



Kesteven Rugby Football Club Safeguarding Policy and associated Documents

Introduction

1. At Kesteven Rugby Football Club (RFC) we believe that taking part in our sport should be a positive and enjoyable learning experience for all ages, which should not only help in their development as a player, but also as a person.
2. Both adults and children have a right to feel safe whilst playing, training, or socialising whether at home or away. It is the responsibility of England Rugby and the Kesteven RFC Board to ensure that all adults are provided with Direction and Guidance (D&G) in Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. This Policy, along with associated documents are accessible via the Clubs webpage and a hard copy is displayed in the Clubhouse.
 - a. All volunteers are required to sign said Policy every three years or if there is a change in Policy, whichever comes first.
3. All Club members should operate within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrate exemplary behaviour to both safeguard children and protect all personnel from allegations of abuse or poor practice.
 - a. Those individuals under the age of 18 are classed as Children, and therefore require stricter safeguarding procedures.
4. This Policy will provide D&G to all adults and children at Kesteven RFC. Further info can be found via the England Rugby Webpage. [RFU Safeguarding Children Policy 2022.pdf \(englandrugby.com\)](https://www.englandrugby.com/2022/pdf/englandrugby.com)

Club Safeguarding Officer

1. The Club will identify a Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO), whose role it is to deal with any concerns about physical, sexual or emotional abuse within the club. **The Club Safeguarding Officer is Ash Austen** email: ash_austen@btinternet.com or Tel: 07930287636.
 - a. The CSO is to identify via age-grade Team Managers all volunteers within their age group and ensure all remain current DBS. In addition, he/she is to send this info regarding all volunteers¹ to the Club Chairperson on a quarterly basis.

¹ Team Managers, Coaches and First Aiders.



Contents

Pg 3	Clubs Codes of Conduct
Pg 3, 4	Reporting a Safeguarding Incident
Pg 5	Adult Volunteers – Recruitment Qualification's Roles and Responsibilities
Pg 6	Adult/Child Ratios
Pg 6	Playing Up or Down (Age-Grade)
Pg 6, 7	Playing Adult Rugby
Pg 8	Safeguarding Considerations for Changing Rooms
Pg 9, 10	First Aid Policy
Pg 10	Injury: Incident/Accident Reporting
Pg 10	Concussion Protocols
Pg 11, 12	Social Media Policy
Pg 13	Photography, Videos and Use of Imagery Policy
Pg 14, 15	Anti-Bullying Policy



1. **Kesteven RFC Codes of Conduct.** To aid in its overall safeguarding, the Club has written its own Codes of Conduct, which compliments those of England Rugby and the Clubs Motto: “**One Club, One Family**” These are displayed within the Clubhouse and on the Clubs webpage. The Club Chairperson is to ensure all adult volunteers are reminded of these prior to the start of each Season.

[Codes of Conduct - Kesteven Rugby Documents](#)

Reporting a Safeguarding Incident

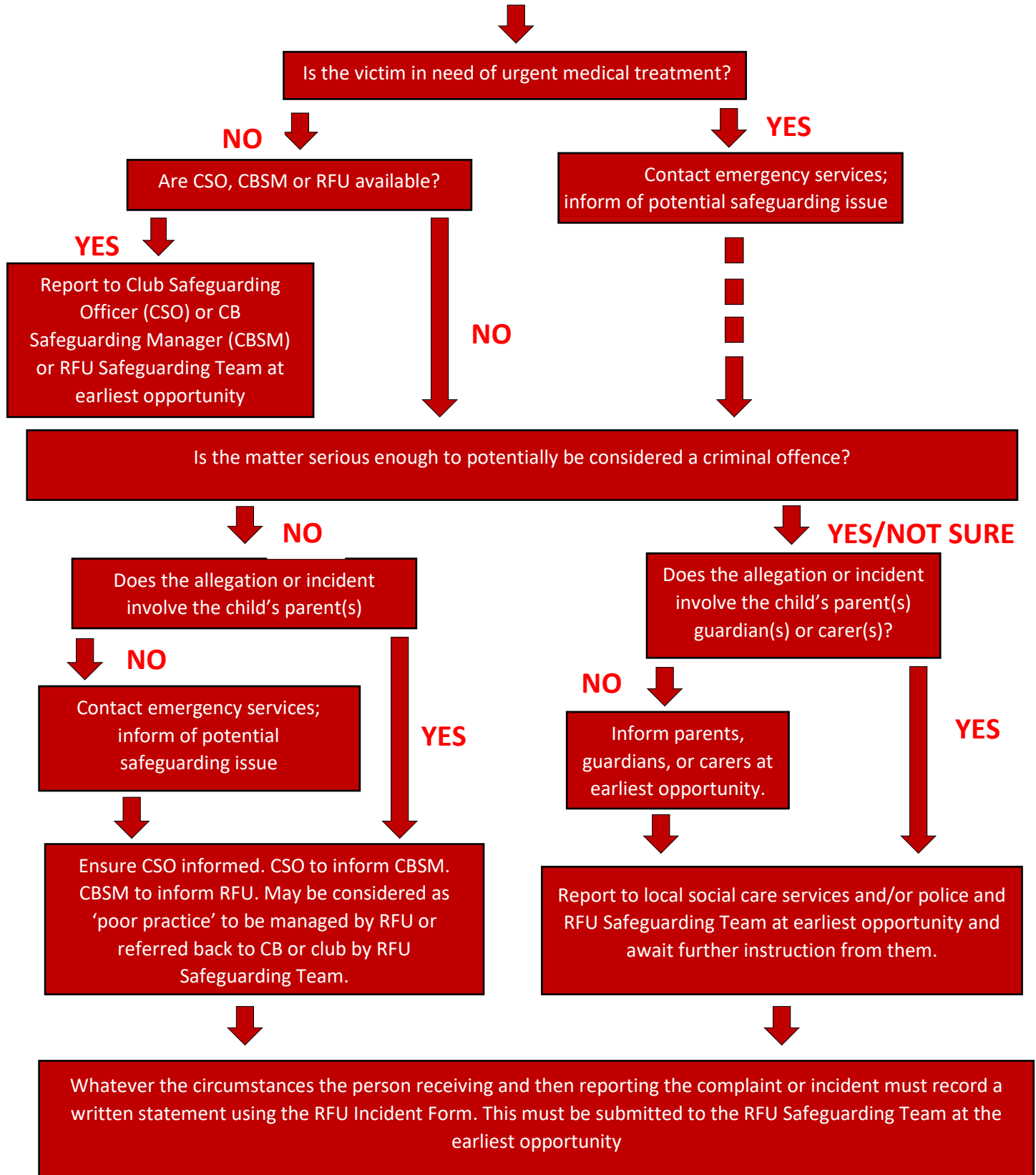
1. Safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility. This means that everyone in rugby has a responsibility to respond to any concerns that they or others, may have about a child, or the behaviour of an adult. This relates to concerns which arise both within the rugby environment and outside of the rugby environment.

2. An individual who becomes aware of any suspicions or concerns about the safety or welfare of a child should pass these on to the CSO as soon as possible. If they feel the child is in immediate risk of abuse, then a statutory agency (local children’s services or the police) should be contacted immediately. Otherwise, the CSO must contact the RFU Safeguarding Team or if they are not available the CB Safeguarding Manager to report the matter or discuss how to proceed. Guidance on reporting is on Pg 4.



A child has disclosed concerning information to you OR you have witnessed OR had reported to you an incident or complaint involving the behaviour of an adult in relation to a child, which may be considered abuse or poor practice.

STAY CALM - REASSURE - NO PROMISES - FEW QUESTIONS - FOLLOW GUIDE





Adult Volunteers

1. **Recruitment.** Kesteven RFC requires a high volume of committed adult volunteers to ensure its survival. All Adults who are placed in a position of trust, or who have regular contact with those under 18 years of age are to complete the following:

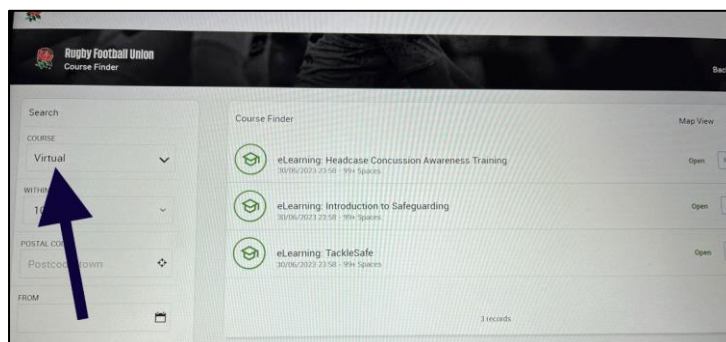
- a. **Volunteer Application Form.** On completion this is to be sent to the Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO) or the Minis and Junior Chairperson.

files.pitchero.com/clubs/26438/DiYrCTSGRMWgW2RlgyXI_20221102_Volunteer+Application+Form.pdf

- (1) Once approved, the Volunteer must then be registered on the Clubs Game Management System (GMS)

2. **Qualification's.** Coaching and First Aid qualifications are to be sought once an individual feels confident of attending, but ultimately said courses will assist in both the development of the volunteer and the players

- a. Volunteers who intend to Manage, Coach or provide First Aid Cover must complete both the **Virtual - eLearning: Intro to Safeguarding Course** and the **Virtual - eLearning: Headcase Concussion Awareness Training** (both available via the GMS) The CSO is to ensure both courses are completed prior to applying for a Disclosed Barring Service (DBS) check.



- b. **Whilst waiting on their respective DBS approval, volunteers may continue to assist their respective age-group, but must never be left alone with a child, under ANY circumstances. This is to protect the child, the club and the volunteer.**



3. **Roles and Responsibilities.** Many of the roles and responsibilities associated with the day to day managing and running of a Club are detailed on the England Rugby Webpage [Roles \(englandrugby.com\)](https://englandrugby.com), however the more front line roles (denoted below) are stated on the Club webpage. <https://kestevenrugby.club/a/volunteer-roles-responsibilities-65277.html> All volunteers are to ensure they read and understand their responsibilities in accordance with their role within their respective age group.

a. **Team Managers** are to ensure they have the following information for each child:

- (1) Surname
- (2) Forename
- (3) Date of Birth
- (4) Parent/Guardian Telephone Numbers
- (5) Any Medical Conditions

- b. Head Coach
- c. Assistance Coach(es)
- d. Team First Aider

4. **Ratios.** The Ratio of Adults to Children is to be always adhered to, no exceptions.

- a. 1 Adult to 10 Children (1:10) over 8 years old aged at least 9
- b. 1:8 for Children under 8 years old, aged 7 and 8
- c. 1:6 for Children under 7 years old.

5. **Playing Up or Down.** There may be occasions when age groups wish to train or play together, due to low numbers, although in some age groups/gender this is not permitted. Regulation 15 (see link below) provides guidance on what age groups may mix.

- a. [RFU Memo Template \(englandrugby.com\)](#)
- b. The respective age-group Managers are to ensure that the Minis and Junior Chairperson and the CSO is made aware of any intended playing up or down at the Club.



6. **Playing Adult Rugby.** There is evidence that in the past, 17-year-olds have often been asked to play adult rugby to meet the needs of a team rather than the development needs of the player. This was often done without an appropriate assessment of the player's physical and emotional development. In several cases this affected their transition to adult rugby and resulted in players leaving the game as they were playing outside their friendship groups and in an inappropriate adult environment.

a. Therefore, if a player shows both the maturity, skillset and desire to play adult Rugby, then the Club is to follow the process as detailed below;

(1) At the start of the Season, the CSO will submit a **Playing Adult Rugby - Club Approval Form**, which once authorised allows the Club to submit Player Approval Forms to the Nottingham Lincolnshire Derbyshire (NLD) Constituent Body.

b. If an U18 player feels they are ready to play adult rugby, and they have the skillset and maturity to do so, and their respective Team Manager/Head Coach supports this - then they are to arrange an independent coach to assess. The independent Coach must be at least Level Two, and registered on GMS to assess said player and populate the following **Playing Adult Rugby - Player Approval Form**

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/0dfda3b353b74227aecc0774b3081287>

(1) Prior to submission, the Club Chairperson or the CSO is to be consulted, as they will propose said player and their details will be populated on the form.

c. Once the NLD Constituent Body has approved the player, he/she is then authorised to play adult Rugby. The Team Manager must ensure the following with an U18 player:

(1) The player does not train or play in the front row of the contested scrum.

(2) Prior to Matches, the opposition Team Manager/Head Coach is to be informed there is an U18 player.

(3) The Player must be provided with a separate Shower or Changing Room should they wish.



Safeguarding Considerations for Changing Rooms

1. Kesteven RFC currently has four changing rooms that can be used by both Adult and Junior Players (U13s and above) and a fifth for a Referee, if required. There are also separate Male and Female Toilets and a Disabled Toilet in addition to one communal Shower.
2. Kesteven is an active Rugby Club, where at times numerous teams play at home. The Club Chairperson, The Junior and Minis Chairperson and the respective Fixtures Secretary are to ensure that at no time Adults and Children use the same facilities to shower or change at the same time.
 - a. In the event that U18s (Male or Female) are approved to play Adult Rugby, via the NLD Constituent Body, they may use the same facilities as the adults they play with.
 - (1) However, U18 Players should be offered² the opportunity to shower and change separately should they choose to do so.
3. **Supervision.** If children need supervising in changing rooms, or coaches or managers need to carry out a range of tasks in that environment, this must involve two individuals cleared to work in regulated activity and of the same sex as the children. In most circumstances, if supervision is required, it should be sufficient for these adults to be within earshot of the changing rooms, ideally, just outside the door to enable support, while maintaining the children's privacy. **Adults must only enter children's changing rooms by themselves when absolutely necessary due to poor behaviour, injury or illness, or in an emergency and when waiting for another adult could result in harm to a child.**
4. The use of mobile phones and/or photographic equipment are prohibited within the changing room and washroom facilities. Team Managers/Head Coaches are to ensure all children are aware of this rule and the reason for it. If team photos are being taken, they should be done outside the changing rooms, with everyone appropriately dressed.

² Team Managers responsibility



First Aid Policy

1. The Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 place a general duty on Kesteven RFC to make adequate First Aid provisions for the people that use the club facilities, including Players, Coaches, Referees and spectators if they become ill or injured during their activities. Kesteven Rugby Club is required to provide equipment and facilities that are appropriate in the circumstances for enabling First Aid to be rendered to Players/ Coaches/ Referees if they become ill or injured during their activities.

a. There are two First Aid Kits located in the Clubhouse (CH) – one in the Kitchen and one behind the Bar.

(1) These are to be checked monthly by the Club First Aid Officer, ensuring they are fully stocked.

b. A defibrillator is located on the outside wall of the CH near to the Catering service hatch. In the event of an emergency, the Catering Manager, Team Managers and First Aiders all have access, should it be required.

2. The Club has a designated First Aid Officer: Catherine Dickinson: Catherine.dickinson1@nhs.net who oversees the provisions of First Aid Kits and supplies. The Club First Aid Officer also is responsible for ensuring all Teams have a designated Team First Aid Officer and they are supplied with a First Aid Kit. This is to contain the following items:

- a. Ice Packs Skin Closure Strips
- b. Cool Spray Eye Pad Dressing
- c. First Aid Scissors (Blunt) Black Sock Tape
- d. Black Sock Tape
- e. Triangular Bandage
- f. Nail Clippers
- g. Big Plaster 7.5 x 10
- h. Nitrile Gloves
- i. Non-Woven Swabs
- j. Water Bottle (For clearing mud from eyes/face)
- k. Washproof Plaster Set
- l. Blister Plaster
- m. Micropore 10mm
- n. Sterowash Pods
- o. Reusable Ice Bag
- p. Low Adherent Dressing 10 x 10
- q. Softpore adhesive 10 x 10 Dressing
- r. Yellow Waste Bag (or carrier bag tied in a knot)



- s. Skin Closure Strips
- t. Eye Pad Dressing

3. Responsibilities of a Team First Aider are provided via the attached link:
[hHcLHmO1RdCWRNfcYII9_20221015_Kesteven First Aider.docx \(live.com\)](https://www.live.com/hHcLHmO1RdCWRNfcYII9_20221015_Kesteven_First_Aider.docx)

- a. All Team First Aid Officers are also provided with Pitch-Side Action Card, which cover a wide range of scenarios.
- b. First Aid Cover must be present for all training and matches (Home and Away)

Incidents and Accidents.

1. As with most sports that are played, Accidents and Incidents will occur. Rugby is a contact sport, where the risk of injury is greater than in most, therefore Head Coaches are to plan and conduct training that is safe in nature but remains challenging. Club Referees are to ensure the game is managed, ensuring that dangerous play, such as high tackles are penalised and stamped out early.

- b. **Concussion related injuries** are common in the game and should be managed properly, ensuring that the player receives not only appropriate medical care, but also follows strict guidelines on when to return to rugby. The link below provides such guidance and should be followed by all, regardless of the importance of the player to the team.

[Concussion & HIA Documents - Kesteven Rugby Documents](#)

- b. In the event of an Accident/Incident, the Team Manager (Head Coach in their absence) is to complete an **Accident/Incident Form**³ Copies of which are also available via the link below and located in the Club House.

(1) [VBj5IPU5QkiSp9e7YErX_20221024_Accident and Incident Report Form.docx \(live.com\)](https://www.live.com/VBj5IPU5QkiSp9e7YErX_20221024_Accident_and_Incident_Report_Form.docx)

³ 1. An injury which results in the player being admitted to a hospital. 2. Deaths which occur during or within 6 hours of a game finishing. 3. An injury on artificial grass pitches or from equipment (e.g. sports goggles). 4. A Concussion related injury.



Social Media Policy

1. It is recognised that Social Media is embedded within our culture and everyday practice, however it is essential that in the same way Kesteven RFC has a responsibility for the physical safety of the children, young people and vulnerable adults when visiting the club's premises, the club must also ensure that the same protection is afforded when using social networking methods of communication.

a. Cyber Bullying is very real and can have serious effects on the recipient. This rests with the Parent/Legal Guardian to educate their child of the harm it can inflict, but also the respective Team Manager/Head Coach. If it's suspected that Cyber bullying is going on, within the respective age group, the Team Manager/Head Coach should first discuss with the Parents and Child but is also to see advice from the CSO. Further guidance is also available via this link: [Encouraging positive behaviour.pdf \(englandrugby.com\)](#) and Pg 14 and 15 of this document.

2. It is vital to both Parent and Child that messages from the Club are communicated via the correct means. Kesteven RFC has a Facebook (FB) page and numerous What's App groups, which allow the Board, The Senior Teams and Age Grade Teams to communicate effectively.

a. **Club Webpage:** Kesteven RFC is legally and morally responsible for the content of its website. Kesteven RFC will nominate a designated person to oversee the content of the website and ensure that there is no abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text) placed on the site itself which may harm a child, directly or indirectly.

b. **E-Mails:** If the club needs to communicate club-related information to children by email (such as training or match details), it should use email groups comprising of email addresses given by parents. It is inadvisable for a coach to communicate by email on a one-to-one basis with a child; if replying to an email from a child the parent must be copied in the response

c. **Virtual Platforms:** In the event the Club requires communication with a child via a virtual platform, such as TEAMS for a Safeguarding concern and/or a Disciplinary issue, the host is to ensure the parents of said child is present on the call.

d. **What's App/Text Messages:** Adult Volunteers (Board Members, Managers, Coaches, etc) should not communicate with individual children by What's App, Text, at any time, unless there is an immediate risk to welfare or life. All communication should go via the Child's Parent(s)/Legal Guardian.



- (1) U18s are free to set-up their own What's App groups, as this allows them to discuss training, matches and build team cohesion. However, Team Managers are to ensure they are included in addition to another member of the Coaching staff. This is solely to monitor group discussions and to ensure that conversations are appropriate.

e. **Facebook/Messenger:** Adult Coaches and Club Officials should not individually communicate with children through social networking sites such as FB. Coaches should not be "friends" with the children they coach and they should not comment on their status as this can open a coach up to allegations.

- (1) All messages posted on the Clubs FB page are vetted by Club Officials, prior to approval and posting, thus ensuring the Clubs messaging is appropriate and meets the Clubs vision.



Photography, Videos and Use of Imagery Policy

1. Both the RFU and Kesteven RFC positively encourage parents and spectators to take photographs of participants involved in rugby to celebrate the ethos and spirit of the sport. Kesteven RFC has a strong rapport with the local paper, which aids in not only promoting the Club, but also the game itself. However, there may be circumstances where taking a photograph of a child might not be acceptable. Common sense and careful considerations should be taken prior to putting in the public domain: The key points are:

- a. Personal information which can lead to a child being identified should never be used. If it is necessary to name a child, ensure you have written parental consent and have informed the parents as to how the image will be used. This is particularly important when issuing press releases and match reports.
- b. Photographs should be of the activity or team, not of one individual
- c. Children must be appropriately dressed when being photographed. It is never acceptable to capture any images in changing rooms, showers or at any time when players are dressing.
- d. Images must neither be sexual, of an exploitative nature nor open to misinterpretation or misuse.
- e. Parents should be made aware if a film is being taken to be used as a coaching aid. Clubs and CBs should ensure that any footage will be carefully monitored and stored securely.

2. Team Managers are to ensure that all Parents in their respective age group have completed a Photo consent form, stating they either approve or disprove of the Club using images of their child. This can be actioned and managed as part of the RFU player registration on the Game Management System (GMS) and Kesteven RFC registration on the Pitchero platform.

3. If an image is captured of an opposition player, the Team Manager/Head Coach is to seek permission via the Opposition Team Manager/Head Coach to use the image. In the event that it is not approved that child's face is to be masked, to protect said child.

4. If at any time either the parent/carer or the young person wishes the data to be removed from the website, the Club Safeguarding officer: Ash Austen – ash_austen@btinternet.com should be informed.



Anti-Bullying Policy

1. At Kesteven RFC we believe that taking part in our sport should be a positive and enjoyable part of children's and young people's lives. The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that all players develop at their own pace, in a safe, caring environment without the fear of being bullied.
2. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone: it is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Kesteven Rugby Football club. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will players be able to benefit fully from the opportunities at Kesteven RFC.
3. Bullying is usually defined as repeated behaviour, which is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically. The bully can be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach with a "win at all cost" attitude, or another intimidating child. Bullying can take many forms but it is ultimately the perception of the victim that determines whether they are being bullied rather than the intention of the bully.
 - c. The three main types of Bullying are:
 - (1) Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
 - (2) Verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
 - (3) Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
4. Players who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, missing training, practice and/ or games.

PLAYERS MUST BE ENCOURAGED TO REPORT BULLYING TO TEAM MANAGERS/COACHES OR THE CLUB SAFEGUARDING OFFICER.

5. The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents of bullying. If bullying is suspected or reported, the Clubs Safeguarding Officer and age group manager will deal with the incident immediately.
 - a. A clear account of the incident will be recorded and if not resolved by the Club Safeguarding Officer, advice will be sought from the CB Safeguarding Manager and RFU Safeguarding Team. Disciplinary measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned.



- b. Players who have been bullied will be supported by:
 - (1) Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with the Safeguarding Officer/Team Manager.
 - (2) Reassuring the player.
 - (3) Offering continuous support.
 - (4) Restoring self-esteem
- c. Players who have bullied will be helped by:
 - (1) Discussing what happened
 - (2) Discovering why the player became involved,
 - (3) Establishing the wrongdoing and need to change.
 - (4) Informing the parents/carers to help change the attitude of the player.
- d. The following disciplinary steps can be taken, if warranted by the Disciplinary Committee
 - (1) Official warnings to cease offending
 - (2) Exclusion from certain club activities
 - (3) Permanent exclusion from the club.
 - (4) Monitoring, evaluation and review:

6. The link attached provides RFU guidance in dealing with children that display challenging behaviour: [Encouraging positive behaviour.pdf \(englandrugby.com\)](#)