



Long Eaton RFC Safeguarding Policy

This document is amended from the RFU Safeguarding Toolkit.

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Long Eaton Rugby Football Club is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children in the sport. All children are entitled to protection from harm and have the right to take part in sport in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment.

This Policy is based on the following principles

- The welfare of the child 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, suspicions of harm and concerns 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.
- The interests of those who work or volunteer with children will be protected.

Definition of a child

“Child” means a person under the age of 18 years as defined by the Children’s Act 1989. Children means more than one child.

Regulation 15 – Age Grade Rugby

Regulation 15 and its guidance sets out the regulations which apply to all U18s rugby and must be read and adhered to as appropriate.

Regulation 21 – Safeguarding

Regulation 21 sets out how allegations of abuse are dealt with and may be found on the RFU website. It also sets out the Disclosure and Barring Service requirements for those working with children.

17 Year Old Males Playing in the Adult Game

RFU Regulation 15 states that a male player can, with written parental consent, play in the adult game when he reaches his 17th birthday, although not play in a front row position until his 18th birthday. The form may be found on the RFU website. Once completed and signed it must be kept as a record of the decision.

A club’s management team must have assessed (prior to any training or playing) and continue to assess, that any 17 year old player playing in adult games or training is both physically and emotionally capable of taking part. Those responsible for the management of adult teams which include 17 year olds, must at all times be mindful of the 17 year old player’s safety and wellbeing and ensure that a suitable adult from within the team and management acts as a mentor.

Long Eaton RFC responsibilities

- Appoints a Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO) (Duncan Gooch and Sam Nason), and where appropriate a deputy, as the first point of contact for safeguarding and welfare concerns
- Ensures that the CSO:
 - is a member of, or attends the appropriate club committees making safeguarding issues a priority at the proper level; and
 - works in accordance with the Safeguarding Toolkit
- Develops a safeguarding training plan ensuring that as a minimum:
 - the CSO attends an “In Touch” Workshop within six months of taking up the post
 - each mini and youth age group has at least one person who has attended the “Play It Safe” course
- Informs all members, parents and children when a new CSO is appointed
- Publishes the club’s own safeguarding policy which reinforces the RFU Safeguarding Policy and procedures which reflects the unique local circumstances for that club and makes it accessible to all members
- Ensures all club officers and committee members are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensures that at any youth disciplinary panel the CSO supports the child and ensures the panel considers the child’s emotional wellbeing throughout
- Identifies any signs of harm and reports them to the CBSM and/or the RFU Safeguarding team
- Ensures that the club’s children’s workforce have up-to-date DBS checks in accordance with Best Practice Guidance and Regulation 21.

Best Practice Guidance

The RFU’s aim is to create a culture where everyone feels confident to raise legitimate concerns without prejudice to their own position. Concerns about the behaviour of coaches, officials or any members of the children’s workforce which may be harmful to a child in their care must be reported to the RFU Safeguarding Team through the Club Safeguarding Officer (Duncan Gooch or Sam Nason) or CB Safeguarding Manager.

While remembering that it is the safety and welfare of children that is of paramount importance, there will be times when those responsible will need to exercise discretion and common sense to ensure their wellbeing. This Guidance is designed to provide information on a number of different topics which CBs, clubs and their volunteers and employees may find useful and will help them to create safe, friendly and welcoming environments for children.

Further guidance is available from the Club Safeguarding Toolkit, the RFU website, or the RFU Safeguarding Team. There is also guidance relating to Regulation 15 on the RFU website which may be useful when considering this section.

Safe Environments

A safe environment is one where: the possibility of abuse is openly acknowledged; volunteers and employees are appropriately recruited and trained; and those who report suspicions and concerns are confident that these will be treated seriously and confidentially.

Communication is central to maintaining a safe environment; this includes information given to parents at the start of the season (such as the CSO’s name), choosing the correct and appropriate method of providing information to children (email/phone to parents), listening to children’s views on matters which affect them, as well as considering how to communicate in an emergency (mobile/landline).

Messages relating to children, sent via telephone, emails and texts, should be through their parents/guardians. Where appropriate older players may be copied in but this should always be

done by blind copying in order to protect their data. Direct personal communication with children should be avoided, unless in exceptional circumstances.

Recruitment

Clubs should have a suitable children's workforce and all reasonable steps should be taken to exclude anyone who may pose a threat to children. When recruiting new members of the children's workforce, clubs should consider asking anyone unknown to the club to provide a written reference, which the club should then verify.

Training

Clubs should encourage all adults who have a coaching role to attend an appropriate Rugby Union Coaching course and a "Play It Safe" course. This is an introductory level safeguarding course designed for any club members.

All Club Safeguarding Officers must, within six months of being appointed, attend the RFU "In Touch" Workshop, which covers their role and responsibilities. Failure to attend means they may not be permitted to continue in the role. This course is a more detailed course providing information about reporting and responding to incidents. Any club official is encouraged to attend this course to ensure their club is fully aware of its responsibilities. The behaviour and performance of new volunteers and employees should be monitored for a period to ensure they are following best practice.

Supervision

To provide a safe environment, clubs should ensure that their volunteers and employees when working with children avoid working in isolation out of the sight of parents or other volunteers. Whilst volunteers and employees are awaiting their DBS disclosure they must be supervised by someone who does have DBS clearance.

Contingency planning should ensure that if a player's injury requires significant attention, or coaches are absent or away with a team, levels of supervision can be maintained by suitably DBS checked adults. However, in an emergency, the first attention must be paid to an injured player and if there are insufficient suitably DBS checked adults available to supervise the remaining players, clearly, other responsible adults will need to be asked to step in.

Adult : Child Ratios

There should always be at least one DBS checked adult in charge of any group of children.

The RFU recommends a minimum ratio of adult to children of:

- 1:10 for children over 8 years old aged at least 9
 - 1:8 for children under 8 years old aged 7 and 8
 - 1:6 for children under 7 years old
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On Tour

These Policy guidelines apply equally on tour as at the club. When on tour if an adult is solely there supporting their own child they will not need DBS clearance but they will if they are acting in any official capacity with other children. This would apply to those on bedtime or other supervisory duties.

For more detailed guidance please read the Safeguarding Toolkit and Tour guidelines which may be found on the RFU website.

Inappropriate Relationships with Children

An adult in a position of trust must not enter into a sexual relationship with a child in their care.

Sexual intercourse, sexual activity, or inappropriate touching by an adult with a child under the age of 16 years is a criminal offence, even where there is apparent consent from the child.

A sexual relationship between an adult in a position of trust and a child over 16 years of age is a breach of trust and an abuse of the adult's position. Whilst it may not be a criminal offence, in a rugby union setting it will be treated very seriously and may result in RFU disciplinary action, including suspension from attending rugby clubs.

Adults must never send children inappropriate or sexually provocative messages or images by text, or other electronic media.

Safeguarding disabled children

Disabled children and their families may need additional information, help and support. The club's paid and volunteer workforce may require training and advice to ensure they include and safeguard them.

Some children may be more susceptible to harm than other participants because they may: lack the mutual support and protection of a peer group, require higher degrees of physical care and support, have limited communication skills, find it difficult to resist inappropriate interventions, have several carers making it difficult to identify an abuser, have a history of having limited or no choice or have a degree of dependency on a carer conflicting with the need to report harm or raise concerns.

It is also important to be aware of the additional vulnerability some children experience as a result of a wide spectrum of issues such as autism, attention deficit disorder and a variety of other disorders. There is guidance on how to deal with some of these issues on the RFU website.

Good role models

The children's workforce should consistently display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance and refrain from pursuits considered unhealthy in front of their players. They must not make sexually explicit comments to children and any language which causes them to feel uncomfortable or lose confidence or self-esteem is unacceptable, as is the use of obscene or foul language.

Alcohol

It is important that all rugby clubs' management committees take considered, positive action to ensure that they are responsible licensees.

It is against the law:

- To sell alcohol to someone under 18
- For an adult to buy or attempt to buy alcohol on behalf of someone under 18
- For someone under 18 to buy alcohol, attempt to buy alcohol or to be sold alcohol
- For someone under 18 to drink alcohol in licensed premises, with one exception - 16 and 17 year olds accompanied by an adult can drink but not buy beer, wine and cider with a table meal
- For an adult to buy alcohol for a person under 18 for consumption on licensed premises, except as above

At training sessions and games for children, adults' drinking habits may affect both children's attitude to alcohol and their emotional well-being. As role models adults should avoid excessive drinking in their presence.

The unexpected can always happen; there should always be adults who abstain from drinking alcohol to deal with any emergencies and to manage the safety and welfare of children in their care.

Contact rugby

The wellbeing and safety of children must be placed above the development of performance. Contact skills must be taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of the players involved.

Adults and children must never play contact versions of the sport together including training games or contact drills. They may play either tag or touch rugby together if these games are managed and organised appropriately (see the RFU website for further information). A risk assessment on the conditions, players and apparent risks should be carried out by a person responsible for the overall session. There is further information available in the Guidance to Regulation 15 which also provides a variety of alternatives.

Coaching techniques

Any inappropriate or aggressive contact between adults and children is unacceptable and a number of principles should be followed when teaching contact rugby:

- The activity should always be conducted in an open environment and in the presence of another adult.

Physical intervention

Discipline on the field of play is the responsibility of the players. Coaches, team managers and parents must always promote good discipline amongst their players, both on and off the field. Penalising lack of discipline on the field of play which contravenes the laws of the game is the responsibility of the referee. Coaches, managers and spectators should not intervene or enter the field of play.

In a situation where individuals have to consider whether to intervene to prevent a child being injured, injuring themselves or others, physical intervention should always be avoided unless absolutely necessary. In these situations it is imperative to:

- Consider your own safety
- Give verbal instructions first
- Use the minimum reasonable force and only when necessary to resolve the incident, the purpose being restraint and reducing risk
- Do not strike blows, act with unnecessary force or retaliate
- Avoid contact with intimate parts of the body, the head and neck
- Stay in control of your actions
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The CSO or CBSM should be notified at the earliest opportunity of an incident of physical intervention which involves possible dispute as a complaint might be lodged with the RFU or the police by a parent whose child has been physically restrained. The incident should be recorded on the RFU Initial Issue/Concern Reporting Form which may be found on the Safeguarding pages of the RFU website and sent to the RFU's Safeguarding Team.

Physical intervention, often referred to in education as 'Positive Handling', should only be used to achieve an outcome in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern or other children involved and never as a form of punishment.

Physical handling by a coach must only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique (Level 1 Coaching Award in Rugby Union)

The reasons for physical contact should be explained wherever practicable so that children and their parents are comfortable with this approach

Further guidance on managing challenging behaviour can be found on the RFU website.

Changing rooms & showers

Adults and children must never use the same facilities to shower or change at the same time.

Adults must only enter changing rooms when absolutely necessary due to poor behaviour, injury or illness. Adults must only ever enter the changing rooms by themselves in an emergency and when waiting for another adult could result in harm to a child.

If children need supervising in changing rooms, or coaches or managers need to carry out a range of tasks in that environment this must involve two individuals cleared to work in Regulated Activity of the same gender as the children. For mixed gender activities separate facilities should be available.

If the same facilities must be used by adults and children

on the same day a clear timetable should be established. No pressure should be placed on children who feel uncomfortable changing or showering with others, if this is the case they should be allowed to shower and change at home.

Where a disability requires significant support from a parent; or carer, the person concerned and their parents should decide how they should be assisted to change or shower.

Before any assistance is offered by another person, appropriate consent should be given by a parent.

Transportation

It should be made clear that in most instances it is the responsibility of parents, not the club, to transport their child to and from the club or nominated meeting point. If parents make arrangements between themselves this is a private arrangement and at the parents' discretion.

If a club hires a coach from a reputable commercial coach company it is entitled to assume that the company provides properly maintained and insured vehicles and properly licensed drivers.

However, children must never travel unaccompanied. A member of the club must travel with the children and that adult's contact details must be readily available to any parent who has reason to contact them.

If the club formally arranges transport eg using minibuses or people carriers (as opposed to facilitating travel arrangements between parents) then the club should ensure that:

- Drivers have a valid driving licence and recruitment procedures, including vetting criteria have been followed and appropriate insurance and breakdown cover has been arranged
- The vehicle is suitable for the number of passengers and has operational safety belts and appropriate child car seats
- Parents give their consent and have the driver's contact details, with the driver having easy access to parents' contact details including mobile phone numbers
- No child is left alone in the car with the driver, unless it is the adult's own child. If, in extenuating circumstances, this situation arises the child should sit in the back of the car if possible
- The children involved are happy with the arrangement and adults are alert to any signs of disquiet.

In the event of a late collection of children, coaches and volunteers should: attempt to contact the parents, wait with the child, preferably in the company of others, notify the CSO/ club official and remind parents of their responsibility to collect their child promptly.

Supervision

Once the RFU has received and approved the individual's DBS disclosure, their RugbyFirst record will be updated. Until such a time, they must be supervised by another DBS checked coach. An individual may have received their DBS disclosure but the RFU Safeguarding team may be making further enquiries about the information appearing on the disclosure; until their RugbyFirst record indicates a DBS by way of a green tick against their name, supervision of that individual is mandatory.

If an individual is helping with a training session it must be within sight and under the direction of a qualified and suitably vetted coach. Sessions should always be conducted openly and visibly. If, for

example, training equipment (e.g. scrum machine or fitness equipment) is used out of the sight of other coaches more than one coach should be involved in this training session. Planning should ensure that in an emergency, levels of supervision are upheld by an appropriate number of DBS cleared and qualified individuals. Club managers should also have plans or contingencies in place in respect of coach absences so that basic supervision levels are maintained.

Environment

As a year round sport weather conditions present rugby clubs with a range of considerations: extremes of heat, sun, rain, frost and snow. It is the responsibility of the club to carry out a risk assessment of the environmental conditions both before and during a game or training session. Conditions such as frost and drought can result in a hard and dangerous playing surface. Children should always be advised to wear appropriate clothing for the season and all players should be monitored to ensure their wellbeing throughout a session. All players should be encouraged to keep hydrated throughout a session particularly during the warmer months.

Frequency of play

The RFU take overplaying and over commitment seriously, especially where it relates to players under the age of 18. Regulation 15 and its guidelines identify the parameters in relation to the amount of time any player is playing or training. Rugby is only part of a child's development and should always be balanced alongside other academic and sporting commitments.

Playing Kit and Equipment

IRB Law 4 details the definition of playing kit and also goes on to regulate for any additional items of clothing including pads, mits, medical support and mouthguards. It also goes on to identify banned items of clothing such as jewellery, sharp items and zips. Ultimately, it is the referee's decision to determine whether any item of the players' clothing is acceptable or not and his decision is final.

Names on shirts: there are no RFU regulations governing the appearance of players' names or nick names on their kit. However, it is considered poor practice to do so as it allows the child to be easily identified by those to whom the child is otherwise, unknown.

Mouthguards: whilst the wearing of a mouthguard is not mandatory, it is a recommendation that all age grade players wear one. It is, however, mandatory in certain competitions and festivals.

Studs and Blades: these must not be sharp or abrasive. It is the referee's decision as to whether or not a player's studs, or blades, are acceptable. It is advisable for players to have boots with interchangeable studs so that they may be replaced if they become worn or dangerous.

Goggles/glasses: players may not wear glasses whilst playing. Only players in the U7s and U8s age group may wear glasses or goggles. Regulation 15 sets out the parameters in detail. Contact lenses may be worn.

This is currently under review. Please refer to the RFU Website for the most up-to-date information regarding the wearing of goggles

Hearing aids: whilst contrary to IRB Laws of the Game, the RFU provide detailed guidance on the issue of hearing aids and cochlear implants. This can be found on the RFU website.

Sponsorship: there are no RFU regulations governing sponsor's logos appearing on players clubs should give consideration to the appropriateness of the sponsor and their business being associated with children's teams.

Under 6s

Clubs which provide the opportunity for U6s, to participate in rugby related activities need to ensure that they are aware of the additional factors which should be taken into account.

Whilst all parents/guardians should be encouraged to remain on the premises throughout a session it is particularly important for those of this age group. Activities should be located within easy reach of shelter and toilets. A session should not exceed one hour and there should be at least one break for refreshments. Adults should be alert to the mental and physical capabilities of the individual children involved and be prepared to adapt/curtail sessions in the event that the children become tired or lose concentration. Whilst

all children will normally start activities at the same time, their parents/guardians should be instructed that they may withdraw them at any time during the session. Where there is a wide range of children they should be matched to activities according to age and development.

The format of any session should be designed to give these children confidence in carrying out basic movement skills,

in the context of fair play, sharing and co-operation. Children need to spend time learning how the game works and its laws, so they become familiar and confident with the game before joining those who are more experienced.

The group must be functionally separate from all other age groups and no matches may be played between the children and those of different clubs.

Insurance

All players, volunteers and match officials are insured under the RFU insurance for catastrophic injuries resulting in death and permanent disability only.

All coaches, match officials and volunteers are covered for third party liability. This is cover for the season, as set out

in Regulation 11, and includes touring subject to the prior permission of the RFU. Any participation in competitive matches outside the season requires the prior written consent of the RFU. Cover only applies if the activity falls within the RFU Rules and Regulations. Further information can be found on the RFU website.

Parents and players are encouraged to take out individual personal insurance if they wish to be covered for less serious injuries.

Serious Injuries

The RFU takes the safety of all its participants very seriously. It is however a contact sport and injuries will occur. In order to try to reduce the number of injuries to players the RFU monitors all injuries that require admission to hospital.

It does not include those who attend an accident and emergency department and are allowed home from there. The RFU Reportable Injury Event Report is available on the RFU website.

Cyber Guidance

Websites are a key part of the daily operation of Long Eaton RFC. They are probably the most flexible way to communicate with members, and to anyone interested in joining a club. They also have the potential to be a very safe way to communicate with children, given their wide accessibility.

Club Websites

However, in the same way that a club has responsibility for the physical safety of a junior member when visiting the club's premises, that club must also ensure that there is nothing on its website which could harm a child, directly or indirectly.

A club is legally and morally responsible for the content of its website.

There are two key risks to guard against, abusive or inappropriate content (photos, video or text), on the site itself or on linked sites (including adverts, especially from Google or other 'sponsored links) and disclosing personal information about a child to people accessing the website. This could be the child's name, address, or any information about a child's life, interests or activities which would help a stranger target a child, or engage that child in conversation.

Another aspect of inappropriate content can be perceived as bullying. This could be material on the site which criticises or humiliates a child. It could also be information which places undue pressure on the child to participate in some aspect of a club's activities.

Mobile and on-line communication with children

Technology is moving very fast in this area. There are now many different ways for people to communicate. On-line communication can be by email, instant messaging or social networking sites.

The risks posed by such methods of communication arise from a variety of issues: the privacy provided, the wide range of content that can be transmitted, including content of a violent, sexual or hateful nature, the ease with which images can be forwarded onto others and the difficulty in knowing truly who you are communicating with.

In sport, there are additional risks: inappropriate pressure can be exerted by adults, particularly coaches, on children or inappropriate criticism of a child's performance. An official position or role within a club, such as coach, can carry with it a level of authority, and engender a level of trust, that facilitates the control of a child.

Against this background, Long Eaton RFC expects:

- When communicating by phone, where possible Club Officials and coaches should speak to the parent of a child
- Club Officials and coaches should not communicate with individual children by text or on-line at any time, on any matter, unless there is an immediate risk to the welfare of that child which can be lessened by such contact
- If a club needs to communicate club-related information to children by email (such as training or match details), it should use email groups comprising email addresses given by parents. It is inadvisable for a coach to communicate by email on a one-to-one basis with a child; if replying to an email from a child the parent should be copied in to the response
- Coaches and Club Officials should not communicate with children through social networking sites such as Facebook.
- **Adults involved in Long Eaton RFC should not be 'friends' (on social media) with members in the U16 age group and below.** Exception can be made for those who have developed a relationship with the child outside of the club e.g. through their own children/family friends.

It is impossible to address every issue or cover every scenario a club or coach might encounter when communicating with children and it is appreciated that different ages will need to be treated

differently. However, in all cases the above guidelines should be considered when determining the most appropriate method of communication in any given circumstances.
Further advice and information may be found on the Child Exploitation and Online Protection, part of the National Crime Agency, website.

Photographic Images

The RFU positively encourages parents and spectators to take photographs of participants involved in rugby union to celebrate the ethos and spirit of the sport.

However, there may be circumstances where taking a photograph of a child might not be acceptable. Any photograph (digital or printed) which is produced and released into the public domain may be misused by anyone as once this has been done, control has been lost. In this day and age when it is so easy to upload or email a photograph within seconds of it being taken, it is worth taking a moment to consider the issue of control.

Club Photographic Policy

Care should be taken when placing photographic images on the club's website and promotional material.

The key points are:

- Personal information which can lead to a child being identified should never be used. If it is necessary to name a child ensure you have written parental consent and have informed the parents as to how the image will be used. This is particularly important when issuing press releases and match reports.
- Photographs should be of the activity or team, not of one individual.
- Clubs should ensure they obtain parental consent for photographs to be taken whilst a child is either at the club or away fixtures. This can be done easily at the beginning of the season when obtaining contact information and membership details.
- Children must be appropriately dressed when being photographed. It is never acceptable to capture any images in changing rooms, showers or at any time when players are dressing. Images should be neither sexual, of an exploitative nature nor open to misinterpretation or misuse.
- Parents should be made aware if a film is being taken to be used as a coaching aid. Clubs and CBs should ensure that any footage will be carefully monitored and stored securely.
- It is not an offence to take photographs in a public place. On privately owned or leased land it is the owner who may regulate whether or not photographs may be taken.
- When clubs meet for fixtures/festivals it is recommended that confirmation is obtained from each club that parental permission has been given for all the children participating. If there is a child who is the subject of a court order who should therefore not have their photograph taken, this should be addressed before the event.
- Parents should be aware that they may be asked to register their intention to take photographs.

Abuse & Poor Practice

Recognising abuse, bullying and poor practice.

It is important to recognise the signs and indicators of abuse and to be aware of how it should be dealt with.

A child may be being abused or bullied if they:

- Change their usual routine;
- Begin to be disruptive during sessions;
- Become withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence;
- Have possessions going missing;
- Become aggressive or unreasonable;
- Start stammering or stop communicating;
- Have unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Start bullying other children;
- Are frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed;
- Display sexual behaviour inappropriate for their age;
- Seem afraid of parents or carers;
- Do not want to attend training or club activities, or even leave the club;
- Stop eating and/or;
- Are frightened to say what's wrong.

One of these signs on its own is very unlikely to be an indicator of abuse. However, cumulatively they should be taken seriously. Members of the staff and volunteers need to be aware of these possible signs and always report any concerns to the CSO.

Types of abuse

There are four main types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. Bullying is an additional type of abuse often encompassing aspects of the other four categories.

An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly or may be responsible for abuse by failing to prevent another person harming that child.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Examples of physical abuse in sport include extreme physical punishments; forcing a child into training and competition that exceeds the capacity of his or her immature and growing body or limitations of a disability; assaulting a person; or where the child is given drugs to enhance performance or in the case of a child, delay puberty.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing a child to take part in sexual activities, which may involve inappropriate touching, penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual photographic or online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them from participating in normal social interaction.

Emotional abuse may involve a child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another as well as serious bullying, causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may also occur alone.

Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children to constant criticism, name-calling, and sarcasm or bullying. It could also include their regular exclusion from

an activity, non-selection for a team, failing to rotate squad positions or more subtle actions such as staring at or ignoring a child . Putting players under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child 's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may involve a parent failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, or to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child 's basic emotional needs.

Examples of neglect in sport could include: not ensuring children are safe; exposing them to undue cold or heat or unsuitable weather conditions, or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury.

Bullying

Bullying is often considered to be a fifth type of abuse but when it does occur it usually has elements of one or more of the four categories identified. The bully can be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach or manager with a 'win at all costs' attitude or another intimidating child. It should also be recognised that bullying can take place in the virtual world of social networking sites, emails or text messages.

If bullying does occur it should not be ignored and the victim should be supported through what can be a traumatic experience. Bullying will not just go away.

Bullying takes many forms but ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied and not the intention of the bully.

There are opportunities to bully at any rugby club or activity. It is the way that incidences are dealt with which makes the difference between life being tolerable or becoming a misery for the victim. Bullies can be very cunning and develop strategies to avoid it being seen by anyone but the victim.

Poor practice

Incidents of poor practice arise when the needs of children are not afforded the necessary priority, compromising their wellbeing. Poor practice can easily turn into abuse if it is not dealt with as soon as concerns are raised or reported.

Examples of poor practice may be shouting, excessive training, creation of intra-club 'elite squads', ridicule of players' errors, ignoring health and safety guidelines and failing to adhere to the club's code of conduct.

How to deal with concerns

Long Eaton RFC's aim is to create a culture where everyone feels confident to raise concerns without prejudice to their own position. Anyone with concerns about the behaviour of a coach, official, volunteer, administrator, professional staff or any other member of the children's workforce which may be harmful to the child in their care must report them.

If you have witnessed or heard about an incident which concerns you, it is important to report it to someone in authority, in the first instance to the Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO). In their absence the Constituent Body Safeguarding Manager (CBSM) or RFU Safeguarding team.

Remember to:

- Stay calm, but don't delay;
- Re-assure the child that they are not to blame;
- Do not make any promises of confidentiality or outcome;
- Keep questions to a minimum;
- Make brief accurate notes at the earliest opportunity.

Club Safeguarding Officers

Duncan Gooch 07870620345 dgooch81@hotmail.com

or

Sam Nason 07806630006 samnason@hotmail.co.uk

The RFU, when dealing with a serious incident, will immediately notify the local statutory agencies (Police/ Children's Services/Local Safeguarding Children Boards) and continue to work in partnership with them throughout any investigations.

Any internal RFU investigation will only commence once the statutory agencies have completed their investigations and referred the case back to the RFU. The wellbeing of the child must be central to any procedures involving them.

Once the RFU has completed its investigations in accordance with Regulation 21 and decided on the appropriate action to be taken it will then consider referring the individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service in line with its legal obligations.

If you are unsure how to deal with any incident please do feel free to contact the RFU Safeguarding Team to discuss the appropriate course of action.

RFU Safeguarding Case Officer may be contacted on:

0208 831 7479

NSPCC Helpline:

0800 8800 5000

Childline:

0800 1111

CEOP:

0870 000 3344

or many websites feature its concern button.