

Child Protection Policy

At Maidstone Rugby Club the welfare of all 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.

1. The Club will adhere to the following principles:

Appoint a Welfare Officer (plus another person to undertake the role in the absence of the designated person) who will act as the first point of contact for concerns about welfare of young people

Ensure that all officers and committee members are aware of their responsibility in this area and that the Club respond to any indication of poor practice or abuse in line with RFU Policy

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 an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure

Identify a disciplinary panel which, where necessary, is able to manage cases of poor practice as identified by the RFU Child Protection Officer

2. Prohibited Practices

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

Take young people to their own home or any other place where they will be alone with them

Spend any amount of time alone with young people away from others

Take young people alone on car journeys, however short

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.

Engage in rough, physical games, sexually provocative games or horseplay with children/young people

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

Share a room with a young person unless the individual is the parent/guardian of that young person

Engage in any form of inappropriate sexual contact and/or behaviour
Allow any form of inappropriate touching
Make sexually suggestive remarks to a young person, even in fun
Use inappropriate language or allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
Allow allegations by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
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 parent/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)
Depart the Club or agreed rendezvous point until the safe dispersal of all young people is complete
Cause an individual to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual
Treat some young people more favourably than others; or
Agree to meet a young person on their own on a one to one basis

3. 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 and Procedures for the Welfare of Young in the Sport of Rugby Union.

Adults must not encourage a physical or emotionally dependent relationship between the person in a position of trust and the young person in their care
All those within the organisation 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

4. CRB Disclosure

All adults who have 'regular supervisory contact with young people' must undertake CRB disclosure within eight weeks of their appointment to a position which involves regular supervisory contact with young people. These adults will 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

Welfare Officers
Physiotherapists
Club administrators
CRB disclosures must be conducted through the RFU Child Protection Department who have jurisdiction to deal with any matter arising from any such disclosure

This policy is further supported by the following documents which are all available to download from the RFU website: www.rfu.org.uk

How to report an incident

Incident report form

Child protection guidelines for match officials

Parent Guide

Policy statement relating to the use of video/photographic images

Photographic permission

Event registration

Welfare Officer role description

RFU policy and procedures for the welfare of young people in rugby union

The welfare of young people in rugby union guidance

Process at Hearing

Make the individual as comfortable as possible – remember this is not a court of law

A designated member of the Disciplinary Committee must take notes at the hearing as a true and accurate record.

The Chair of the Disciplinary Panel must read out the alleged offence and ask the player for admission or non-admission.

Read out the written report of the incident.

Provide the individual with the chance to explain what happened in their own words.

Ask any representatives present to make any mitigating or supporting comments.

Ask the individual to withdraw whilst they discuss and agree sanctions as appropriate.

2.3.3 Sanctions

The Disciplinary Panel will have the powers to carry out the following:

Make the sanctions in accordance with the recommended sanctions of the IRB as contained in Appendix 2 of the RFU Handbook. Youth Rugby recommended sanctions can be found in Appendix 3 of the RFU Handbook.

Take no further action

To take no action but refer to the Kent RFU Discipline Sub-Committee

Issue a caution

Suspend any individual for an agreed period of time

Terminate membership

Any other penalties as deemed suitable to the offence committed.

2.3.4 Appeals

All individuals should be given the option to appeal against any sanctions given.

The Appellant shall serve notice of appeal in writing, stating the grounds of the appeal. The Chair shall appoint two other Officers of the club to serve on the Appeal Panel (none of whom served on the original Disciplinary Committee) and shall advise the Appellant of the appeal hearing, which should be no more than 14 days after the original hearing. A member of the original panel that heard the case may attend the appeal hearing as an observer. The Appeal Panel has the power to quash a finding and any sanction imposed by the original Disciplinary Committee. It may also substitute an alternative finding and/or reduce or increase the original sanction. There shall be no further right of appeal from this appeal.

The Appellant shall remain under suspension pending the outcome of the appeal hearing.