



## Child Protection Policy

### SECTIONS

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## A. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Penicuik Rugby Football Club is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures a child is someone under the age of 18 years.

Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

### **The policy is based on the following principles:**

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Organisations shall work in partnership together with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

### **Penicuik Rugby Club will:**

- Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities to take part in rugby safely.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes, and feelings of children.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff, members, and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- Require staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and associated procedures.
- • Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- • Observe guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.

### **This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:**

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any changes within Penicuik RFC.

- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within Penicuik RFC
- In all other circumstances, at least every three years.

## B. KEY CONTACTS

### Penicuik Rugby Club

In line with its obligations under the Scottish Rugby Participation agreement, Penicuik Rugby Club has appointed a Child Protection Officer (CPO) to coordinate child protection and welfare on its behalf, and to provide a main point of contact for staff and volunteers, parents, and children in need of support, advice or training, or if they need to report a concern.

#### Penicuik Rugby Contact Details

**Child Protection Officer**

Sonia Watson

07940 745 710

[cpo@penicuikrugby.org](mailto:cpo@penicuikrugby.org)**Director of Rugby**

Mark Blair

07825 686 971

### Scottish Rugby Union

Although matters relating to the welfare of children at Penicuik Rugby Club should ordinarily be referred in the first instance to the Penicuik Rugby Club CPO, the Scottish Rugby Lead Officer for Child Protection and Welfare may also be contacted for support and advice on any child protection matter by any CPO, child, parent, staff member or volunteer at any time.

Scottish Rugby acts as the umbrella body for the purposes of processing applications for the disclosure check of volunteers working with children at rugby clubs in Scotland. Accordingly, a PVG administrator has been appointed to process applications for club volunteers and to advise and support Club Child Protection Officers on matters relating to the PVG scheme.

#### Scottish Rugby Contact Details

**Child Wellbeing and Protection Advisor**

Clare Forrest

07966 902 246

[clare.forrest@sru.org.uk](mailto:clare.forrest@sru.org.uk)

Scottish Rugby

BT Murrayfield Stadium

Edinburgh

EH12 5PJ

## **C. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PLAYERS IN RUGBY**

Penicuik Rugby Club supports and requires all members to observe the following standards of practice, including verbal and non-verbal actions when involved in activities with young players under the age of 18 years. Staff and volunteers who work with young people sign up to this Code of Conduct.

The standards of practice given below are indicative not exhaustive and serve to highlight key areas. Basic principles remain consistent, but specific methods of application will vary depending on age and performance level of the players involved.

### **GOOD PRACTICE - Organisation / Youth Programme**

- Implement suitable and robust recruitment for volunteers and staff to work with young players
- Appoint suitably trained coaches and managers
- Ensure there is a clear way for players and parents to raise any concerns
- Appoint a child protection officer
- Adopt and implement a child protection policy
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible
- Ensure staff/volunteers are up to date with good practice in welfare and child protection

### **GOOD PRACTICE - Coaches, Managers, Physios, Medics, Match Officials**

- Follow the Scottish Rugby “play your part” document
- Keep up to date with and follow good practice coaching guidelines
- Properly supervise young players during rugby activity
- Make rugby fun, enjoyable and promote fair play principles
- Place value on the efforts and achievements of all players involved, including those on other teams
- Treat all players with respect, dignity and fairness
- Put the welfare and development of players first before winning or achieving team performance goals
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust and respect
- Include players in the decision-making process wherever possible and appropriate
- Work in an open environment, wherever possible
- Be an excellent role model
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young players
- Follow medical advice and protocols relating to injury prevention and management

- In setting up communication mechanisms with children, e.g. social media groups, ensure that at least two adults have access to this group communication.

### **PRACTICES TO BE AVOIDED - Coaches**

- Too much emphasis on the team winning over the enjoyment and development of the young players involved (Note: the balance of winning v player development will be different at different ages and levels of performance but should be in line with the relevant Long Term Player Development principles)
- Excessive training and competition, pushing young players against their will and putting undue pressure on them.
- Involving adults in practical demonstrations of contact rugby techniques
- Spending inappropriate and unnecessary amounts of time working with children alone in private or unobserved situations

### **PRACTICES TO BE AVOIDED - General**

- Failing to follow SRU guidelines and recommendations on best practice
- Having 'favourites'
- Arranging to transport a child alone in your car, without prior parental consent
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking non-prescription drugs while responsible for young players
- Entering player's bedrooms on trips away, unless in an emergency or in the interest of health and safety
- Doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

### **UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE - Coaching**

- Deliberately threatening, insulting, humiliating or embarrassing a player as a form of control and/or 'motivation'
- Reducing a player to tears as a form of control
- Engaging in rough or physical contact, including tackling a young player and/or participation in contact games or training
- Swearing at young players or allowing players to do the same unchallenged
- Using sexualised language and/or allowing young players to do the same unchallenged
- Condoning or promoting excessive rivalry between players, teams and/or clubs on or off the pitch
- Shouting abusive or derogatory comments from the touchline at players or match officials

### **UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE - General**

- Inviting or allowing young players to stay at your home
- Sharing a room alone with a young player

- Getting changed and/or showered in the same facilities at the same time as young players
- Forming intimate emotional, physical or sexual relationships with young players
- Allowing or engaging in sexual behaviour, this includes suggestive comments and provocative jokes and games
- Allowing young players to smoke or drink alcohol
- Allowing young players to take non-prescription drugs
- Failing to follow SRU policies on safety for young players
- Allowing allegations made by a player to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

## REPORTING

Any allegations by a player, parent or coach regarding safeguarding of players should in the first instance be reported immediately to the Child Protection Officer or the Director of Rugby.

If a child reports a concern to an adult volunteer / coach, it is then the responsibility of this adult to report the matter to the Child Protection Officer. Note that in receiving the report of concern from the player, the adult cannot promise not to tell anyone. However, they can and **should** explain to the child that they will tell someone, and that the matter will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

## D. RECRUITMENT OF YOUTH RUGBY COACHES

Penicuik Rugby Club welcomes volunteers who would like to take up coaching of Micro, Mini, or Youth Rugby. Penicuik Rugby Club also recognises that most volunteer coaches of Micro, Mini, or Youth Rugby take up coaching because their own child is playing rugby. The Club has agreed that the youth convenor should maintain a database of coaches of Micro, Mini or Youth Rugby.

All coaches of Micro, Mini or Youth Rugby should meet the Club's Youth Convenor before beginning coaching. If any individual expresses an interest in coaching, the relevant age group coach should speak to the Youth Convenor who, in turn, will arrange to meet the volunteer. **No one can coach** Micro, Mini and Youth Rugby at Penicuik RFC until an enhanced Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check has been completed to the satisfaction of Scottish Rugby in relation to that persons suitability to coach specifically at Penicuik Rugby Club. Coaching children without such a check having been completed is a criminal offence, as is permitting that coaching to take place.

At the meeting the Youth Convenor will take the necessary details of the volunteer. Following this, the Club's Child Protection Officer will arrange for the individual to apply for membership of the PVG scheme or, where the individual is already a member, a Scheme Record to be obtained. The Club Development Officer will arrange for the individual to attend a coaching course relevant for the level at which the individual will be coaching.

At the meeting the Youth Convenor will also give to the individual copies of following Club documents:

- Child Protection Policy
- Welcome document

In addition to membership of the PVG Scheme, relevant coaching qualifications and acknowledgement of receipt of the above document, Penicuik Rugby Club requires that all coaches of Micro, Mini or Youth Rugby be full members of the Club in their own right. This is so that coaches are subject to both the governance, and covered by the insurance of Penicuik Rugby Club and, through the Club, of Scottish Rugby.