



# **SARACENS AMATEUR RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB**

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

Updated: February 2024

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults in the sport. All children and vulnerable adults are entitled to protection from harm and have the right to take part in sport in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment.

Saracens Amateur RFC ('Saracens' or 'the Club') are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children participating in rugby at Saracens and the Club is required by the Rugby Football Union to have a Safeguarding Policy which must be published.

This document sets out Saracens ARFC Safeguarding Policy.

All Officers, Committee members and others involved in volunteering at Saracens must be aware of their responsibilities in this area to ensure that the Club responds appropriately to any indication of poor practice or abuse in line with RFU / RFUW Policy (see the Guidance);

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### KEY PRINCIPLES

The key principles on which this policy statement are based: •

The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount

- All participants regardless of age, gender, ability or disability, race, faith, size, language or sexual identity, have the right to protection from harm
- All allegations and suspicions of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately
- Everyone will work in partnership to promote the welfare, health and development of children and vulnerable adults
- The interests of those who work or volunteer with children and vulnerable adults will be protected

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### **POSITIONS OF TRUST**

All adults who work with young people are in a position of trust which has been invested in them by the parents, the sport and the young person.

This relationship can be described as one in which the adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their position. Sexual intercourse or touching by an adult with a child under the age of 16 years is unlawful, even where there is apparent consent from the child. A consensual sexual relationship between an adult in a position of trust within the rugby setting and a child over 16 years of age is contrary to the Policy & Guidance for the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults in Rugby Union .

Adults must not encourage a physical or emotionally dependant relationship to develop between the person in a position of trust and the young person in their care.

All those within the Club have a duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of coaches, officials, volunteers, administrators and professional staff which may be harmful to the children, young people in their care, without prejudice to their own position.

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### **PROHIBITED PRACTICES**

Coaches, managers or volunteers including all professional staff must never:

- a. Take young people to their own home or any other place where they will be alone with them;
- b. Spend any amount of time alone with young people away from others;
- c. Take young people alone on car journeys, however short;
- d. If it should arise that such situations are unavoidable they should only take place with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the Club and / or a person with parental responsibility for the young person. In exceptional circumstances where a coach, manager or volunteer cannot obtain the consent of someone in charge in the Club and / or a person with parental responsibility for the young person then if it is in the welfare interest of the young person, paragraphs (a) and (c) do not have to be followed. If this occurs the adult must record the occurrence with the Club/ governing body Safeguarding Officer.
- e. Engage in rough, physical games, sexually provocative games or horseplay with children/young people;
- f. Take part as a 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 of the young players;
- g. Share a room with a young person unless the individual is the parent / guardian of that young person;
- h. Engage in any form of inappropriate sexual contact and / or behaviour;
- i. Allow any form of inappropriate touching;

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- j. Make sexually suggestive remarks to a young person even in fun;
  - k. Use inappropriate language or allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
  - l. Allow allegations by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
  - m. Do things of a personal nature for a young person that they can do for themselves unless you have been requested to do so by the parents / carer (please note that it is recognised that some young people will always need help with things such as lace tying, adjustment of Tag belts, fitting head guards and it is also recognised that this does not preclude anyone attending to an injured / ill young person or rendering first aid);
  - n. Depart the rugby Club or agreed rendezvous point until the safe dispersal of all young people is complete;
  - o. Cause an individual to lose self esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual;
  - p. Treat some young people more favourably than others; or
  - q. Agree to meet a young person on their own on a one to one basis.

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### **DBS CHECK**

All adults who have *'regular supervisory contact with young people'* at Saracens must undertake Enhanced DBS check.

These adults can include;

- Professional Staff
- All coaches / assistant coaches
- Heads of Mini / Midi Rugby sections
- Heads of Youth Rugby Sections
- Team Managers
- All Referees who regularly officiate mini / midi and youth games
- Safeguarding Officers
- Physiotherapists
- Club administrators

The club will maintain a single central record, overseen by the club's safeguarding lead.

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### **BEST PRACTICE**

It is the aim of Saracens as a Club that all young people enjoy the game in a safe enjoyable setting. The following sets out the Good Practice Procedures which all those involved in the delivery of the game of rugby union to young people at Saracens should adhere to.

Saracens publishes separately its Codes of Conduct for Match officials, Coaches, Players, Parents and Spectators. The following is supplementary guidance aimed at Saracens coaches and other club officials in order to ensure that all children and young people and the individuals who work with them will enjoy the game in a safe environment.

When working with young people coaches and officials must adopt the following guidance:

- a. They must always be publicly open when working with young people. They must avoid situations where the adult and an individual child are alone and / or unobserved, e.g. individual skill session after a team training session. They must work in pairs and never alone with a group or individual.
- b. Rugby is a physical game. Situations will occur when, in order to teach or coach certain techniques, it is necessary to make contact with the player. However the following must apply:
- c. Parents and young players must be made aware of situations in which this may happen when they join the club.
- d. Physical handling must only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique and always with the permission of the child / young person and their parent / carer.
- e. Any contact or touching which is inappropriate (not directly related to the coaching context) or is aggressive is poor practice and is unacceptable. (See Appendix 4 of the Guidance)
- f. If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that individuals work in pairs, and that gender is appropriate. Children / young people must not change at the same time or in the same place as adults.



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- g. Where mixed teams compete away from home they must always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.
  - h. Volunteers and professionals must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all and treat everyone with equality.
  - i. Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the player above the development of performance. This means that coaches must adhere to the following guidelines:
    - Avoid overplaying of players (particularly talented players). All players need and deserve equal opportunity to play and to rest.
    - Remember that children/young people play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only a part of it.
    - Motivate youngsters through positive feedback and constructive criticism.
    - Ensure that contact skills are taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of young players.
    - Never allow young players to train/play when injured. If unsure, err on the side of caution.
    - Ensure equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the players.
  - j. At least one coach per age group must hold a current RFU coaching award or a recognised award. All other coaches should hold a current RFU coaching award or be working towards one.
  - k. Coaches must keep up-to-date with knowledge and technical skills and should be aware of their own limitations. Coaches must only work within the limitations of their knowledge and qualifications.
  - l. Coaches must ensure that the activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the players.

### **CLUB SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

Saracens will appoint a Club Safeguarding Officer and the details of that appointment will be recorded on the RFU *RugbyFirst* website.

The Club will ensure that the Club Safeguarding Officer receives the training that is appropriate for this role within the Club.

The terms of reference of the Club Safeguarding Officer will include, *inter alia*, the following:

- Ensuring the club has a Child Protection Policy and self monitoring strategy.
- Ensuring Codes of Conduct are well publicised and adhered to.
- In consultation with the RFU Child Protection Officer ensuring all reported incidents are managed at the appropriate level in line with RFU / RFUW procedures.
- Ensuring all relevant club members are aware of training opportunities.
- Ensuring all parents, children and young people are aware of the club policy on Child Protection / Welfare and the correct procedures and channels for voicing concerns.
- Ensuring that all adults who have regular contact with young people undertake a DBS check.
- Being aware of local Social Services and Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- Sitting on any relevant club committees

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### **POOR PRACTICE AND THE CLUB DISCIPLINARY PANEL**

Poor practice is defined as any behaviour which contravenes the Saracens or RFU / RFUW Codes of Conduct (Fair Play Codes) or RFU / RFUW Guidance for Good Practice.

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

parents of a young person.

9. A copy of the finding must be sent to the CB Welfare Manager and RFU Child Protection Officer.

The possible outcomes of a Club Disciplinary Panel may include the following:

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