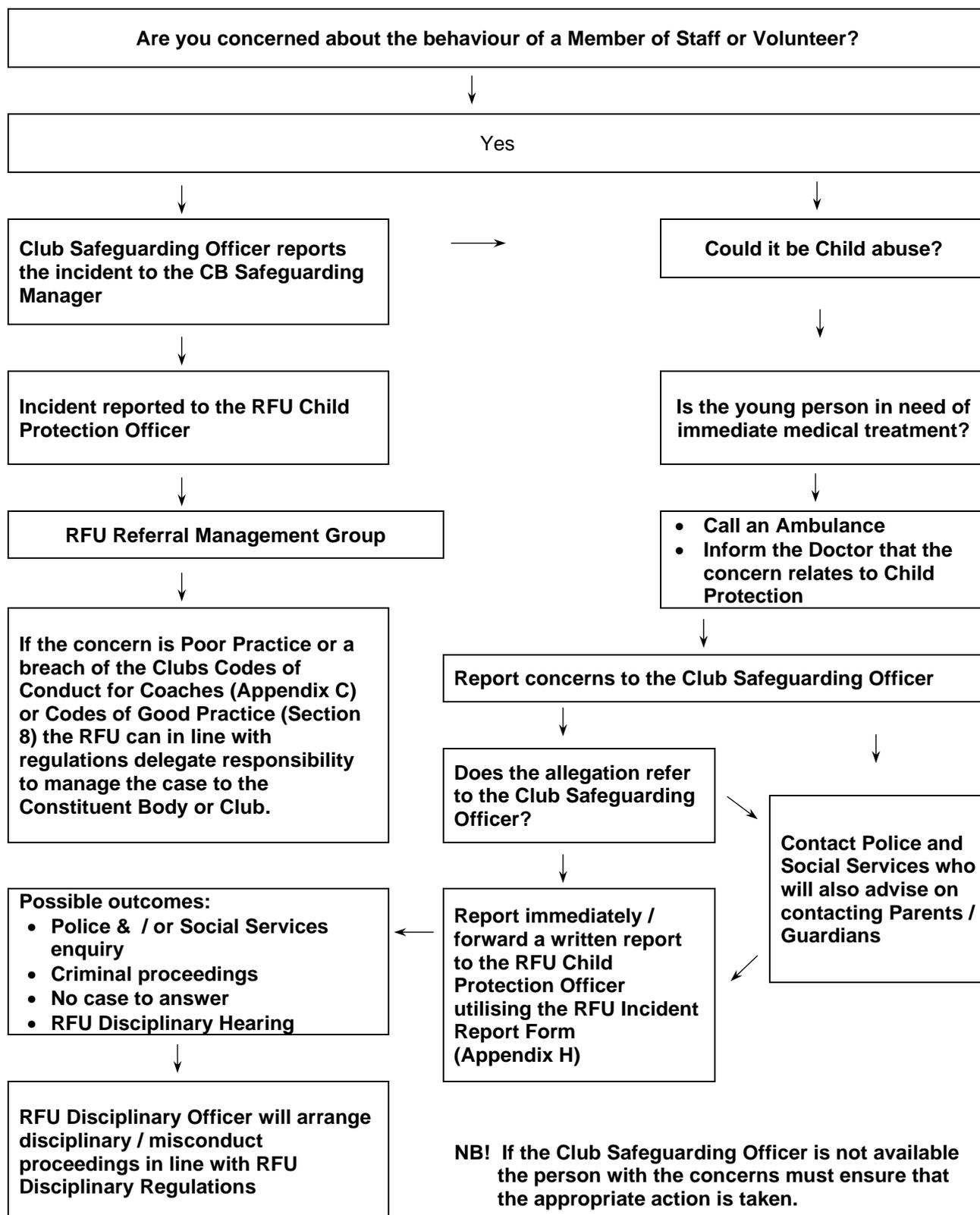


DEALING WITH POSSIBLE ABUSE OCCURRING OUTSIDE OF THE RUGBY SETTING





DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATIONS ABOUT STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS WITHIN RUGBY UNION





7. RECRUITMENT OF STAFF COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS

It is of vital importance that all staff, coaches and volunteers are of the highest calibre and are safe to work with children and young people.

Consequently it is crucial that stringent and reasonable steps are taken to prevent people from entering the sport of Rugby Union who may pose a threat to the safety and welfare of young people.

The following recruitment principles should be followed:

1. Advertising

If any form is used to recruit staff, it should reflect:

- The responsibilities of the role.
- The level of experience or qualification required (e.g. working with children an advantage).
- The Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW stance on Child Protection.

2. Applications

All adults who are in contact with young people, whether paid or voluntary, will complete an Application Form, see Appendix G. After a position has been offered the person must complete a DBS Application Form. Note that until the DBS Certificate has been received that person cannot work unsupervised.

3. Training

Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of poor practice or concerns of possible abuse.

The RFU / RFUW strongly recommends that:

- All adults who have regular contact with or responsibility for young people complete the RFU
 - Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Course.
- All Club Safeguarding Officers should attend the RFU Club Safeguarding Officer Workshops.
- All adults who have a Coaching responsibility for young people attend **an appropriate RFU**
 - **Coaching Course.**

It is vital that all staff working with young people in the sport of Rugby Union are conversant with:

- Player centred coaching techniques.
- How to work with young people safely and effectively.

4. Monitoring and Appraisal

At regular intervals all professional Staff will receive structure formal supervision. Volunteers should at least be given the opportunity to receive formal or informal feedback. In both instances this will enable managers and the member of staff to:

- Identify training needs.
- Set new goals.
- Highlight concerns about inappropriate behaviour.



8. GOOD PRACTICE IN THE RUGBY SETTING

It is the aim of Gosforth RFC that all young people enjoy the game in a safe enjoyable setting. The following section sets out Good Practice Procedures which all those involved in the delivery of the game of Rugby Union to young should adhere to:

Codes of Good Conduct for Coaches and Officials

Codes of Conduct will ensure that all children and young people and the individuals who work with them will enjoy the game in a safe environment. When working with young people coaches and officials must adopt the following guidance:

1. They must always be publicly open when working with young people. They must avoid situations where the adult and an individual child are alone and / or unobserved, e.g. individual skill session after a team training session. They must work in pairs and never alone with a group or individual.
2. Rugby is a physical game and situations will occur when, in order to teach or coach certain techniques, it is necessary to make contact with the player.

However the following must apply:

- 🏴 Parents and young players must be made aware of situations in which this may happen when they join the club.
 - 🏴 Physical handling must only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique and always with the permission of the child / young person and their parent / guardian.
3. Any contact or touching which is inappropriate (not directly related to the coaching context) or is aggressive is poor practice and is unacceptable, see appendix D.
 4. If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that individuals work in pairs and that gender is appropriate.
 5. Where mixed teams compete away from home they must always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.
 6. Volunteers and professionals must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all and treat everyone with equality.
 7. Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the player above the development of performance. This means that coaches must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - 🏴 Avoid overplaying players, particularly talented players. All players need and deserve equal opportunity to play and to rest.
 - 🏴 Remember that children / young people play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only a part of it.
 - 🏴 Motivate youngsters through positive feedback and constructive criticism.
 - 🏴 Ensure that contact skills are taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of young players.
 - 🏴 Never allow young players to train / play when injured. If unsure err on the side of caution.
 - 🏴 Ensure equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the players.
 8. At least one Coach per age group must hold a current RFU Coaching Award or a recognised award. All other Coaches should hold a current RFU Coaching Award or be working towards one.
 9. Coaches must keep up-to-date with knowledge and technical skills and should be aware of their own limitations. Coaches must only work within the limitations of their knowledge and qualifications.



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10. Coaches must ensure that the activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the players.
 11. Coaches, managers, volunteers and parents must always promote the positive aspects of their sport, e.g. fair play, and never condone law violations or use of prohibited substances.
 12. Coaches and team managers must consistently display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance.
 13. Coaches, volunteers and parents must never overtly criticise players or use language or actions which may cause the player to lose self-esteem or confidence.
 14. Young people must not be allowed to drink alcohol or encouraged to drink alcohol if they are under the legal age to do so.



Appendix A

CLUB PROCEDURES TO MANAGE CASE OF POOR PRACTICE

Poor practice is defined as any behaviour which contravenes Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW Codes of Conduct (Fair Play Codes) or RFU / RFUW Guidance for Good Practice (Section 8 of this policy document).

1. Once an incident is reported to the Club Safeguarding Officer he / she should consult with the RFU Child Protection Officer in order to ascertain whether the allegation is to be investigated / dealt with as poor practice, bullying or abuse.
2. Once the incident has been identified by the RFU as poor practice and in consultation with senior club officials (Club or Youth Chair) a decision will be made whether or not to suspend, temporarily the person accused. Each case will be considered on its merit.
3. A disciplinary hearing may be called. The panel of which should be made up of three club members with regard to the following criteria:
 - No person who has been involved in bringing the case to the disciplinary hearing should sit on the panel.
 - Senior Management of the club must be represented.
 - As the case relates to poor coaching practice, experience in this field must be represented.
 - The CB Safeguarding Manager can be invited.
4. The accused will be advised of receipt of the report and provided with both copies of the report and all witness statements.
5. The accused will be invited to attend any disciplinary hearing.
6. The accused must be given sufficient advance notice of the disciplinary hearing.
7. The accused must be given the opportunity to offer his / her side of the events and call witnesses.
8. Once the disciplinary panel reaches a decision it should be communicated to the accused and confirmed in writing and to the parents of the young person.
9. A copy of the finding must be sent to the CB Safeguarding Manager and RFU Child Protection Officer.

Possible Outcomes

1. Temporary suspension.
2. Person may only Coach whilst supervised.
3. Coach must undertake RFU / RFUW Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Course.
4. Coach must attend SCUk Good Practice and Child Protection Course.
5. Coach must attend appropriate FRU / RFUW Coaching Course.



Appendix B

A. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CLUB SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

1. Ensure the club has a Child Protection Policy and a self-monitoring strategy.
2. Ensure Codes of Conduct are well publicised and adhered to.
3. In consultation with Child Protection Officer ensure that all reported incidents are managed at the appropriate level in line with Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW Procedures.
4. Ensure that all relevant club members are aware of training opportunities.
5. Ensure that all parents, children and young people are aware of the Club Policy on Child Protection / Welfare and the correct procedures and channels for voicing concerns.
6. Ensure all adults who have regular contact with young people undertake DBS disclosure.
7. Be aware of local Social Services and local Safeguarding Children's Board.
8. Sit on relevant Club Committees.

B. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSTITUENT BODY (CB) SAFEGUARDING MANAGER

1. Support Clubs to produce a Child Protection Policy.
2. Monitor 10% of Clubs to ensure implementation of Child Protection Policies within the CB.
3. In consultation with RFU Child Protection Officer advise on the management of all reported cases, in line with Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW Procedures, and ensure that all cases are reported to the RFU / RFUW.
4. In consultation with RFU Child Protection Officer plan the implementation of DBS disclosure within the CB.
5. Monitor the effectiveness of the Club's Child Protection Policies.
6. Establish contact with Social Services and local Safeguarding Children's Boards.
7. Have a formal role on relevant committees within the CB.
8. Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of training plans within the CB.



Appendix C

COACHES CODE OF ETHICS

1. All Rugby Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and young person with whom they work and treat them equally.
2. All Rugby Coaches must place the physical and emotional wellbeing of all young players above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
3. The relationship that a Rugby Coach develops with young players with whom they work must be based on mutual trust and respect.
4. All Rugby Coaches must ensure that all activities undertaken are appropriate to the age, maturity, experience and ability of the young players.
5. All Rugby Coaches will encourage young players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
6. All Rugby Coaches should clarify with the young players, and their parents / guardians, what is expected of them both on and off the Rugby field and also what they are entitled to expect from the Coach.
7. All Rugby Coaches should work in partnership with others within the game, Officials, Doctors, Physiotherapists, Sports Scientists, to ensure the wellbeing, safety and enjoyment of all young players.
8. All Rugby Coaches must promote the positive aspects of the sport, e.g. Fair Play. Violations of the Laws of the Game, behaviour contrary to the spirit of the Laws of the Game or relevant regulations or the use of prohibited techniques or substances must never be condoned.



Appendix D

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN RUGBY UNION

Guidance

There are a number of principles that should be followed within the sport of Rugby Union when the activity involves physical contact.

Physical contact in Rugby should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. The adult should only use physical contact if their aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques.
- To treat an injury.
- To prevent an injury or accident occurring.
- To meet the requirements of the game.

The adult should seek to explain the nature and reason for the physical contact to the child reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission.

It is good practice, as part of an induction process or pack for new members, to explain to Parents / Carers and their Child or give written guidance about any physical contact that will be required as part of that activity (see Section 11.2 of the Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People in Rugby Union).

Young people should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that cause a child distress or embarrassment.

Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

Specific Situations

i) Physical Punishment

Any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful by Coaches, Volunteers and Professional, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. It is particularly important that adults understand this both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the organisation in which they are involved.

ii) Contact as Part of Coaching

There are specific circumstances within the sport of Rugby Union which will require Coaches or Teachers to come into physical contact with children and young people from time to time in the course of their duties.

Examples will include activities where safe practice is critical, e.g. the introduction / development of scrummaging. Adults should be aware of the limits within which such contact should take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.

It should be recognised that physical contact between an adult and a child that may occur during legitimate teaching or coaching may be misconstrued or misunderstood by a Pupil, Parent or Observer.



Touching young participants, including well intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised.

As a general principle adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. It is particularly unwise to attribute frequent touching to their teaching or coaching style or as a way of relating to young participants.

iii) Responding to Distress and Success

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Physical contact may also be required to prevent an accident or injury and this would wholly appropriate. A young person or coach may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture.

Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what it is, and what is seen by others present, normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same Young Person over a period of time. It should also be considered that what, to an adult may seem appropriate, may not be shared by a young person

iv) Sports Science and Medicine

There may be some roles within Rugby Union where physical contact is and / or a requirement of the role, particularly sports science or medicine. These tasks should only be undertaken by properly trained or qualified practitioners. The guidance does not seek to replace the specific guidance and codes of practice developed for those professionals and reference should be made to the appropriate body for that discipline.



Appendix E

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR MATCH OFFICIALS

When refereeing young players, match officials must:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating young players.
- Provide verbal feedback in a positive way during games.
- Appreciate the needs of the players.
- Be a positive role model.
- Recognise that safety is paramount.
- Explain decisions - most young players are still learning.
- Never tolerate verbal abuse.

Officials will not:

- Change in the same area as young players.
- Shower with young players – agree a timetable with the Coaches.
- Be alone with young players at any time – if a young player comes into the dressing room ensure another adult is present.
- Check studs without the Coach being present.
- Administer first aid
- Allow a young player to continue playing if there are doubts about their fitness.
- Tolerate bad language from young players.
- Engage in inappropriate contact with young players.
- Give a lift to a player unless there are other young people or adults in the car and the parents are aware of the arrangement.
- Take a young player to their own home.
- Overtly criticise young players or use language which may cause the player to lose confidence or self-esteem.
- Make sexually explicit remarks to young players.

Officials must always:

- Report, in writing, to the Club Safeguarding Officer or CB Safeguarding Manager and / or Society Secretary, behaviour by adults which you feel contravenes Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW Child Protection Policy.

This includes:

- Verbal bullying by coaches, parents or spectators.
- Physical abuse by coaches, parents or spectators.
- Inappropriate or aggressive contact by an adult to a young person.
- Verbal abuse directed at an official by young people or adults.

REMEMBER: The welfare of all young people is paramount.



Appendix F

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

Principles

- Bullying of any kind is not acceptable within any Club or Constituent Body (CB) providing playing opportunities for children and young people.
- The RFU / RFUW are a “telling” culture and anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell their Club Safeguarding Officer or CB Safeguarding Manager.
- Bullying will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to deal with the situation.
- It is the responsibility of every adult working in Rugby Union whether professional or volunteer, to ensure that all young people can enjoy the sport in a safe enjoyable environment.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), tormenting (e.g. hiding rugby kit, threatening gestures including sending threatening text messages)
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic – because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Objectives of the Policy

- All Club members, coaches, volunteers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All Club members, coaches and volunteers should know what the Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW / CB Policy is on bullying, and follow it up when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents should know what the Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW / CB Policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Players and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Children and young people have described bullying as:

- Being called names.
- Being teased.
- Being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked.
- Having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken.
- Receiving abusive text messages.



- Being forced to hand over money.
- Being forced to do things they do not want to.
- Being ignored or left out.
- Being attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or ethnic or racial origin.

Other Signs and Symptoms

A child or young person:

- Doesn't want to attend training or club activities.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Begins being disruptive during sessions.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Has possessions going missing.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Starts stammering.
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Is bullying other children.
- Stops eating.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.

These sign and behaviours may not constitute bullying and may be symptoms of other problems. Club / CB members, coaches and volunteers need to be aware of these possible signs and report any concerns to the Club Safeguarding Officer or CB Safeguarding Manager.

Procedures and Management of Bullying

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Safeguarding Officer, or CB Safeguarding Manager, and record using the RFU Incident Record Form.

If the incident is an adult bullying a young person, the Club Safeguarding Officer, or CB Safeguarding Manager, will report the incident to the RFU Child Protection Officer.

If the incident is a young person bullying a young person the club / county will manage this and can access advice and support from the Club Safeguarding Officer, CB Safeguarding Manager or the RFU Child Protection Officer at any stage of the process.

2. Parents may be informed and asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
3. If necessary and appropriate the Police will be consulted.
4. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the Club / CB / RFU can initiate disciplinary action under the relevant constitution.

Implementing RFU Anti-Bullying Policy

Phase 1: Raising Awareness

Raise awareness with all members and players within the club:

- Put posters on the Club Notice Board(s).
- Ensure all young players know they can talk to someone if they are worried
- Ensure that parents have a copy of the policy.
- Adopt the policy within the Club Constitution.



-
- Ensure that the Code of Conduct clearly states that any behaviour which constitutes bullying will not be accepted.
 - Ensure that all coaches, staff and volunteers have signed up to the Code of Conduct.
 - Ensure the policy is given to members and players.
 - Set up a working party to support the ongoing development and implementation of the policy.
 - Identify any training needs within the club and contact the RFU to find out workshops and opportunities for support.

Phase 2: Review, Monitor and Evaluate

- Ensure that the working group meets to review any incidents.
- Take lessons learnt from incidents and re-evaluate the policy as required.
- Maintain an ongoing poster campaign.
- Ensure members, players, coaches, volunteers and parents are kept up-to-date with any changes.
- Invite feedback from players, parents, coaches, members and volunteers about the policy and its impact.



Appendix G

APPLICATION AND REFERENCE FORMS

RFU / RFUW APPLICATION FORM

Surname: _____ First Name(s): _____ Title: _____

Sex: M / F National Insurance No: _____

Any previous names by which you have been known: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____ Telephone No: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Post for which you are applying (Voluntary / Paid Full / Part Time):

Relevant Experience, Qualifications and Training:

Career involvement in Sport (with dates):

I confirm that I have read and agree to abide by the Club's Code of Good Practice and by the Rugby Football Union's (RFU) Child Protection Policy.

I consent to you sending this form to the RFU together with my completed DBS Application Form and the use by you and the RFU of the information provided by me, any referee and the DBS to assess my suitability to work with children.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Continued on next page



Please supply the names and addresses of two people (not relatives) who will provide references regarding your experience of, and suitability for, working with children and young people, e.g previous employers:

Reference 1:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Position: _____

Tele No: _____

Reference 2:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Position: _____

Tele No: _____



Appendix H

RFU / RFUW INCIDENT RECORD FORM

Your Name:		Your Position:	
Child's Name:	DOB:	Male or Female	
Child's Address:	Parents' / Carers' Name and Address:		
Disability (If applicable):			
Time and Date of any Incident:			
Your Observations:			
State exactly what the child said and what you said. Remember do not lead the child – record actual details			
Action taken so far:			
Name of the alleged offender:	Position in Sport:		
Relationship between the alleged offender and child:			
Address:	Marital Status:		
	Age:		



Appendix H continued

External Agencies Contacted (Date and Time)

Police: Yes / No	If yes – which: Name and Contact Number Details of advice given
Social Services: Yes / No	If yes – which: Name and Contact Number Details of advice given
RFU: Yes / No	If yes – which: Name and Contact Number Details of advice given
Local Authority: Yes / No	If yes – which: Name and Contact Number Details of advice given
Other (e.g. NSPCC)	If yes – which: Name and Contact Number Details of advice given



Appendix H continued

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

The information which you provide on this form will be transferred to the CB Safeguarding Manager and the RFU's Child Protection Department either of whom may, if necessary, provide the information to the relevant Police Force, Social Services Department or other bodies concerned with the protection of children.

NB!

A copy of this form should be sent to Social Services or the Police after the telephone report. This form must be completed as soon as possible and certainly when the event or incident is fresh in the memory. Any delays in completing and forwarding this form may seriously jeopardise the safety, protection and welfare of the child or young person.



Appendix I

PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES (INCLUDING THOSE TAKE BY MOBILE TELEPHONES)

Gosforth RFC recognises that publicity and pictures of young people enjoying Rugby are essential to promote the sport and a healthy lifestyle. To facilitate this it is therefore essential that the following principles and rules should be observed.

Gosforth RFC is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young people. Implicit in this is the commitment to ensure that all publications, resources and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect. By adopting the points outlined in these guidelines you will be putting in place the best possible practice to protect young people wherever photographs or recorded images are taken and stored.

The eight golden rules that will ensure compliance with the policy on photographic images are as follows:

1. Ensure parents / guardian / young person have granted their consent for the taking and publication of photographic images and have signed and returned the Parent / Guardian and Young Person Permission Form. It is strongly recommended that the relevant form (see below) is incorporated into the annual club registration form and will therefore only need to be completed once a year.
2. All young people must be appropriately dressed for the activity taking place.
3. Photography or recording should focus on the activity rather than a particular young person. Personal details, which might make a young person vulnerable, such as their address, must never be revealed.
4. Where an individual has achieved success in the game, e.g. when selected for a representative side or showing triumph over adversity, permission must be gained from the parent / guardian and young person to use photographs / recordings and relevant details.
5. Where possible photographs / recordings should represent the diverse range of young people participating in Rugby.
6. Anyone taking photographs or recording at any Rugby event must have a valid reason for doing so and seek permission of the organiser / persons in charge.
7. They should make themselves known to the event organisers /persons in charge and be able to identify themselves if requested during the course of the event.
8. All concerns regarding in appropriate or intrusive photography should be reported in confidence to the RFU Child Protection Officer.



POLICY STATEMENT RELATING TO THE USE OF VIDEO / PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES

Gosforth RFC recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all young people in Rugby Union. As part of our commitment to ensure the safety of young people we will not permit photographs, video or other images including those taken via mobile telephones of young people to be taken or used without the consent of the parents / guardians and the young person.

Gosforth RFC will follow the RFU / RFUW guidance for the use of images of young people.

Gosforth RFC will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes for which they are intended, which is the promotion and celebration of the activities of Gosforth RFC.

If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform Gosforth RFC.

The images may be published on the Gosforth RFC website <http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/gosforthrfc>

If at any time either the parent / guardian or the young person wishes the data to be removed from the website, the Club Safeguarding Officer should be informed.



**PARENT / GUARDIAN AND YOUNG PERSON PERMISSION FORM
FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS AND RECORDED IMAGES**

I _____ (Parent / Guardian Full Name)

consent / do not consent to the photographing / videoing and publication of images of

_____ (Name of Young Person)

under the RFU's Child Protection and Best Practice Guidelines and I confirm that I am legally entitled to give or withhold this consent.

I also confirm that _____ (Name of Young Person)

is not the subject of a court order.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

I _____ (Name of Young Person)

consent / do not consent to the photographing / videoing and publication of images of my involvement in Rugby union under Gosforth RFC / RFU / RFUW's Child Protection and Best Practice Guidelines.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form to _____ (insert details)



Appendix J

DEALING WITH MEDIA ENQUIRIES

1. Why do you need a media strategy?

Child abuse is an issue which will quite correctly generate media interest. It is, however, imperative that Gosforth RFC has an effective strategy for dealing with media enquiries.

The RFU / RFUW now has a regional media team who can help deal with media enquiries. However, it is important that you handle initial enquiries in a way that will not aggravate the situation or generate negative publicity. It is also important to be aware of legislation that prevents the naming of children and young people in the media.

Gosforth RFC along with the RFU / RFUW is committed to investigating all allegations, but the potential damage the publication of false allegations can do to an individual or the club should not be underestimated.

2. Be Prepared

- Gosforth RFC has a Press Officer to handle media enquiries.
- If you know of an allegation of child abuse it is important to be prepared in advance for potential publicity.
- Contact the RFU / RFUW Regional Press Officer (RPO) for your area or the Regional Media Manager and give them all of the facts.
- Don't hide anything or pretend the situation is not as serious as it is or might become. The press can out a large headline on even the smallest story and it is important that the RPO is aware of the details.

3. Who do I contact?

The Regional Media Manager and Regional Press Officer for your area:

Tony Simpson, Northern Regional Press Officer

Mobile: 07734 902 033, email: tonysimpson@rfu.com

4. What to do when approached or contacted by a journalist?

- A journalist may hear of an alleged case of abuse, from a source, or directly from a relative or acquaintance, of the alleged victim.
- They are likely to approach the Constituent Body, Club, School or Coach, Official and ask for their response. It is worth remembering that the journalist may already have the story mapped out in their own mind so what you say, and how you say it, is important.
- Make sure you clearly hear the name of the journalist and the media they are working for. If necessary, ask them to repeat it and write it down.
- Make sure you fully understand what the journalist is asking you.

Ask them to repeat a question if necessary. You may be aware of the incident concerned but not always.

- Do not say "No Comment". It makes you sound guarded and as if you have something to hide.
- Take a contact phone number where they can be easily reached and find out what their deadline is.



-
- Contact the Regional Press Officer for your area and discuss the matter.
 - The RPO will contact the RFU Child Protection Officer, to formulate an appropriate response.
 - The RPO will then respond to the journalist and inform you of that response.

5. The Follow-up

Allegations of child abuse are rarely one-day stories so be prepared for more phone calls and media enquiries. Just because one response has been given does not mean that the media will not have more questions in the future.

Follow the same procedure as before and contact the Regional Press Officer.

6. Going off the record

Journalists like nothing better than going “off the record”. They use this tool to get more information but with the undertaking that they will not publish what you say. Do not speak off the record in any situation involving child protection issues.



DEALING WITH MEDIA ENQUIRIES

If you know about a serious allegation of child abuse

If you are contacted by a journalist regarding a serious allegation of child abuse

Take journalist's name, the media they work for and a telephone number

Contact the RFU Regional Press Officer (RPO)

The RPO will contact the RFU's Child Protection Officer

The RPO will then have a response in case of media enquiries

The RPO will contact you and the journalist with comment.

Keep the RPO informed of any developments.



USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

The RFU Child Protection Officer

Ann Hutchins

Telephone: 0870 143 2438

Mobile: 07921 283 200

Email: annhutchins@rfu.com

The RFU Equity, Welfare & Medical Manager

Steve Farr

Telephone: 0870 143 2438

Mobile: 07730 814 159

Email: stevefarr@rfu.com

The RFU Child Protection Lead Officer

Carol Isherwood

Mobile: 07973 829 074

Email: carolisherwood@rfu.com

RFU Helpline: 0208 831 6655

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Asian Helpline: 0800 096 7719

Welsh helpline: 0800 100 2524

Deaf Users Text Phone: 0800 056 0686

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

This is a 24-hour free and confidential telephone helpline that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

3 Gilmour Close,

Beaumont Leys,

Leicester,

LE14 1EZ

Telephone: 0116 234 7278

Website: www.thecpsu.org.uk

If not already advised the Club Safeguarding Officer details are available from the Chair of the Mini / Juniors



GOSFORTH RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB LTD

**Broadway West Playing Field
Broadway West
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 2HY**

Web site: www.pitchero.com/clubs/gosforthrfc