



Safeguarding Policy

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Policy statement

Hamilton Rugby Club is committed to child protection and the welfare of children and young people in our sport. All children and young people are entitled to protection from harm and take part in rugby in a safe and enjoyable environment. We embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of all children and young people. Everyone within Hamilton Rugby Club will be made aware of the policies and procedures in place to protect children and young people in our care and to promote their well-being.

Key principles:

- A child or young person is recognised as someone under the age of 18
- The welfare of the child or young person is paramount
- Everyone will work in partnership to promote the welfare, health and development of children and young people
- The protection of children and young people in our care is everyone's responsibility

Definitions

Who is A Child?

In Scotland, a child is legally an adult when they turn 16, however this can be extended to 18 under certain circumstances but it is important to know that Scottish Rugby policy covers all players to the age of 18 due to the position of trust that coaches and volunteers are in.

17 Year Olds Playing Adult Rugby

This policy covers all players under the age of 18. However it is recognised that some players under the age of 18 but over the age of 16 can, with the necessary consents as per our Age Banding Policies play adult rugby. Those dealing with players under 18 who are playing up a level must always be mindful of the player's safety and well-being.

However, for the purposes of this policy, a player who is training or playing with an adult team, having obtained the necessary consents for playing up a level is treated as an adult and the detail of this policy does not apply while he/she is training or playing with that adult team.

CPO

Child Protection Officer

GIRFEC

Getting It Right For Every Child

PVG

Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Act 2007) is a membership scheme that provides information on a person's criminal records and suitability to work with children or vulnerable groups.

Scottish Rugby Child Protection Team

Scottish Rugby has a dedicated Lead Child Protection Officer and Child Protection Administrator who are part of the HR & Regulatory Teams. They can be contacted on safeguarding@sru.org.uk or 0131 346 5000.

Scottish Rugby values

Scottish Rugby is the Governing Body of Rugby union in Scotland and promotes these core values from our National Teams through to grassroots rugby. Our core values are:

LEADERSHIP

ENGAGEMENT

ACHIEVEMENT

ENJOYMENT

RESPECT

Playing Our Part

Scottish Rugby will:

- Appoint a Lead Child Protection Officer to manage its child protection programme.
- Require that each Member/Affiliated Member club appoints a Child Protection Officer and has a Club Child Protection Policy in place.
- Act as an Umbrella Organisation for the PVG process on behalf of club coaches, CPOs and other volunteers in regulated work.
- Require that Clubs comply with PVG checks as part of the Club Sustainability Award Scheme and membership of the Union.
- Ensure that Child Protection Policies and Best Practice guidelines are reviewed and amended as required by changes in legislation.
- Provide training programmes for Scottish Rugby employees and the volunteer workforce within clubs.
- Manage and respond to referrals and/or concerns in an efficient and fair manner.
- Take Disciplinary Action against those who breach Scottish Rugby Regulations.

Hamilton Rugby Club will:

- Appoint a Club Child Protection Officer (CPO) and where appropriate an assistant CPO, to act as the first point of contact for any child protection and well-being concerns.
- Ensure that the CPO is a member of the PVG Scheme with necessary Scheme Record Update and attends Foundation & Intermediate Level Child Protection training within 6 months of appointment.
- Ensure a Child Protection Policy is in place and easily accessible by club members, parents, players etc.
- Ensure their CPO is easily contactable to deal with any areas of concerns around a child's well-being and refers to the appropriate agency/Scottish Rugby Child Protection team.

Members, Volunteers and Employees will:

- Agree to work together to provide a safe environment, friendly and accessible to all children to experience and enjoy rugby.
- Agree to comply with their Club Child Protection Policy.
- Agree to complete Child Protection training as required by their role.
- Agree to become a PVG Scheme Member if their role is in regulated work.

Role of the Child Protection Officer

Each member club must appoint a Child Protection Officer (CPO). This person should be the main point of contact within the club for any support, concerns, advice and training.

The CPO should lead on good practice and be known in their role, be accessible and visible to other volunteers/staff, children and parents. They should be friendly and approachable and be able to communicate well with children and adults. They should understand the importance of confidentiality, impartiality and possess the ability to deal with sensitive situations with empathy and integrity. They should have a willingness to challenge opinion and the confidence to manage situations and know when to ask for support.

Scottish Rugby will provide each CPO with training on an annual basis and are available to provide support and guidance.

Roles & Responsibilities for the Club Child Protection Officer

- Promote and champion Child Protection at the club and encourage good practice.
- Ensure club has a Child Protection Policy that is available on club website.
- Respond appropriately to any child protection or well-being concerns.
- If unable to deal with a concern due to conflict of interest or any other reason, they should refer the issue to Scottish Rugby without delay.
- Ensure that good practice is used in the recruitment of all volunteers, coaches, staff who are working with children.
- Ensure that everyone at the club in regulated work has a PVG Membership, keep records of these, and keep those records up to date.
- Report to the Club Committee or equivalent on any issues or concerns.
- Maintain records of any reported cases and action taken, on a confidential basis.
- Liaise with Scottish Rugby Child Protection department as required.
- Signpost other members of the club to relevant training or advice.

How to Recognise, Respond, Report and Record

There are many signs and indicators that a child is being harmed. Often one of these signs alone is not cause for concern (e.g. most children will get a bruise at some point during activity) however cumulatively they should form a picture and be taken seriously. If a child discloses or you observe any concerns or are told about concerns from someone else, follow the 4 R's.

Recognise

You first need to **recognise** a child protection concern. You need to know what abuse is, what to look out for and be vigilant at all times. Things to look out for:

- A change in the child's behaviour – e.g becoming disruptive or unreasonable during sessions.
- Becoming anxious, lack confidence or are withdrawn and stop communicating.
- Begin bullying other children.
- Display sexual behaviour or language inappropriate for their age.
- Are often hungry, may steal food, always tired.
- Have inadequate clothing, are dirty, poor personal hygiene.
- Have unexplained cuts and bruises or bite marks.
- Self-harming or eating disorder.
- Reluctance to change clothes for sport/activity or receive medical treatment such as physio.
- Seem afraid of parents or carers, don't want to go home.
- Are frightened to say what's wrong.

If you have a concern it is not the role of any volunteer or staff member including the CPO to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused. Concerns should be reported so that experts can advise and take action if necessary.

Respond Appropriately

Second, you need to **RESPOND** to possible concerns. Sometimes a concern is obvious; sometimes it is not. It is important to respond when a player or another person tells you that something bad is happening in their lives, or someone else tells you. Not all children will tell someone what is happening to them, so if you see or hear anything that could be a concern for them, you must respond quickly.

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Listen to what they say and don't show disbelief or disgust.
- Reassure them they are not to blame and were right to tell you.
- Avoid stopping them to go and get someone else – let them speak.
- Avoid asking too many questions, just gather basic questions, who, where, when.
- Don't give personal viewpoints.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret, be clear that this is important and you have to tell someone else.
- Reassure them they are not in any trouble.

Report your concerns

Third, you need to **REPORT** – or refer – passing on information to the Child Protection Officer in your club. This will begin the process of making sure that the club and Scottish Rugby is doing what it should to keep players safe.

- If the child is in immediate danger call
- Speak to the Child Protection Officer at your club.
- If you are the CPO, contact Scottish Rugby Child Protection team for advice.
- Or contact one of the main charity helplines:
 - **Children1st – 0131 446 2300**
 - **NSPCC - 0808 800 5000**

Record your observations

Fourth you need to **RECORD** your observations, your concerns and the actions you take or do not take using Scottish Rugby reporting form.

As soon as you can, write down:

- The child's name, date of birth.
- When they made the disclosure (date/time/where).
- Whether the child told you about their concern or about someone else.
- Use the child's own words – don't try to edit or make it sound more polite.
- What the concern is.
- Description of any visible injuries, behaviours – don't examine the child.
- Details of any witnesses.
- What the child's view is – bear in mind the abuse may be something the child is not conscious of – it could be normal to them.

To ensure a safe environment in which children can enjoy their rugby, everyone involved in the sport must work together. It is EVERYONE'S responsibility to contribute towards child well-being.

How Hamilton Rugby Club will Respond

The well-being of children is at the centre of any concerns raised. Hamilton Rugby Club will always take any concerns seriously and our first priority will be to a victim and any witnesses.

Concerns will be referred to our Child Protection Officer in the first instance and then escalated if necessary. In some cases disciplinary processes may also be involved should we consider that an individual's of club membership should be suspended or terminated.

Where required we will liaise closely with statutory agencies such as social work, Police Scotland, Children 1st and NSPCC or Local Authority Child Protection Committees

What is Abuse?

There are four main areas of abuse – PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, NEGLECT, EMOTIONAL – and these are detailed below. However, a child's overall well-being is vitally important and any concerns around this should also be raised in the appropriate manner. Further information on WELLBEING and the key indicators can be found in the Legislation section of this Policy.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a carer or parent feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after. This is known as fabricated or induced illness.

In Sport: Physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregards the capacity of the young person's immature and growing body.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is any act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. It involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of indecent images, or in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse is not only committed by men; women can also sexually abuse children, as can other children.

In Sport: Activities which might involve physical contact with players could potentially create situations where sexual abuse could go unnoticed, however it is important to identify that positive and appropriate touch in sport can actually help children identify inappropriate touch should that ever happen at another point.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child from physical harm or danger, to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or failure to respond to, a child's emotional needs. Neglect may result in a child's failure to thrive or to meet normal weight and growth developmental milestones.

In Sport: It is important that if you have concerns that a child may be being neglected that you speak to the child protection officer. You are not expected to be an expert or investigate but you have a vital contribution to make in creating a child centred culture where children feel valued, listened to and believed when they are experiencing difficulties in their lives.

Neglect in sport could mean exposing a child to unnecessary risk of injury, forcing them to train or play in extreme weather conditions, or not ensuring they are safe and failing to seek medical attention for injuries.

Emotional

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve saying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve the imposition of age, or developmentally inappropriate expectations on a child or causing them to feel frightened or in danger, or exploiting or corrupting children. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill-treatment of a child. It can also occur independently of other types of abuse.

In Sport: Emotional abuse in sport can be constant criticism, giving negative feedback or being expected to perform at levels that are above the individual's capability.

Bullying will not be tolerated within Scottish Rugby either from other players, Scottish Rugby officials or parents and carers. Social media is also increasingly used by abusers to contact, bully and abuse children.

In most situations, children may experience more than one type of abuse. For example, most types of abuse are emotionally harmful and sexual abuse can also cause physical harm.

Guidance and Responsibilities

Scottish Rugby website scottishrugby.org has a range of best practice documents, some of which expand on the information given below. However we have given some guidance here which our employees, club coaches and volunteers may find useful in order to provide a safe, welcoming and friendly environment for children.

Recruitment

All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure anyone who may pose a threat to children is excluded from working in our sport. If a job involves working with children, the club has a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that the person appointed is suitable. The steps below are a guide to recruiting coaches and volunteers.

PVG Membership

Scottish Rugby requires anyone within our own workforce (employees) and anyone within our member clubs who are in regulated work to be a member of the PVG Scheme.

Youth Coaches are not permitted to work within clubs until they have their PVG Membership number it has been recorded on the Scottish Rugby club database. (CDMS/SCRUMS).

If Disclosure Scotland inform Scottish Rugby that an individual is barred from working with children, that member of the club must be removed from working with children immediately. The Club must consider whether that individual's membership of the Club should be suspended or terminated.

If Disclosure Scotland informs Scottish Rugby that an individual is considered for listing, the person should be suspended from regulated work as a precaution until the outcome of the investigation is determined.

Adult: Child Ratios

Activities should be planned to involve at least two adults, preferably one male and one female. Ratios of adults to children should take into account the activity and other risk factors such as whether any of the group has special requirements or a physical disability, the level of experience of the leaders, the age, maturity and experience of the children in that sport.

For children aged 3 and over the minimum ratio is 1:8

If all children are over 8 years of age, then the minimum ratio is 1:10

Changing Rooms and Showers

Adults and children must never use the same facilities at the same time to shower and change.

It is recognised that in a rugby environment that adults may need to supervise children in changing rooms, or that in certain situations, physio or medical treatment may be necessary. There should be two adults present, both of whom are PVG members and this should be for necessary activity only.

No pressure should be placed on any children who feel uncomfortable changing or showering with others, and they should be allowed to do so at home if needed.

For mixed gender activities separate facilities should be available and staff of same gender on duty.

Transportation

In most cases it is the responsibility of parents to drop off and pick up their children. There should be a clear transport policy in place with consent given for the children to be transported by the club to fixtures. Drivers must have appropriate licences, insurance and, if a regular occurrence, a PVG check. Vehicles used must be of good condition with seatbelts and where required booster seats.

No child should travel unaccompanied. In the event of late collection, the club should try and contact the parents, wait with the child, preferably in the company of others, notify the club CPO. No child should be transported alone unless in emergency circumstances, where parents should be made aware and have given consent that the child is given a lift.

Social Media & Photography

The wider topic of social media policy is covered in Hamilton Rugby Club's Social Media Policy but there are a number of guidelines that are relevant in protecting children.

Use of social media and taking photographs is largely a positive tool for promotion of rugby and recording of children's participation and enjoyment of the sport. However, there are risks associated and a few key principles should be followed:

- Clubs have responsibility for their websites and online presence and should keep children safe from harm in the same way as they do on their pitches and in their clubhouses.

- Key risks can be any inappropriate or abusive content on the site or linked sites, or disclosing information about a child to people accessing the website.
- No personal information regarding a child should feature on the club website without having obtained parental consent for that use – for example avoid listing a child’s full name, school, address etc.
- Club coaches should not be communicating directly with individual children through social media – e.g. should not be “friends” on Facebook.
- If a club is communicating with a group of players through social media it should be done in a closed group using details provided by parents and with parental consent.
- Clubs should monitor any sites that allow comments to be posted to ensure that there is no online bullying or critical comments about individual players/children.
- Parental consent should be obtained before any photographs of a child appear on club websites or promotional material.
- There may be children who are not able to be photographed (eg subject to court orders) and clubs should be responsive to this.
- Children should be featured as a team, not individually.
- No photographs must ever be taken within changing rooms, or where anyone is not appropriately dressed.
- Images must not be inappropriate or of a sexual or exploitative nature.
- Parents may be asked to register their intention to take photos and be given guidance on using these photos.

Legislation

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is about improving the well-being of children and young people in Scotland. The Act is wide ranging and includes key parts of the **Getting It Right For Every Child** approach, commonly known as **GIRFEC**. Well-being sits at the heart of the GIRFEC approach and reflects the need to tailor the support and help that children, young people and their parents are offered to support their well-being. A child or young person's well-being is influenced by everything around them and the different experiences and needs they have at different times in their lives.

Well-being is broader than child protection and how we tend to think about welfare. To help make sure everyone – children, young people, parents, and the services that support them – has a common understanding of what well-being means, we describe it in terms of eight indicators commonly referred to by their initial letters -**SHANARRI**.

Child protection services will continue to protect children and young people at risk of significant harm.

The Eight Indicators of Well-being

Safe - Protected from abuse, neglect or harm at home, at school and in the community.

Healthy - Having the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare and support in learning to make healthy, safe choices.

Achieving - Being supported and guided in learning and in the development of skills, confidence and self-esteem, at home, in school and in the community.

Nurtured - Having a nurturing place to live in a family setting, with additional help if needed, or, where possible, in a suitable care setting.

Active - Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport, which contribute to healthy growth and development, at home, in school and in the community.

Respected - Having the opportunity, along with carers, to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them.

Responsible - Having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision, and being involved in decisions that affect them.

Included - Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities, and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

More details can be found at: <http://www.gov.scot/topics/people/young-people/gettingitright>

Contacts

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