



HERTFORD RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

SAFEGUARDING

POLICY

Last Reviewed: August 2015



Policy

1. Hertford RFC acknowledges its' responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Hertford RFC from harm. Hertford RFC confirms that it adheres to the Rugby Football Union's Safeguarding Policy. This policy should be read in conjunction with that Policy and does not replace nor supercede it.
2. A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any rugby union activity. Where a 17 year old player is playing in the adult game every reasonable precaution will be taken to ensure their safety and wellbeing are also protected.
3. The Key Principles of the RFU Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy are that:
 - a. The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is, and must always be, paramount to any other consideration
 - b. All participants regardless of age, gender, ability or disability, race, faith, culture, size, shape, language or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse or harm
 - c. All allegations or suspicions of abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately
 - d. Working in partnership with other organisations, statutory agencies, parents, carers, children and young people is essential for the welfare of children and young people
4. Hertford RFC recognises that all children and young people have the right to participate in sport in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment whilst at the same time being protected from abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice. Hertford RFC recognises that this is the responsibility of everyone involved, in whatever capacity, at the club.

Codes of Conduct

5. Hertford RFC follows the RFU Code of Conduct and the Codes of Conduct for Coaches, Spectators and Officials. These Policies are in Appendix A.

Websites, Online and Mobile Communications

6. Hertford RFC follows the RFU Guidance for Websites, Online and Mobile Communications as set out on the RFU website. RFU Guidelines are attached in Appendix B.

Photographic Policy

7. Hertford RFC Photographic Policy is published on the club website and in Appendix C. Hertford RFC follows the RFU Photographic Policy recommendations and Best Practice guidelines.

Incident Reporting

8. The Club Safeguarding Officer and Assistant Safeguarding Officers are published on Club Noticeboards, in the Club Yearbook and in the Contacts and Safeguarding sections of the Club Website. Anyone witnessing or aware of an incident where the welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been put at risk must in the first instance inform the Club Safeguarding Officer or an Assistant Safeguarding Officer. If an incident involves the Club Safeguarding Officer the Club Chairman should be informed and also either the Herts RFU Safeguarding Manager or the RFU Safeguarding Executive. The chart in Appendix E provides guidance on who to contact and in what circumstances.



DBS Checks

9. All members of Hertford RFC who have a regular supervisory contact with children or a management responsibility for those working with children must undertake an RFU Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. An RFU flowchart to determine who requires a DBS check is reproduced in Appendix D.

Safeguarding Best Practice

10. Hertford RFC will ensure that all coaches, volunteers, and officials comply with the Safeguarding Best Practice Guidance as issued by the RFU. In summary, the following are **NOT** acceptable and will be treated seriously by the club and may result in disciplinary action being taken by the club, Herts RFU or the RFU:
 - a. Working alone with a children or young people
 - b. Consuming alcohol or smoking whilst working with children or young people
 - c. Failing to comply with the Club's guidelines on phone, email, messaging, internet and online contact with children or young people given in APPENDIX B
 - d. Providing alcohol to children or young people or allowing its supply
 - e. Humiliating children or young people
 - f. Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult
 - g. Participating in, or allowing, contact or physical games between adults and children or young people
 - h. Having an intimate or sexual relationship with any child, young person or vulnerable adult developed as a result of being in a "position of trust"
 - i. Making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material.

Changing Facilities

11. Hertford RFC ensures all its' coaches, parents, officials and spectators are aware that adults must not use the changing facilities at the same time as children, young people or vulnerable adults.
12. 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 DBS checked individuals of the same gender as the children
13. No pressure should be placed on young people who feel uncomfortable changing or showering with others, if this is the case they should be allowed to shower or change at home.

Safeguarding Training

14. Hertford RFC will provide its coaches and volunteers with the support and safeguarding training required for their position and role. Coaches and Volunteers must ensure they attend this training.

Events

15. Any events held on Hertford RFC premises must comply with this Policy and if appropriate a Safeguarding Plan specific to that event should be discussed and circulated to those affected.



Tours

16. Any tours, overseas or domestic, undertaken by Hertford RFC must comply with the relevant RFU Regulations and Guidance relating to tours. All Tours must be notified to the RFU in advance and all overseas tours require RFU approval in advance. Tour organisers should contact the Club Safeguarding Officer in the first instance.

Bullying

17. Hertford RFC follows the RFU's Anti-Bullying policy. This can be viewed on the RFU website at www.rfu.com.

Policy Implementation

18. The welfare of children at Hertford RFC will only be protected properly if this policy is implemented effectively.

19. Hertford RFC have designated individuals with child protection responsibility. Their names and contact details are on the club's website and on display in the clubhouse.



APPENDIX A: RFU CODES OF CONDUCT

THE GOOD COACHES CODE

IN RUGBY UNION, COACHES OF YOUNG PLAYERS SHOULD:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching young players.
- Most learning is achieved through doing. Appreciate the needs of the players before the needs of the sport.
- Be a positive role model - think what this implies.
- Keep winning and losing in perspective - encourage young players to behave with dignity in all circumstances.
- Respect all referees and the decisions they make (remember it could be you refereeing next week) and ensure that the players recognise that they must do the same.
- Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner, to all young players, both during coaching sessions and games.

IN RUGBY UNION, COACHES OF YOUNG PLAYERS MUST:

- Provide experiences, which are matched to the young players' ages and abilities, as well as their physical and mental development.
- Ensure all youngsters are coached in a safe environment, with adequate first aid readily to hand. Avoid the overplaying of the best players, by using a squad system, which gives everybody a satisfactory amount of playing time.
- Never allow a player to train or play when injured.
- Ensure good supervision of young players, both on and off the field.
- Recognise that young players should never be exposed to extremes of heat, cold, or unacceptable risk of injury.
- Develop an awareness of nutrition as part of an overall education in lifestyle management. Recognise that it is illegal for young players under 18 to drink alcohol.
- Ensure that their knowledge and coaching strategies are up to date and in line with RFU philosophy.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU recommended procedures for taking young people on residential tours at home and abroad.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the policies and procedures outlined in the RFU Child Protection Guidance Booklet.

REMEMBER: COACHES WORKING WITH YOUNG PLAYERS BELOW THE AGE OF 18 MUST FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES LAID DOWN BY RFU RUGBY AGE GRADE REGULATIONS.

THE GOOD PARENT'S CODE

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- Be familiar with the coaching and training programme in order that you can ensure that your child is fully involved and the coaches are aware of their availability.
- Be familiar with the teaching and coaching methods used by observing the sessions in which your child participates.



- Be aware that the club has a duty of care and therefore, where appropriate, assist coaches with the supervision of the young players, particularly where numbers are large and there is a need to transport youngsters to away games.
- Be involved with club activities and share your expertise.
- Share concerns, if you have them, with club officials.
- Be familiar with the Good Coaches Code. In particular: Coaches should recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when coaching young players. Coaches should keep winning and losing in perspective, encouraging young players to behave with dignity in all circumstances. It is important that parents support coaches in instilling these virtues.

PARENTS SHOULD:

- Remember that young people play rugby for their own enjoyment not that of their parents. Encourage young people to play - do not force them.
- Focus on the young players' efforts, rather than winning or losing.
- Be realistic about the young players' abilities; do not push them towards a level that they are not capable of achieving.
- Provide positive verbal feedback both in training and during the game.
- Remember that persistent, negative messages will adversely affect the players' and referee's performance and attitude.
- Always support the rugby club in their efforts to eradicate loud, coarse and abusive behaviour from the game.
- Remember young people learn much by example.
- Always show appreciation of good play by all young players both from your own club and the opposition.
- Respect decisions made by the match officials and encourage the young players to do likewise.

THE GOOD PLAYER'S CODE

PLAYERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- Recognise and appreciate the efforts made by coaches, parents, match officials and administrators in providing the opportunity for you to play the game and enjoy the rugby environment.
- Understand the values of loyalty and commitment to adults and team mates.
- Recognise that every young player has a right to expect their involvement in rugby to be safe and free from all types of abuse.
- Understand that if an individual or group of young players feel they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then you have a right to tell an adult either at the rugby club or outside of the game.

PLAYERS SHOULD:

- Play because you want to do so, not to please coaches or parents.
- Remember that skill development, fun and enjoyment are the most important parts of the game.
- Be attentive at all training and coaching sessions.
- Work equally hard for yourself and your team - both will then benefit.
- Recognise good play by all players on your team and by your opponents.



- Be a sportsman - win or lose.
- Play to the Laws of the Game and accept, without question, all referees' decisions.
- Control your emotions. Verbal or physical abuse of team mates, opponents, or match officials is not acceptable.
- Treat all players, as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take advantage of any player.

THE GOOD SPECTATOR'S CODE

SPECTATORS ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

- Act as positive role models to all young players.
- Be familiar with, and abide by, the RFU Child Protection Guidance in relation to verbal and emotional abuse.
- Respect the rugby club with regard to spectator behaviour.

SPECTATORS SHOULD:

- Remember children play sport for their enjoyment not yours.
- Acknowledge good individual and team performance from all youngsters irrespective of the team for whom they play.
- Respect match officials' decisions. Remember - they are volunteers providing an opportunity for youngsters to play rugby.
- Never verbally abuse young players, match officials, fellow spectators or coaches. Such behaviour can create a negative environment for young players and their behaviour will often reflect this. Acknowledge effort and good performance rather than 'win at all costs' ethic.
- Verbally encourage all youngsters in a positive way. If you do want to shout make sure it is 'for', not 'at' the players.
- Encourage all youngsters irrespective of their ability - never ridicule any individual player, regardless of the team for whom they play.

THE GOOD MATCH OFFICIAL'S CODE

MATCH OFFICIALS SHOULD:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating young players.
- Provide positive verbal feedback in a constructive and encouraging manner during games. Emphasise the spirit of the game.
- Appreciate the needs of the young players before the needs of the sport.
- Understand the physical, social and psychological development of young players.
- Be a positive role model. You set an example, and as such, comments you receive should be positive and supportive.
- Look to self-improvement e.g. participation in Mini/Midi or National 15-a-side courses.

MATCH OFFICIALS MUST:

- Recognise that the safety of young players is paramount.
- Explain decisions - all young players are still learning.



- Always penalise foul play.
- Play advantage whenever possible in order to let the game flow.
- Show empathy for the age and ability of young players.
- Be consistent and objective.
- Ensure that verbal abuse from players, coaches or spectators is not tolerated and is dealt with by club officials immediately.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the RFU Child Protection Guidance policies and procedures.



APPENDIX B: HERTFORD RFC SAFEGUARDING POLICY RELATING TO CLUB WEBSITES, MOBILE AND ONLINE COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Website and Message Board.

The Club Website is a key part of the daily operation of the Club. In particular, the Message Board on the website is the primary means of communicating with Parents, Players and Members. They are also a very safe way to communicate with children given their wide accessibility.

However, in the same way that Hertford RFC has responsibility for the physical safety of Mini and Youth members when on the club's premises, Hertford RFC will also ensure that there is nothing on its' website which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. Hertford RFC is responsible for the content of its website. Message Board content, which can be posted by all members, will be moderated by Board moderators to ensure inappropriate content is removed.

Given our Club Website and Message Board are open to the public, there are 2 key risks to guard against when posting information:

1. Disclosing personal information about a child to people accessing the website. This could be the child's name, address, or any information about a child's life, interests or activities which would help a stranger target a child, or engage that child in conversation.
2. Abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text), on the site itself. This includes material which criticises or humiliates a child. It could also be information which places undue pressure on the child to participate in some aspect of a clubs' activities.

Online Photos and video

Photos and video clips can make any child featured vulnerable to grooming if information about the child (name, address, activities or interests) is also disclosed. Furthermore, posting an image on a website carries a risk that the image could be taken and adapted for an inappropriate use.

RFU Recommendations:

- Use group images, rather than individual images.
- For images of individual children (such as in action shots) where possible use models or illustrations.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress, to minimise the risk of inappropriate adaptation of the image
- If a child is named on the site, do not include an image (individual or group). If a child features in an image on the site, do not use the child's first name or last name, either in text on the site or in the image file name.
- Hertford RFC will abide by all RFU recommendations regarding photo and video images and will obtain consent from the appropriate responsible person(s) before using any images of children or vulnerable adults on its website. Consent request clauses are included in the registration form which is completed each season and are also held by the club age group administrators.



Webcams and Live Image Streams

Hertford RFC will not use webcams to stream live images of children or vulnerable adults and if use of a webcam to broadcast images of children or vulnerable adults is requested, the Safeguarding Officer at Hertford RFC will contact the RFU for further guidance before permission is granted.

Mobile and Online Communication with Children

Technology is moving very fast in this area. There are now many different ways for people to communicate. In addition to landlines, there are mobile phones for voice and text, and most new phones incorporate cameras that take still shots and video. Two-way video calling is commonplace. On-line communication can be by email, instant messaging and social networking sites.

The risks posed by such methods of communication arise from:

- The privacy. It is often one-to-one
- The wide range of content that can be transmitted, including content of a violent, sexual or hateful nature
- The ease with which images can be forwarded onto others
- The difficulty in knowing truly who you are communicating with. Where grooming happens, it often involves this type of communication.

In sport, there are additional risks:

- Inappropriate pressure can be exerted by adults, particularly coaches, on children (such as to play when injured)
- There can be inappropriate criticism of a young player's performance
- An official position or role within a club, such as Coach, can carry with it a level of authority and engender a level of trust that facilitates the control of a child.

Against this background, Hertford RFC will abide by all RFU guidance with regard to mobile and online communication with children and vulnerable adults and will cascade any information for them to the parents (or carer) of that child or vulnerable adult. Hertford RFC will not directly contact a child or vulnerable adult directly by mobile phone unless prior consent is given by the parent or carer.

Club Guidelines:

- All Age Group communications – for example fixture information, team selection – should be sent via the Club Message Board. Emails can be sent linking to the Message Board as a reminder to parents to check the Message Board. Emails should only be sent using email groups comprising email addresses given by parents. An email should not be sent to a child unless the parent is also copied. Such emails should only come from age group coaches or administrators as communicated to Parents.
- Other Online (Social Media) Services. No Club Member may initiate a social media outlet that is directly linked and intended to be used by Hertford RFC members without the express permission of the Club Executive Committee or, for Mini or Youth matters, the respective Mini or Youth Committees. Administrators of social media outlets must ensure the content complies with the Website and Message Board policy above. Further:



- Twitter can be used for broadcasting information but must not be used for 1-1 (Direct) Messaging between Adults and Young People. Content must conform to the Website and Message Board policy above
- Facebook. Communication via Facebook is permitted only via public club Facebook pages where the content is public and conforms to the Website and Message Board policy above. Private, closed groups and 1-1 messaging between Coaches and Young People is not permitted.
- Other online and social media services whether public or private are not permitted. Requests to add other services to the approved list should be directed to the Club Safeguarding Officer.
- SMS Messaging (Texting): Club Officials and Coaches should only communicate directly with individual children by text at any time, on any matter, if the parent or carer is copied on such communication or there is an immediate risk to the welfare of that child which can be lessened by such contact.
- Telephone: When communication by phone is needed, Club Officials and Coaches can speak to individual young people on phones provided they have prior consent from the child's parents or carer and from the young person if old enough to understand.



APPENDIX C: HERTFORD RUGBY CLUB PHOTOGRAPHIC POLICY

Overarching Principles

Hertford Rugby Club's photography policy derives from the RFU's Policy. The basic principles are:

- **Permission:** Every parent or carer has the option to decline permission for the taking and publication of images/videos of a young person in their care
- **Appropriate Circumstances & Attire:** Photography/video must be undertaken in appropriate circumstances. All young people must be appropriately attired at all times
- **Publication and Identification:** Publication should not be done in such a way that young people are identifiable; images should be published without accompanying sensitive personal details such as a young persons address
- **Focus of the Photography:** The imagery should focus on the activity rather than any particular individual
- **Equity Policy:** Wherever possible, imagery should reflect the diversity of the young people making up The Clubs membership
- **Third Party Photography:** Whenever professional photographers or outside media are invited or commissioned, the Club will require identification and safeguarding measures to ensure only the proper use and dissemination of imagery

Circumstances of photography/video

Photographs/videos of junior players are usually taken in the following contexts. This list is not exhaustive.

- Coaching - video may be filmed and used thereafter for coaching purposes
- Action photographs - general photographs of players during a game
- Team photographs - posed group photos of teams
- Awards and ceremonies
- Press coverage - local, national and specialist rugby media photographs/video
- Tours and festivals - at other clubs and grounds which will be subject to the host clubs policy permission.

All parents/guardians are asked to indicate on Registration Forms if they do not consent to the taking and use of photographs/videos featuring their children throughout the season. If consent is not withheld, the parent or carer permission continues throughout the season, terminating at its conclusion, unless the parent or carer notifies the squad manager and Club Safeguarding Officer, in writing, of a change of mind.

The result of withholding or withdrawing permission is that the Club reserves the right to require the parent or carer to be present throughout an event where photo/video is expected to be taken and to undertake to supervise and monitor the event for the purpose of safeguarding their child.

Focus and content of the imagery

Images taken by parents, carers, supporters and coaches at the Club's grounds, and at away games, tours and festivals where the host club applies no stricter policy, should comply with the following restrictions:



1. The Club adopts the RFU guidelines on appropriate dress for young players. These recommend that all young people featuring in photographs/videos be appropriately dressed with outer clothing/ garments covering their torso between the bottom of the neck and the thighs i.e. a minimum of a vest/shirt and shorts. For formal photographs players should be properly dressed in Club kit.
2. Wherever possible the Club also undertakes to reflect the RFU Equity Policy. Accordingly photographs/videos should represent the diversity of young people participating in rugby at the Club.
3. Photographs/video should focus on the activity rather than any particular young person. Where possible photography of young people should concentrate on small groups of players.

Sensitive Information

Photographs/videos should not include nor be accompanied by sensitive information which might enable a stranger to identify the players. Such information might include, but is not limited to, an image of the players parent or guardian, the players full name, age, address, email address, telephone number or such personal details of the parent/guardian or the parents/guardians personal details.

Publication by the Club of Imagery

The Club must have general parent or carer permission to use an image of a young person (see above). When such permission has been given, the Club may publish photographs/videos in its own materials or via third party media organisations such as the local press. Such publication of photographs/videos will not include any sensitive information described or identified above of the young people or of their parents or carers.

Where the reason for publication is an individual achievement (i.e. a players selection for a representative side, triumph over adversity), particular attention will be paid to ensuring specific permission is also secured from the young person to use their image.

Publication by Others of Imagery

The Club must have general parent or carer permission to use an image of a young person (see above).

Photography/Video by the Media or Third Party

The Club reserves the right to invite photographers from the local media or rugby specialist press to record the Clubs events. If it does so it undertakes that it will

1. Require any such photographers to register upon arrival at a Club event; to carry with them, at all times, bona fide and appropriate identification which must be produced on request and to abide by the overarching principles set out above
2. inform parents and participants that one or more media photographers will be present and
3. not approve/allow unsupervised access to the players, one-to-one photography sessions with players, nor photo sessions outside the event or at any players home.

Use of photographic/video equipment by parents/guardians and adult supporters

Parents and carers are advised that if they have concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography/filming these should be reported to the squad manager, to an event organiser or to an official so that these may be recorded and dealt with in the same manner as any other child protection concern.



If parents or carers or adult supporters wish to take images of a game, session, or event at a Club ground, they must ascertain whether any member of the squad has had permission withheld for photography; at any other ground they must also be prepared to comply with the policy of the host club.

In addition, wherever the Club's young players are playing photographers may be required to identify themselves and state their purpose for photography/videoing an event. They must, if advised that any visiting or host clubs young player withholds permission for photography, cease doing so immediately unless able to come to an arrangement with that players parent or guardian.

The Club reserves the right to contact authorities in the event that any individual refuses to stop taking photographs/video or refuses to identify themselves upon challenge by the Club.

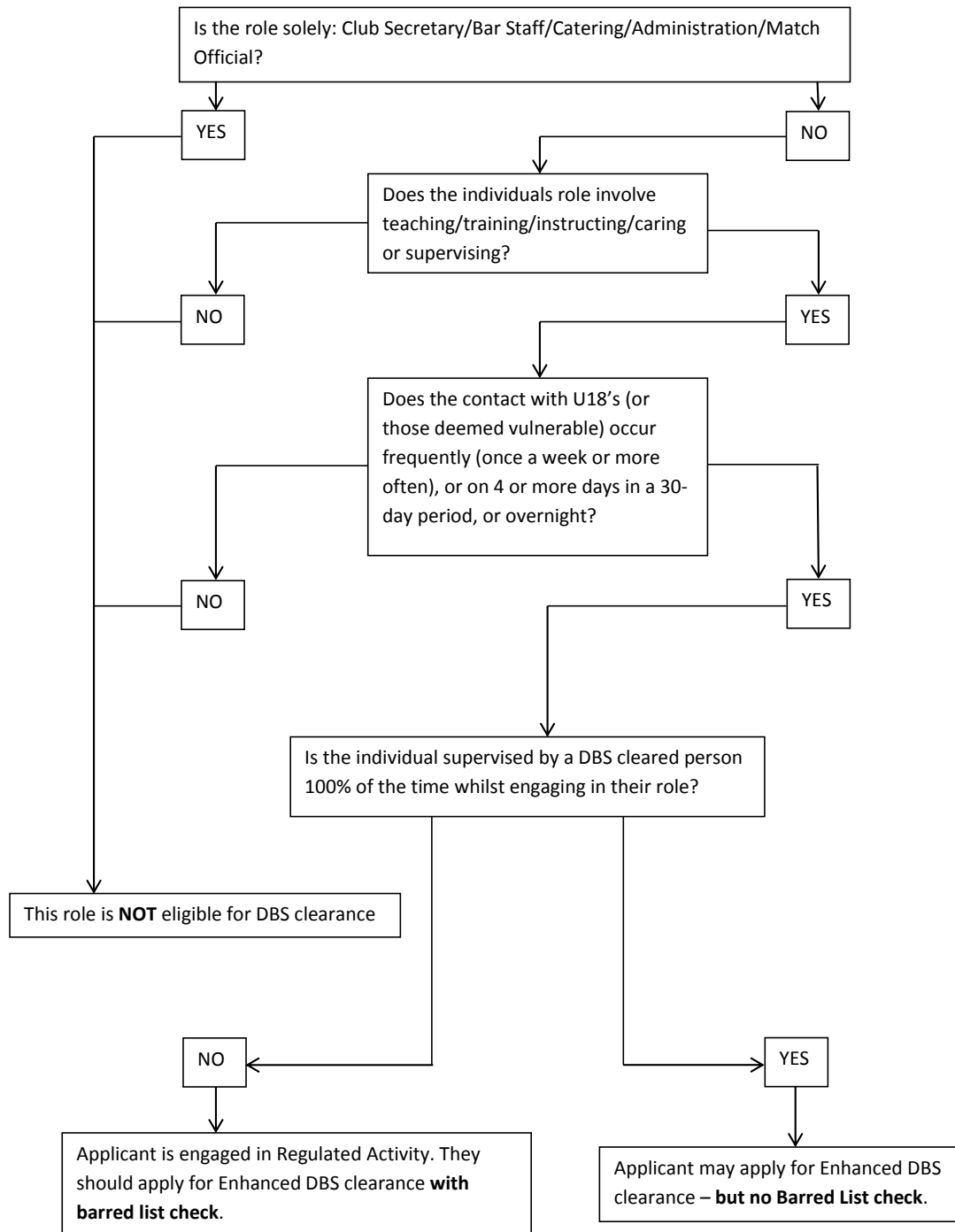


APPENDIX D- WHO NEEDS A DBS CHECK?



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

DBS Eligibility Decision Flow-Chart





APPENDIX E: INCIDENT REPORTING FLOWCHART

PROCEDURES

