

Wharfedale Rugby Union Football Club



Safeguarding Policy

Produced in accordance with policies outlined by the RFU

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Foreword

Wharfedale RUFC consider that they have a moral obligation to ensure, when given responsibility for children, that coaches and volunteers provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

Through the implementation of this safeguarding policy and with the support of the coaches and volunteers, Wharfedale RUFC will maintain the necessary professional approach and safeguards of good practice required within the game of Mini and Junior rugby.

In order to achieve this Wharfedale RUFC has drawn up the following Safeguarding Policy to be implemented throughout the club, with appropriate personnel attending training courses sponsored by the RFU.

The policy outlines the following key areas:

- Recognising the responsibility of those involved with Wharfedale RUFC to safeguard and promote the interests and well-being of the children with whom they are working.
- The value of working closely with other coaches, parents and volunteers to protect children from harm and discrimination.
- Recognising 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 others working within the club.

Wharfedale RUFC Safeguarding Team

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The safeguarding team can be contacted on any issue concerning the welfare of our young members either at the Club or by telephone.

Introduction

It is the responsibility of all adults to protect children from all forms of abuse.

Abuse can happen within any environment, school, the home, sports or social clubs, etc. and can happen to children.

It is important to recognise that everyone associated with Wharfedale RUFC has a legal and moral obligation to ensure that the children for whom the club is responsible are provided with the highest possible standard of care.

Members of Wharfedale RUFC must recognise that they have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard and promote the interests and well-being of children they are working with or supervising
- Ensure that all adults who work with young people are aware of their role and responsibilities and that training opportunities are made available to them
- Take all reasonable practical steps to protect children from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment
- Respect players rights, and feelings.

Club child protection procedures will:

- Safeguard children, coaches, assistants, committee members and club members
 - Help to maintain the professional approach and the safeguards of good practice, which should operate within the club.

It is recognised that any procedure is only as effective as the ability and skill of those who operate it. Wharfedale RUFC is committed to the sound recruitment, provision of support and appropriate training for coaches and helpers; enabling them to work together with parents/carers and other organisations to ensure the needs and welfare of the children remains paramount.

Principle statements

- Anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child or young person for the purposes of this document.
- The welfare of all children and young people is paramount.
- All children and young people, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, religion, ethnic origin, nationality, social status or sexual orientation should be able to enjoy the game in an environment safe from abuse of any kind.
- It is the responsibility of child protection professionals to determine whether abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility within the sport of rugby union to report concerns.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately as per RFU Policy and Procedures.
- Working in partnership with parents/carers is essential for the protection of young people.
- The RFU recognises the roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies in relation to safeguarding children/young people and promoting their welfare and is fully committed to complying with the procedures of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Board.
- RFU Policy and Procedures for the Welfare of Young People is mandatory and all affiliated clubs and Constituent Bodies must appoint a Safeguarding Officer to ensure that the appropriate procedures are followed.

Recognising abuse in rugby union

In order to provide young people with the best possible experiences and opportunities in the sport of rugby union, it is imperative that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrates exemplary behaviour. This not only ensures the game makes a positive contribution to the development of young people, safeguards them and promotes their welfare, but also protects all personnel from allegations of abuse or poor practice.

The Club recognizes that it is not the responsibility of employees or volunteers in the sport of rugby union to determine whether or not abuse is taking place. It is their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have a concern about the welfare of a child or young person.

The four main types of abuse:

1. Emotional abuse

This occurs when individuals persistently fail to show young people due care with regard to their emotional welfare, when a young person may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, or be subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures. There may also be over-protection, preventing young people from socializing, or bullying to perform to high expectations. The young person may lose self-confidence and may become withdrawn.

In a rugby situation, emotional abuse may occur when coaches, volunteers or parents:

- provide repeated negative feedback.
- repeatedly ignore a young player's efforts to progress.
- repeatedly demand performance levels above the young player's capability.
- over-emphasise the winning ethic.

2. Abuse by neglect

This occurs when a young person's essential needs for food, warmth and care both physical and emotional are not met.

In a rugby situation neglect may occur when:

- young players are left alone without proper supervision.
- a young player is exposed to unnecessary heat or cold.
- a young player is not provided with necessary fluids for re-hydration.
- a young player is exposed to an unacceptable risk of injury.

3. Physical abuse

This occurs when individuals, including other young people, deliberately inflict injuries on a child or young person, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It includes injuries caused by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or using excessive force. It also occurs when young people are given alcohol, or inappropriate drugs, or there is a failure to supervise their access to these substances.

In a rugby situation physical abuse may also occur when:

- young players are exposed to exercise/training which disregards the capacity of the player's immature and growing body.
- young players are exposed to over-playing, over-training or fatigue.
- any person exposes young players to alcohol and gives them the opportunity to drink alcohol below the legal age or fail to supervise access to alcohol.
- young players are provided with or encouraged to take prohibited substances including performance-enhancing drugs.

4. Sexual abuse

Girls or boys can be abused by adults (both male and female) or other young people. This may include encouraging or forcing a child or young person to view or take part in sexual activity.

In a rugby situation sexual abuse may occur when:

- an adult uses the context of a training session to touch young people in an inappropriate sexual way.
- coaches, managers or volunteers use their position of power and authority to coerce young players into a sexual relationship.

Bullying

Bullying can be carried out by an adult or a child or young person in person or online. There are 4 main types of bullying: physical, verbal, emotional and cyber bullying.

In a rugby situation bullying may occur when:

- a coach adopts a win-at-all-costs philosophy.
- a player or group of players intimidates others.
- an official is over officious.

Indications of abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect children at any age. Effects can be so damaging that if not treated, they may follow an individual into adulthood.

Signs and indicators for coaches and volunteers to be aware of include;

- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent or untreated injuries.
- Fear of returning home.
- Aggression towards others.
- A child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- Someone else, a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming quiet, withdrawn or displaying uncharacteristic outbursts or temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or inappropriate language.
- Sexually explicit or risk taking behaviour.
- A child is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- A child has difficulty making friends or displays low self-esteem.
- A child is prevented from socialising with other children
- A child displays variations in eating patterns such as overeating or loss of appetite.
- A child loses weight for no apparent reason.
- A child becomes increasingly unkempt or dirty.

NB: It is not the responsibility of those working in Rugby Union to decide if abuse is taking place but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns and report these to the Safeguarding Team.

Roles and responsibilities

It is the role of Wharfedale RUFC to:

- Appoint a Safeguarding Officer who will act as the first point of contact about the welfare of young people.
- Accept that all officers and committee members have a responsibility in this area and be prepared to respond to any indication of poor practice or abuse in line with RFU Policy and to put in place structures and systems to ensure that this is followed in practice. Adopt and implement a policy of best practice for all adults working with young people.
- Ensure that all relevant members who have regular supervisory contact with children or a management responsibility for those working with young people undertake a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.

- Ensure guidelines are in place to control and monitor the use of photographic images of children (see Appendix V)

Responding to suspicions

If you become aware of anything which causes you to feel uncomfortable you should talk to someone else about it.

This means being aware of the attitudes of coaches and volunteers and of the interactions between them and the children and also with each other.

You should be alert to any unusual incidents or activities which take place where you feel that coaches or volunteers are putting themselves in a vulnerable position.

Allegations of abuse against coaches and volunteers

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a coach or volunteer, there may be any one of three types of investigation:

1. A disciplinary or misconduct investigation
2. A child protection investigation
3. A criminal investigation.

The results of the Police and Social Services investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation.

What to do if you have a concern about a coach or volunteer

The RFU recognises that young players are coached in a variety of environments and by any number of coaches. Thus the term Person in Charge will refer to the senior official responsible for the event. At Wharfedale RUFC this will be the Safeguarding Officer, Club Chairman or in their absence any other committee member or coach present at the time.

- If, following consideration the allegation is clearly about poor practice then the Safeguarding Officer or Club Chairman will deal with it as an internal club issue.
- If the allegation refers to poor practice by the Safeguarding Officer or Club Chairman or where a matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be referred to the RFU who will decide how it should be dealt with and whether to instigate a formal course of action.
- Any suspicion of child abuse by a coach or volunteer must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer or Club Chairman, who must take the necessary steps to ensure the immediate safety of the child and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Safeguarding Officer or Club Chairman, after consultation with the professional staff of the RFU, refer any allegations to the Social Services Department who may then involve the Police.

- A child's parents/carers will be contacted immediately following advice from Social Services.
- Every effort must be made to maintain the confidentiality of all persons concerned.
- The RFU will make an immediate decision as to whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further Police and Social Services inquiries.
- Irrespective of Police and Social Services findings the RFU must assess all individual cases under the appropriate disciplinary/misconduct procedure, to determine whether the accused person can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. In such cases the RFU must make a decision based upon the information available. The child's welfare must remain paramount at all times.
- Consideration should be given to what support may be appropriate to children, their parents or the coach/volunteer involved.
- Where allegations prove to be unfounded, the RFU will work in a professional manner to ensure that the person concerned is given appropriate support to continue working in rugby.

If an allegation is brought to your attention:

DO

STAY CALM – do not rush into inappropriate action

REASSURE THE CHILD – that they are not to blame and confirm that you know how difficult it must be to confide.

LISTEN – to what the child says and show that you have taken him/her seriously.

ALLOW ONLY ONE ADULT TO TALK TO THE CHILD – as any discrepancies in statements may lead to legal problems.

ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT THE CHILD HAS SAID – and record it – so that you can pass it on to the appropriate authorities.

CONSULT WITH YOUR IDENTIFIED CHILD PROTECTION PERSON – ensuring that you communicate all the information accurately.

FOLLOW GUIDELINES relating to confidentiality.

DO NOT

DO NOT QUESTION THE CHILD. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed if it appears that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested.

DO NOT IGNORE WHAT HAS BEEN DISCLOSED.

DO NOT PANIC.

DO NOT CHALLENGE PARENT/GUARDIAN about concerns.

DO NOT MAKE PROMISES YOU CANNOT KEEP – explain that you may have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening whilst maintaining the maximum possible confidentiality.

DO NOT MAKE THE CHILD REPEAT THE STORY UNNECESSARILY.

DO NOT DELAY the reporting procedure.

Promoting good practice within the rugby club environment

All young players have a right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect.

Data protection

Information collected by the RFU, or by affiliated clubs on behalf of the Governing Body, particularly personal details relating to young rugby players, is subject to the Data Protection Act.

Recruitment and selection of coaches and volunteers

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. It is essential that a consistent procedure is used at all times.

Wharfedale RUFC agrees with the RFU recommendation that when undertaking pre-selection checks, they should adopt the following procedure:

- All adults who are in contact with young people should complete an application form (see Appendix II).
- All adults who have “regular supervisory contact with young people” will undertake CRB disclosure. This will include all coaches / assistant coaches, heads of mini/junior sections, welfare officers, and referees who manage mini game and junior games
- Where it is deemed appropriate, 2 references should be taken up, including at least one regarding previous work with children.
- The club will ensure that all information received is treated in the strictest confidence.

Policy and procedure

To help prevent abuse of children the club has a policy which ensures that children are protected and safe from harm. Everyone involved in the care of children must be aware of the procedures if there are concerns about abuse. See Safeguarding Policy Aims and Objectives (Appendix III)

Training

It should be clearly recognised that checks are only a part of the process of protecting children from possible abuse. Appropriate training is also necessary to make coaches and volunteers aware of and sensitive to possible abuse. All coaches who have a coaching responsibility for young people should attend an appropriate RFU coaching course. The RFU provides appropriate training for all nominated child protection personnel.

Supervision

Coaches and volunteers should be sensitive to any concerns about abuse, and act on them at an early stage. They should also offer appropriate support to those who report concerns.

Complaints

The Club Committee must ensure that there is a well-established complaints procedure in operation and those parents and children have the relevant information that will allow easy access to the procedure.

Guidelines for good practice

- Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid situations where you and an individual child are completely unobserved.
- 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. If this is the case, tell the player beforehand and ask if they have any objections. Parents must be made aware of situations in which this may happen when their child joins the club. Physical handling should only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique.
- If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that adults work in pairs and that gender is appropriate. Camera phones should not be allowed in changing rooms or, at best, switched off.
- Where mixed teams compete away from home, they should always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.
- Coaches and volunteers must respect the rights and dignity and worth of all and treat everyone with equality.
- Coaches must place the well-being of the player above the development of performance.

Coaches should:

- Avoid overplaying of players. All players need and deserve an equal opportunity to play.
- Remember that children play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of it.
- 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 play or train when injured.
- Ensure equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the players.
- Coaches should hold current RFU coaching awards or a recognised leadership award.
- Coaches must ensure that the activities which they direct, or

advocate are appropriate to age, maturity and ability of the players.

- Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of their sport (e.g. Fair play) and never condone law violations or use of prohibited substances. Young people should not be allowed to drink alcohol if they are under the legal age to do so.
- Coaches should consistently display a high standard of personal behaviour.
- Coaches should never overtly criticize players or use language or actions likely to cause a player to lose self-esteem or confidence.
- Spend amounts of time alone with children away from others.
 - Take children alone on car journeys, no matter how short the journey.
 - Take children to your home.

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 consent responsibility for the player.

Codes of Conduct

Wharfedale RUFC will ensure that all coaches, players, parents and spectators are given access to, and abide by, the relevant codes of conduct

Wharfedale RUFC Incident Record Form



Your name _____ Position _____

Tel (home) _____ (mobile) _____

Child's name _____ Sex (male or female) _____

Date of birth _____

Parent/guardian name _____

Address _____

Tel (home) _____ (mobile) _____

Time and date of any incident _____

If incident is reported by a third party, please record details below

Third party name _____

Address _____

Tel (home) _____ (mobile) _____

Observations _____

State exactly what the child said and what you said. Ask open questions and remember not to lead the child – record actual details

Actions taken so far _____

Name of accused _____ Position _____

Relationship between the accused and child _____

| |
|--|
| <p>External agencies contacted (date and time):</p> <p><i>Police</i> Contact name and number _____</p> <p>Details given of advice _____</p> <p><i>Social services</i> Contact name and number _____</p> <p>Details given of advice _____</p> <p><i>Other agencies</i> Contact name and number _____</p> <p>Details given of advice _____</p> |
|--|

Please note. A copy of this form should be sent to Social Services or the police after the telephone report.

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know

Signature _____ Print name _____

Date _____

Application Form Coach/Volunteer



Information required on adults wishing to supervise at Wharfedale RUFC (Mini and Junior Section) involving non-related children (Ref: Children Act 1989).

This form will be held by the "Safeguarding Officer" at Wharfedale RUFC.

Surname _____ First name _____

Title _____ Sex (male or female) _____

Address _____

Tel (home) _____ (mobile) _____

E-mail address _____

Date of birth _____ Place of birth _____

Post for which applying (coaching/supervision/administration) _____

1. I can confirm that I have read and agree to abide by Wharfedale RUFC's Code of Practice
2. I can declare that I have never been convicted of any form of offence against children and young people
3. I agree that a necessary police check may be carried out by the club

Signature _____ Date _____

Please supply the names and addresses of two people (not relatives) who will provide references regarding your experience of, and suitability for, working with children and young people

Name _____ Name _____

Address _____ Address _____

Position _____ Position _____

Tel _____ Tel _____



Safeguarding Policy Aims and Objectives

At Wharfedale Rugby RUFC we believe that taking part in our sport should be a positive and enjoyable part of children's lives.

We want to ensure that children are protected and kept safe from physical or emotional harm while they are with the club's coaches and volunteers.

To do this we have the following aims:

- Coaches of each age group will be required to attain a minimum qualification of;
 - **Level 1 within the RFU National Coaching Structure**
 - **RFU Introduction to Safeguarding**
 - **Headcase Training**
- The club will encourage and help coaches to stay up to date with rugby, coaching and child protection issues.
- All coaches will be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and the Coaches Code of Conduct and be expected to work within the guidance given.
- The Club will provide a written Health and Safety policy covering fire procedures, telephone access and first aid emergency procedures.
- The Club will provide a written procedure, available to coaches and parents, for dealing with accusations of abuse.
- The Club will promote "fair play" and always play within the spirit of the game.
- The Club will identify a Safeguarding Officer whose role it is to deal with any concerns about physical or emotional abuse within the club

Policy Statement Relating to the Use of Photographic and Recorded Images



Wharfedale RUFC (Mini and Junior Section) recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all young people in rugby union. As part of our commitment to ensure the safety of young people we will not permit photographs, videos or other images of young people to be taken or used without the consent of the parents/guardian and the young person.

The Club will follow the RFU guidelines for the use of images of young people.

The Club will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended, which is the promotion and celebration of activities of the club.

If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform the Club Safeguarding Officer.

If at any time either the parent/guardian or the young person wishes the data to be removed from the web site, the Club's Safeguarding Officer should be informed.



Safeguarding at Wharfedale Rugby Club

Social Events

Guidance

Wharfedale Rugby Club is committed to providing a safe environment for younger people and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is **EVERYONE'S** responsibility.

Our club's Safeguarding Officer is Annette Campbell r.
Annette can be contacted on 07729554546 or nitacampbell2@aol.com

At age graded rugby events DBS checked coaches offer an additional level of safeguarding for age grade players.

Social events where there is beneficial intergenerational social interaction can give rise to situational risk. An informal atmosphere, consumption of alcohol and spontaneous interactions around the social activity can all combine. Some social interaction to continue after a club event where security and first aid volunteers had "stepped down".

The committee endorses the following guidance:

All members

- Make safeguarding your concern
- Be a good role model for younger club members
- When dealing with younger members or vulnerable adults ensure that there is more than one adult present: do not put yourself at risk
- Be aware that appearance is not always an accurate way to judge actual age
- Report any concerns to a club committee member/club official/coach. All concerns and incidents should then be reported to the club Safeguarding Officer.

Organisers/Volunteers

- Be clear when the event finishes
- Be clear when security and/or first aid is no longer required
- Volunteers providing first aid/security should not consume alcohol until their formal responsibility for first aid/security has ended
- Report any concerns to a club committee member/club official/coach.
- All concerns and incidents should then be reported to the club safeguarding officer.

Parents

- Ensure children are appropriately supervised, especially outside rugby activities when there is no named club coach in a supervisory position.
- Report any concerns to a club committee member/club official/coach. All concerns and incidents should then be reported to the club safeguarding officer.