

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Old Wimbledonian Warriors RFC takes the welfare of children, in its widest sense, very seriously. It has therefore appointed a qualified official to manage Child Welfare and Safeguarding issues across the Mini and Junior section this is Rob Byrne. He should be contacted if you have any concerns which either cannot or have not been properly resolved by the managers/coaches of the relevant age group:

Club Safeguarding Officer

Rob Byrne

07779011802

cwowarriors@gmail.com

Or his deputy

Brian Morgan

abgmorgan@sky.com

A Guide: The following overview has been issued by the RFU on the subject of child abuse.

This document is intended as a guide for people involved in the coaching, management and development of Rugby Union within the club environment. It should be read by volunteers, parents and professionals alike, and in particular a new coach. In it, you are introduced to the concept of child abuse in sport, in all its forms and are given ways of both recognising warning signs and acting on concerns.

Abuse is a powerful and emotive term. Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by those they know and trust. The coach often holds this trust and may be at risk of misusing their power over the young players.

It is widely recognised that there are four main areas of abuse which coaches and volunteers should be aware of:

– Emotional Abuse

In general terms, emotional abuse occurs when adults persistently fail to show children due care, love or affection, where a child may be constantly shouted at, or threatened or subjected to sarcasm and unrealistic pressures.

– Neglect

In general terms, neglect as a form of abuse occurs when a child's essential needs for food, warmth and care fail to be met.

– Physical Abuse

In general terms, this occurs when adults or even children, deliberately inflict injuries on a child, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It also occurs when an adult gives children alcohol, or inappropriate drugs, or fails to supervise their access to these substances.

– Sexual abuse

In general terms, girls and boys are abused by adults, both male and female, who use children to meet their own sexual needs.

There may, however, be an increased risk within many sports, including Rugby Union, for abuse to occur which does not necessarily fit into these categories. The unique culture and traditions of rugby, along with so-called stereotypical behaviour, whilst common to many team sports, may give rise to unacceptable behaviour leading to situations where abuse may occur or coaches and/or young players are at increased risk.

Safeguarding the welfare of our young players is paramount. As coaches and volunteers we have a moral and possibly a legal responsibility to provide the highest possible standard of care when we welcome young people into the game of Rugby Union.

Whilst there are many ways in which the welfare of young players can be safeguarded, this document does not go into detail and further guidance can be sought from the 'RFU/RFUW child and young player protection policy'.

- You are advised to become familiar with ways in which you and your club can:
- Understand what child abuse means
- Ensure good practice in the coaching of young players
- Provide a safe environment for young people
- Recognise abuse and provide a structure to deal sympathetically with concerns

Additional notes for Parents

At Warriors we maintain that the safety of the children and their enjoyment of the sport is paramount. Both parents and coaches have a part to play in ensuring that competitive pressures are not allowed to dominate.

The Club rigorously adheres to the RFU Codes of Conduct. These are displayed on the notice board in the Clubhouse. They govern the conduct of the coaches players, parents and spectators. The Club will take any breach of these codes very seriously. All coaches team managers and 1st aiders are subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Every player must be registered with the Club and the RFU. Annual subscriptions are payable to the Club after a short introductory period on the players first season. Each age group has a lead coach and a team manager. You will also receive in due course an Identity card with your child's RFU membership number and photo on it, in practice and for practical reasons photo cards are retained by team managers as often the Mini fixtures are festivals, which involve playing in games over the whole day at a Surrey Club. Membership of the Club includes use of the Club's facilities, including an active social membership and use of the Bar. Light food and hot drinks are available in the clubhouse between 9am and 1pm every Sunday.

All children must have the correct equipment. Boots must have the correct studs and players in contact age groups must wear a gum shield while engaged in contact activities. Club kit is available from the Club shop open on Sunday's, your children will be required to wear the correct club colours at festivals. All

bursary applications will be considered for kit and annual subscriptions. It is important that parents get to familiarise themselves with how the club is run and contribute to it. A club representative will give you a guided tour of the Club & Clubhouse – bar, toilets, canteen, shop and notice board. Pitch allocation will also be explained. Most Mini & Junior coaches are parents who have previously played the game and have some empathy with children. The Club supports them by providing practical advice and role models. They are also encouraged to undertake appropriate RFU courses to which the club makes a contribution. All Mini & Junior coaches team managers and 1st aiders are subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Photography

Please do not use cameras at training sessions or matches and please ask your guests not to either. We may wish to take photographs or video activities involving your child during training, social events fixtures and festivals. We occasionally use these images on our website promotional material club newsletters and the like names are not used. We ask you to give consent for this on your initial registration form, if you do not wish us to use any photographs please indicate this on the consent form.

Alcohol

The Warriors clubhouse has a licensed bar, under no circumstances do we allow alcohol to be consumed by anyone under 18. It is also an offence for someone over 18 to buy alcohol for consumption by a young person under 18.

Questions Parents often ask about young players

Should my child play competitive sports?

Properly organised youth sports programmes can offer a positive growth experience for children. Children are not merely small adults. Their needs are quite different. The quality of their experience depends on both effective coaching and effective parenting.

What is the central issue in coaching young players?

The value of youth sport is proportional to the child's opportunity to grow as a person while also having fun. "Winning" is clearly secondary. The exaggerated emphasis on winning that characterises so many sports on television should not be carried over to children. Effective coaches teach children the proper balance between competition and co-operation. In sport for the youngest children, it is not necessary to keep the score. As the children get a bit older and their skills and interest increase, the intensity of competition should rise in proportion.

What is the role of self-esteem?

Good coaches boost children's self-esteem. Moreover, children with low self-esteem are more vulnerable. They have the need for a good sporting experience. They can gain more from good coaching and suffer more from bad

coaching than children with high self-esteem.

What is the ideal relationship between parent and coach?

Parents play an important part in the players experience. This is represented here. Note that with skilful parenting and effective coaching, the triangle is filled with fun and growth. When one or both are missing, the triangle and therefore the playing experience may be hollow.

What is the key issue in effective parenting of the young rugby player?

Here again the issue is self-esteem. Positive reinforcement by the parents is critical. Repeated praise for gradually increasing skills enhances self-esteem and motivation to participate – this applies to all ages.

What is the parents role on the side line?

On the sideline the parents should encourage and support. Younger children find it difficult to understand or appreciate their parents arguing with the coaches or match officials.

What is the key characteristic of effective parents?

The children know they are loved for who they are and not how they perform, either on the playing field or in the classroom.

Should I coach?

It is estimated that one coach is necessary for every eight children participating in junior sports. Consequently, in many cases, if the parent does not coach, there will be no team for the child. Coaching effectiveness training becomes a tremendous asset in this situation.

At Warriors the primary function of our club is to enable children to have FUN whilst playing sport in a safe enviroment.