

THE RUGBY FIVES ASSOCIATION

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

The Children Act 1989 defines children as those under the age of 18 and it is concerned with the protection of children from any form of abuse. Abuse is illegal.

The Rugby Fives Association (RFA) is the governing body responsible for the playing of Rugby and Winchester Fives throughout the UK.

Policy Statement

The RFA seeks to safeguard all children involved in RFA activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. The RFA will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in RFA activities through adherence to the Safeguarding and Child Protection guidelines and procedures adopted by the RFA.

Policy Principles

The Rugby Fives Association acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and regulatory requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of playing and watching the sport of fives in a safe and child centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in the sport of fives or outside of the activity.

The Rugby Fives Association acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy the Rugby Fives Association will

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people

- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in the Rugby Fives Association. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

The Different Types of Abuse

- Over-zealous coach
- Physical abuse through over-training
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse through bullying and pressure to succeed.

Good Practice Guidelines

Anyone working with children within the game of Rugby Fives should be aware of and adhere to the relevant RFA Codes of Conduct (see Appendix 1 to this policy) and in particular should

- be professional and maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour
- always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication)
- treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity
- always put the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- maintain a safe and appropriate distance from players
- be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol while coaching or playing Fives with young people
- give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young people, avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will

- be aware of physical contact with a player when helping to develop a game skill. This might be interpreted wrongly by the player or an observer
- not respond to any form of sexual innuendo
- ensure, as far as possible, that they are not alone when working with young players.

Documents, Policies and Procedures

The Rugby Fives Association adheres to the standards set out by the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU). In particular, it incorporates the following CPSU Documents into its policies and procedures:

- CPSU codes of conduct (terms incorporated into the RFA Codes of Conduct attached at Appendix 1)
- NSPCC Incident Reporting Form (terms incorporated into the RFA Incident Reporting Form at Appendix 2)
- CPSU Reporting of Concerns at Events Flowchart
- CPSU Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport
- CPSU Safeguarding Reporting Procedures Flowchart
- CPSU Briefing on Records Retention and Storage

What to do if a Concern arises or a Problem does occur

Any incident, problem or concern relating to Safeguarding or Child Protection should be recorded as soon as possible on the RFA Incident Reporting Form and these concerns and details should be reported to the RFA Safeguarding Lead Officer (the Welfare Officer) and the RFA General Secretary as soon as possible thereafter.

Any allegation or suspicion should not be discussed with another person, other than the police, before the General Secretary has been contacted.

If the incident reporting form is not available, then a record should be made as soon as possible of any relevant details and information, including the nature of the allegation, background information, the period of time involved and the degree to which the information is known to be fact rather than opinion or hearsay. These records should be retained indefinitely.

Make no comment to the media. All enquiries should be directed to the RFA General Secretary.

Revised January 2014

Revised and re-drafted February 2018

Reviewed April 2018

Appendix 1

RFA Codes of Conduct

Appendix 2

RFA Incident Reporting Form