

WESTCOMBE PARK RFC

Child Safeguarding Policy

Whole Club



WESTCOMBE PARK
RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB
RFU KCRFU MCRFU LSRFUR KSRFUR

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Scope
<p>The scope of this document is to show the Club’s approach to the subject of safeguarding children whilst engaged in pursuing the sport of Rugby.</p> <p>This document is not intended to replace any existing standards produced by any regulatory body such as the RFU, but to clarify the Club’s methods of implementing these standards.</p>

Description
<p>This document outlines the key principles of safeguarding children engaged in the sport of rugby, including these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key principles of safeguarding • Recognising types of abuse • Our anti-bullying policy • The accepted responsibilities of the Club • Our role in preventing abuse • Officers’ and parents’ responsibilities in terms of all aspects of safeguarding • A definition of Poor Practice in this field, and the Club’s response

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Introduction

Westcombe Park Rugby Football Club (herein referred to as “WPRFC”) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the sport of rugby.

All children are entitled to feel safe and protected from any form of abuse and neglect, and have the right to take part in sport in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment

WPRFC recognises the obligation to ensure that the volunteer coaches and parent helpers and carers who have a responsibility for children within the club provide them with the highest possible standard of care

This policy supplements, but does not replace, the RFU policies regarding safeguarding which are available here:

<https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding>

Through the implementation of a policy for the Welfare of Children, and the support of its volunteers, WPRFC will maintain the professionalism and safeguards of good practice that are associated with the game.

In support of these objectives, WPRFC will ensure that each youth age group has a trained safeguarding representative, as well as club officers trained in child safety at RFU recognised courses. This training will include relevant senior side officers and members as appropriate.

This policy outlines the following key areas:

- It emphasises the value of working closely in partnership with volunteer coaches / parents, and professionals to protect children from harm and discrimination.
- It acknowledges that abuse does take place in sport and that raising awareness and understanding of the main forms of abuse and establishing communication and reporting procedures if abuse is suspected will further safeguard the children, coaches and all others working within the club.

WPRFC will work with parents/carers and members at all levels through youth rugby (Minis & Juniors) and the senior club to ensure that all players within the club enjoy the game in a safe and friendly environment whilst developing a sense of fair play and good sportsmanship.

Although we know that rugby is a team sport, coaches never forget to value each player for their individual contribution whatever their ability. The club encourages adult supporters at weekly training, matches and competitions. At all times, all adults are expected to set the “right example” at the touchline, by appreciating good play on either side and providing only encouraging support to all our players.

Key Principles

Anyone under the age of 18 within the club should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

The welfare of all children is paramount.

- All children, whatever their age gender, culture, ability or disability, language, religious belief, racial origin, and/or sexual identity should be able to enjoy the game in a fun, environment safe from abuse of any kind.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All adults who are in contact with children whether paid or voluntary, should complete an application form and, where appropriate, hold a valid enhanced DBS
- All volunteers within the club will be made aware of good practice in order to ensure that they are not placed in situations where unmerited allegations are made.
- For each volunteer the club will, at their Safeguarding training Session, provide a copy of or make them aware of the RFU's safeguarding policy.

WPRFC acknowledges that within RFU regulations a male player is permitted to play in the adult game on reaching his 17th birthday. The club recognises its responsibility to be mindful of the safety and well-being of the player. All RFU regulations currently in force will be fully complied with.

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 parents and children must be made aware of situations in which this may happen when they join the club. Physical handling should only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique.

WPRFC recognises that anyone may be in a position to abuse young people in some way and the club will therefore use its best endeavours to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people or vulnerable adults within the Rugby Club. Under the Protection of Children Act 1999 all individuals working on behalf of the club are treated as employees whether paid or unpaid.

Recognising Abuse

It is not always easy to differentiate poor practice from abuse, albeit intentional or unintentional. It is not, therefore, the responsibility of adults within the club to determine whether or not abuse is taking place.

It is however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have a concern about the welfare of Vulnerable Person(s). The club will take all allegations seriously and appropriate action will be pursued.

1.) The four main types of abuse are:

1.1) Emotional abuse:

In a rugby situation, emotional abuse may occur when:

- Coaches provide repeated negative feedback.
- Repeatedly ignore a player's efforts to progress.
- Repeatedly demand performance levels above those of which the player is capable, over emphasise the winning ethic.

1.2) Abuse by neglect:

In a rugby situation neglect may occur when:

- Vulnerable players are left alone without proper supervision.
- A Vulnerable player is exposed to unnecessary heat or cold without fluids or protection.
- A Vulnerable player is exposed to an unacceptable risk of injury.

1.3) Physical abuse:

In a rugby situation physical abuse may occur when:

- Coaches, Managers or helpers expose vulnerable players to exercise/training, which disregards the capacity of the player's immature and growing body, or adult skill levels.
- Coaches, Managers or helpers expose vulnerable players to overplaying, over training or fatigue.
- Coaches, Managers or helpers expose young players to alcohol, or give them the opportunity to drink alcohol below the legal age.
- Coaches, Managers or helpers expose vulnerable players to performance enhancing drugs or recommend that they take them.

1.4) Sexual abuse:

In a rugby situation sexual abuse may occur when:

- The close proximity of coaches and others to vulnerable people provides opportunities for potential abusers to exploit their position of trust to sexually abuse.

Club Responsibilities and Procedures

2.) The Role of the Rugby Club:

- To appoint a Safeguarding Officer(s) who will act as the first point of contact for concerns about the welfare of vulnerable persons.
- To accept that all officers / committee members have a responsibility in this area and be prepared to respond to any indication of poor practice or abuse.
- To adopt and implement a policy of Best Practice for all adults working with young people.
- To identify a disciplinary panel this where necessary will be convened to hear cases.
- The club will ensure that there is an Equity Policy and that all discrimination is challenged.
- The club will ensure that all adults who supervise vulnerable persons undertake DBS disclosure
- The club will ensure guidelines are in place to control and monitor the use of photographic images relating to Rugby.
- The club has an anti-bullying policy, which is actively promoted (See Appendix A)
- The club will monitor coaches and provide them with feedback with particular reference to “poor practice”
- Photography or recording used by the club should seek to promote all people enjoying the sport.
- The club will protect the personal details of individual players as disclosure might leave a vulnerable person at risk.

3.) Club Welfare Officer(s) Responsibility:

- Ensure club has a Safeguarding Policy and implementation plan.
- Ensure Codes of Conduct are well publicised and adhered to.
- In consultation with the County Safeguarding Officer, ensure all reported incidents are managed at the appropriate level in line with RFU procedures.
- Ensure all volunteer managers; coaches/parent helpers who have regular supervisory contact with vulnerable persons or a management responsibility for those working with vulnerable persons undertake a DBS disclosure.
- To ensure that relevant training is available for all those working with vulnerable persons .
- Ensure all parents are aware of the club policy on Safeguarding and the correct protocols for voicing concerns.
- Be aware of local Social Services and Area Child Protection Committee Contacts.
- Sit on relevant club committees.
- Ensure awareness of safeguarding issues regarding safeguarding vulnerable persons.

4.) Coaches' Responsibility:

- Coaches should hold current RFU coaching awards or a recognised Qualification or have committed to undertake the relevant training within a reasonable period of taking office.
- Coaches must ensure that the activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the players.
- Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of their sport (e.g. fair play).
- Coaches must consistently display high standards of personal behaviour, and never condone law violations or use of prohibited substances.
- Coaches should never overtly criticise players or use language or actions, which may cause the player to lose self-esteem or confidence.
- All coaches must have a valid DBS Check.
- Be familiar with and adhere to the club Child Safeguarding Policy and Best Practice Guidelines.
- Ensure all referees who manage mini/midi and youth games are DBS checked.
- Undertake relevant Safeguarding training provided by the club.
- Avoid physical contact except where:
“Physical handling by a coach must only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique (Level 1 Coaching Award in Rugby Union)”
And if necessary:
“The reasons for physical contact should be explained wherever practicable so that children and their parents are comfortable with this approach”
- In a situation where individuals have to consider whether to intervene to prevent a child being injured, injuring themselves or others, physical intervention should ways be avoided unless absolutely necessary. In these situations it is imperative to:
 - Consider your own safety
 - Give verbal instructions first
 - Use the minimum reasonable force and only when necessary to resolve the incident, the purpose being restraint and reducing risk
 - Do not strike blows, act with unnecessary force or retaliate
 - Avoid contact with intimate parts of the body, the head and neck
 - Stay in control of your actions

Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the player above the development of performance. Coaches should:

- Avoid overplaying of players (particularly talented players). All players need and deserve equal opportunity to play.
- Remember that 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.
- Ensure equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the players.
- Ideally young people should not have to change at the same time or in the same place as adults.
- Where mixed teams compete away from home they must always be accompanied by at least one male and one female.
- Not leave the Rugby Club until the safe dispersal of all young people is complete.

5.) Team Managers' Responsibilities:

- To ensure all players are age appropriately registered with the RFU.
- To keep written records of player attendance and parent contact details.
- Ensure all parents are advised where access to this document WPRFC's "Whole Club Safeguarding Policy" may be obtained (e.g. Website, Certain Office Holder's and Notice Boards).
- Ensure parents/guardians of vulnerable persons are made aware of the policy "WPRFC Photographic Policy".

6.) Parents' Responsibilities

- To ensure all vulnerable persons are appropriately kitted out for the weather conditions.
- To ensure vulnerable persons attending rugby are fit to do so.
- To inform the coaches of any issues that might affect the vulnerable persons during the session.
- Ensure the club manager/coach has all relevant health or other details relating to your child/vulnerable person.
- Share any vulnerable person protection concerns initially with the club Safeguarding officer.
- Be an active supporter of Club Activities.
- Attend club sessions with your vulnerable person if their age group requires parental/guardian supervision.
- All concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported in confidence to the RFU Equity and Ethics Manager via the Rugby Club or the club's Safeguarding officer.

Poor Practice

Constitutes any behaviour which contravenes the club Code of Conduct and Code of Good Practice in the Rugby setting and:

- **Infringes on an individual's rights.**
- **Is a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care.**

Allegations relating to **poor practice** where an adult's behaviour is inappropriate and maybe causing concern to a vulnerable person(s), parents or club volunteer(s), coach(es) or helper(s) will be taken very seriously by the club, and appropriate action taken.

The Club Safeguarding officer will follow club procedures for a report of poor practice.

Non-action is not an option - the welfare of the vulnerable person(s) is always paramount.

7.) Individuals should never:

- Take vulnerable persons to their home or other secluded places where they will be alone.
- Engage in rough, physical games, sexually provocative games or horseplay with vulnerable persons.
- Take part as player in any dynamic contact games or training sessions with young people. If there is a need for an adult to facilitate learning within a coaching session through the use of coaching aids e.g. contact pads, this should be done with the utmost care and with due regard to the safety and well-being of the young players.
- Share a room with a vulnerable person unless the individual is the parent/guardian of that vulnerable person.
- Allow any form of inappropriate touching. (Not specifically related to the coaching of the game).
- Make sexually suggestive remarks to a vulnerable person even in fun.
- Use inappropriate language or allow young players to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Allow allegations by vulnerable person to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for a vulnerable person that they can do for themselves unless you have been requested to do so by the parents/carers (Please note that it is recognised that some vulnerable persons will always need help with things such as lace tying, adjustment of Tag belts, fitting head guards).
- Cause an individual to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
- Treat some vulnerable person more favourably than others.
- Take vulnerable persons alone on car journeys, however short.
- If you accidentally hurt a player, or cause distress in any manner, or the player appears to respond in a sexual manner to your actions, or misunderstands, or misinterprets something you have done, report the incident to a colleague supported by a written report of the incident as soon as possible
(Form attached in Appendix B).
Parents/carers should also be informed of the occurrence.
- Agree to meet a vulnerable person on your own on a one to one basis, or spend amounts of time alone with vulnerable persons away from others. If it should arise that such a situation is unavoidable it should only take place with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club/governing body and/or a person with parental responsibility for the player.

Appendix A - WPRFC's Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying is not always easy to define and will not always be an adult abusing a young person or vulnerable adult. It is often the case that the bully is another young person or vulnerable adult. This behaviour must also be watched out for where the victim is a vulnerable adult. There are three main types of bullying:

- Physical e.g. hitting, kicking, theft.
- Verbal e.g. racist or homophobic remarks.
- Emotional e.g. persistent negative feedback.

The competitive nature of Rugby Union makes it a potential environment for the bully. This may manifest itself in some of the following ways:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards a victim
- A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies.
- An outcome, which is always painful and distressing for the individual.

Bullying behaviour may also include other forms of violence:

- Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive offensive comments of sexual nature.
- A parent who pushes too hard.
- A coach who adopts a win at all costs philosophy.
- A player who intimidates others.
- An official who is over officious.

Emotional and verbal bullying is more likely to be found in rugby than physical violence, it is also more difficult to cope with or prove. It is of paramount importance that all volunteer coaches / helpers, players and parents subscribe to and accept the procedures outlined in this policy.

WPRFC will always:

- Take the problem seriously.
- Investigate any incidents.
- Talk to the bullies and victims separately.
- Decide on appropriate action, such as:
 - Obtain apology from the bully(ies) to the victim / compensate the victim.
 - Inform parents of the bully(ies).
 - Insist on the return of items "borrowed" or stolen.

It is acknowledged that WPRFC has no control over, or way of monitoring, the use of social media. However, any use of social media to bully or intimidate will be dealt with according to WPRFC and England Rugby policies, as severely as any other form of bullying, as WPRFC makes no discrimination between digital, physical, or any other form of bullying.

Members are encouraged to make known any such behaviour as soon as possible to safeguarding representatives or the Club safeguarding officer, so that the matter may be dealt with appropriately.

Appendix B – Use of Changing Facilities & Showers

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

Adults must only enter changing rooms when absolutely necessary due to poor behaviour, injury or illness. **Adults must only ever enter the changing rooms by themselves in an emergency and when waiting for another adult could result in harm to a child.**

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 of the same gender as the children. For mixed gender or different gender activities separate facilities are available at WPRFC.

If the same facilities must be used by adults and children on the same day a clear timetable should be established. No pressure should be placed on children who feel uncomfortable changing or showering with others, if this is the case they should be allowed to shower and change at home.

Where a disability requires significant support from a parent; or carer, the person concerned and their parents should decide how they should be assisted to change or shower.

Before any assistance is offered by another person, appropriate consent should be given by a parent.

Appendix C – Provision of Alcohol

Westcombe Park's management committee are mindful of their responsibility as licencees. Members are reminded that it is against the law:

- To sell alcohol to someone under 18
- For an adult to buy or attempt to buy alcohol on behalf of someone under 18
- For someone under 18 to buy alcohol, attempt to buy alcohol or to be sold alcohol
- For someone under 18 to drink alcohol in licensed premises, with one exception - 16 and 17 year olds accompanied by an adult can drink but not buy beer, wine and cider with a table meal
- For an adult to buy alcohol for a person under 18 for consumption on licensed premises, except as above

At training sessions and games for children, adults' drinking habits may affect both childrens' attitudes to alcohol and their emotional well-being. As role models adults should avoid excessive drinking in their presence.

The unexpected can always happen; there should always be adults who abstain from drinking alcohol to deal with any emergencies and to manage the safety and welfare of children in their care.

Appendix D – Reporting An Incident

If there are any concerns about a child, please contact the Club Safeguarding Officer.

The following form...

<https://www.englandrugby.com//dxdam/91/91d2809e-07b8-43ba-8860-707c25534a80/SafeguardingReferralForm.pdf>

...should be completed when you have any concerns relating to the behaviour of any child or adult involved or spectating at your club. These may include general concerns about a child's welfare, concerns about bullying or poor practice, suspicions or allegations of misconduct or allegations of abuse.

Please send this form to the Club Safeguarding Officer, who will inform the CB Safeguarding Manager and the RFU Safeguarding Team at safeguarding@therfu.com as required.

Appendix E – WPRFC Safeguarding Contacts

The club's current Safeguarding Officers are listed on our website here:

<https://www.westcombeparkrugby.co.uk/contact>

They can be contacted via:

safeguarding@westcombeparkrugby.co.uk

This document, and more information related to the club's Safeguarding Policy (including this document), are available on our website here:

<https://www.westcombeparkrugby.co.uk/a/safeguarding-2384.html>