



Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

Strathmore Community Rugby Trust is committed to safeguarding, from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying, children, young people and adults at risk taking part in its activities. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of participants are paramount and that all participants, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, have the right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

The Trust takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and training, participants are able to participate activities organised by the Trust in a safe and enjoyable environment.

The Safeguarding Policy is based on the following principles:

- The Trust will act in the best interest of children, young people and adults at risk
- The protection and wellbeing of Trust participants is the responsibility of everyone
- An individual's rights, wishes and feelings should be respected and promoted.

Definitions

Definition of a child

Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that everyone under 18 has the rights set out in the Convention. Within the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, a child is defined as anyone who has not reached the age of 18¹.

For the purpose of this policy "children", "child", "young person" and "young people" refer to any persons under the age of 18.

The Child Wellbeing and Protection Policy applies to all children and young people regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, nationality, socio-economic status or family circumstance.

Definition of 'adults at risk'

The Adult Support and Protection Act 2007 defines adults at risk as those aged 16 years and over who:

- Are unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests
- Are at risk of harm
- And because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

¹ Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 section 97(1)



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Definition of safeguarding

Safeguarding is taking action to ensure that *all* children, young people and adults at risk are safe from harm when participating in trust activities. It means proactively doing everything possible to minimise and prevent abuse of children, young people, and adults at risk.

Safeguarding Responsibility

The responsibility to safeguard, promote, support and protect a child, young person or adult at risk wellbeing does not rest on one person. All those involved in the Trust are responsible.

Rugby can contribute in many different ways to an individual's positive wellbeing including health benefits of being active. The achievements they can make in gaining new skills and their experiences of being included and respected as part of a team. Supporting and promoting a child, young person or adult at risk's wellbeing at all times included forming positive relationships, understanding their circumstances and responding appropriately to concerns about their wellbeing. To ensure we can respond when a child or young person needs help or support, we must firstly understand their rights and the meaning of wellbeing. Secondly, we must recognise and acknowledge the risks that exist for children and young people in rugby and put in place a range of safeguards that minimise these risks. Leadership is essential to ensure that these safeguards are managed and promoted, and this will be done by staff and volunteers within particular roles at the Trust who receive specific training for their level of responsibility. However, everyone must understand the risks associated for children and young people, and the appropriate processes which are in place should an individual's wellbeing be at risk or they are in need for protection.

Everyone has the responsibility to recognise the concern, to ensure the child, young person or adult at risk is safe if they are at risk of immediate harm, and to report the concern to the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer. Thereafter the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer will respond appropriately.

No matter your role or involvement in Strathmore Community Rugby Trust, you have responsibility to safeguard, promote, support and protect the wellbeing of individuals involved in Trust activities.

If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child, young person, adult at risk or about the conduct of any adult then you must report the matter to the Safeguarding Officer, Maggie Lawrie, on 07771867059 or coordinator@strathmoretrust.co.uk.



Review

The Safeguarding Policy will be regularly reviewed and will include individual's participation and feedback on the content and actual implementation as part of any review.

The policy will be reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on relevant individual's wellbeing, protection or rights
- Following the review of an issue or concern raised about the wellbeing or protection of an individual within the Trust, when the case review suggests that this policy should be reviewed

What is abuse?²

Physical Abuse

The causing of physical harm to a child, young person, or adult at risk. This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to an at risk individual.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is any act that involves the at risk individual in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the at risk individual either consented or assented. It involves forcing or enticing an at risk individual to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the individual 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 individuals in looking at, or in the production of indecent images, or in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards an at risk individual or encouraging an at risk individual to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse is not only committed by men; women can also commit sexual abuse, as can other children.

In Trust activities

Activities which might involve physical contact with others 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 an at risk individual's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the individual'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

² As defined by Scottish Rugby Union



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respond to, an individual's emotional needs. Neglect may result in an individual's failure to thrive or to meet normal weight and growth developmental milestones.

In Trust activities

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 culture where at risk individuals feel valued, listened to and believed when they are experiencing difficulties in their lives. Neglect in sport could mean exposing an individual 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 an individual's emotional development. It may involve saying to an individual 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 an individual or causing them to feel frightened or in danger or exploiting or corrupting an individual. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all types of ill-treatment of an individual. It can also occur independently of other types of abuse.

In Trust activities

Emotional abuse in sport activities 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 Trust activities either from other participants, Trust staff, volunteers, officials or parents and carers.

Social media is also increasingly used by abusers to contact, bully and abuse. In most situations, individuals 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.

What to do

There are many signs and indicators that an at risk individual is being harmed. Often one of these signs alone is not cause for concern however cumulatively they should form a picture and be taken seriously. If an at risk individual discloses or you observe any concerns or are told about concerns from someone else, then follow below.

Recognise

Recognise a protection or safeguarding concern. You need to know what abuse is, what to look for and be vigilant at all times.

Things to look out for:

- Changes in behaviour

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- Becoming anxious, lack of confidence or are withdrawn and stop communicating.
- Begin bullying others.
- Display sexual behaviour or language inappropriate for their age.
- Are often hungry, may steal food, often tired.
- Have inadequate clothing, are dirty, poor personal hygiene.
- Have unexplained cuts and bruises or bite marks.
- Self-harming or eating disorder.
- Seem afraid of parents/carers and 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 CWPO, to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused. Concerns should be reported so experts can advise and take action if necessary. The Trust will liaise with Social Services or Police Scotland.

Respond

Not all individuals 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 individual.
- 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 stick to the basics, 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 that they are not in any trouble.

Report

Pass on the information to the Child Welfare and Protection Officer for the Trust (details provided above). This will begin the process of making sure that the Trust is going what it should to keep participants safe.

- If the child is in immediate danger call Police Scotland on 999.
- Speak to the Child Welfare and Protection Officer.
- Or contact one of the main charity helplines – Children 1st on 08000 282223 or NSPCC on 0800 800 5000

If the allegation is in relation to the Child Welfare and Protection Officer for the Trust or if the matter has been handled inadequately, it should be reported to the Chair at chair@strathmoretrust.co.uk. The Chair will then decide on how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Record

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Record your observations, concerns and actions you take or do not take.

As soon as possible, write down:

- The child's name, date of birth.
- When they made the disclosure (date/time/place).
- Whether the disclosure came from the child or someone else.
- Use the words of the child – don't edit.
- What the concern is.
- Description of any visible injuries, behaviours – do not examine the child
- Details of any witnesses.
- What the child's view is, it could be normal to them.

Best Practice

Culture

It is important to develop a culture within the Trust that everyone (children, young people and adults) feel safe and able to raise concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously, confidentially and not escalate situations for the individual or others.

Minimising Risk

Good practice protects everyone – children, volunteers and staff.

These guidelines should be followed by all involved in the Trust

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets).
- Treating all young people/adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with participants (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Do not take at risk individuals alone in the car, however short the journey.
- Do not take at risk individuals to your home.
- Where any of the above are unavoidable then ensure that they only take place with the full consent and knowledge of someone in charge and/or the individual's parent/guardian.
- Design training programmes that are tailored to the ability and needs of the individuals.

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or young adults, that they can do for themselves.

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Recruitment

All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that anyone who may pose a threat to children is excluded from working with the Trust. If a job involves working with children, the Trust has a legal and moral responsibility to ensure the appointed person is suitable.

All applicants who will work with children or vulnerable adults will be made aware that their employment is subject to the completion of a Disclosure Scotland PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) Scheme Record Membership, or where they are already a member and PVG Scheme Record update.

All applicants will be required to complete an application form or submit a CV, which provides the following information:

- Previous experience of working with children and young people.
- Names of two referees – one of whom should have knowledge of the applicant's previous work with children and young people
- A declaration of any past convictions or cases pending
- Evidence of identity (Passport or driving license with Photo).

Bullying

The same procedure should be followed as set out in the Section relating to responding to suspicions or allegations if bullying is suspected. All settings in which children are provided with rugby playing or coaching away from home should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place.

Actions to Help the Victim and Prevent Bullying in Sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Trust's Safeguarding Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action Towards the Bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully(ies) 's parents.
- Insist on the return of borrowed items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the coach of the victim.

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- Impose sanctions, as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

Social media & photography

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.

- The Trust has the responsibility for their website and online presence and should keep children safe from harm in the same way as they do on their pitches and in their clubhouses.
- No personal information regarding a child should feature on the Trust website without having obtained parental consent for that use – for example avoid listing a child's full name, school, address etc.
- Coaches should not be communicating directly with individual children through social media – e.g. should not be "friends" on Facebook.
- The Trust will monitor any sites that allow comments to be posted to ensure that there is no online bullying or critical comments about individual players/children.
- There may be children who are not able to be photographed (e.g. subject to court orders) and the Trust should be responsive to this.
- 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
- Storage and retention of photographic or video contents should comply with the privacy policy

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sports people in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all employees and volunteers be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to the Secretary.

Videoing as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent coaches using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, players and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such films.

Support to Deal with the Aftermath

Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to children, parents, and members of staff. Use of Helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association of Counselling Directory (The British Association

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for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, E-mail: bac@bac.co.uk, Internet: www.bac.co.uk) may be a useful resource.

Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.