

Child Protection and Code of Conduct

STEWARTRY RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB Hobdell Pavilion, Ayr Road, Castle Douglas DG72LH

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1. INTRODUCTION

All sporting organisations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that –

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All coaches/volunteers working in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

Note – For the purposes of this Policy and in line with more recent legislation our definition defines children as up to age 18.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Stewartry RFC has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in the Club from harm.

This duty includes the prevention of physical, sexual or emotional abuse of all children associated with the Club. The Club will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in the Club through adherence to the Child Protection Guidelines adopted by Stewartry RFC.

**The Club's Child Protection Officer (Co-Ordinator) is: -
Clare Dooley – doolron@yahoo.co.uk - 07826854374**

**The Club's secretary is: -
Iain McDonald – iainmcdonald22@gmail.com**

A copy of the Club's Child Protection Policy is available from either of the above named officials.

Policy Aims

The aim of Stewartry RFC's Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice –

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety protection whilst in the care of the Club
- Allow all coaches/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues

3. PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

Child abuse can provoke strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgment about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including at home, school or in the community. A coach, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where the child needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the Club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good Practice Guidelines

All coaches, players, parents and spectators should be encouraged to demonstrate good behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. Codes of Conduct for Coaches, Players, Parents and Spectators are attached as Appendices.

Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol by any person under the legal age (18 years) shall never be permitted by any coach or volunteer. This includes any area within Stewartry Rugby Club, any form of transport being used to convey players, and any other place/club visited.

Photographs and Filming Equipment

The taking of photographs is permissible during training sessions or matches with the permission of the coach or manager. Parents are asked on the Registration Forms to give permission to allow photographs to be taken of their child but if they have any objections, they must discuss this with the coach before the start of any session or matches.

Club coaches/ managers use video equipment as a coaching aid. Parents of children and young people should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme.

The Club will ensure that all negatives, copies of videos and digital photograph files are stored in a secure place. These will not be kept for any longer that is necessary having regard to the purposes for which they were taken.

Images will not be shared with external agencies unless permission is obtained from the player, or parent/guardian (if the child or young person is under 18 years of age).

Practices to be Avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the Club, or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event

Practices Never to be Allowed

The following should never be allowed. You should never –

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room with a child
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Allow a child under 18 years old to consume alcohol
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised

Sharing Information and Confidentiality

Everyone has a responsibility to act to make sure that a child whose safety or welfare may be at risk is protected from harm. The need to ensure proper protection for children requires that agencies share information promptly and effectively when necessary. It is often when information from a range of sources is put together that a child can be seen to be in need or at risk of harm. **Within any organisational setting, confidentiality is not an option when children and young people are at risk. Everyone has a professional and moral duty to put the child's welfare first.**

If any member observes something about a child or young person that causes them to be concerned, it is vital that this information is shared with the Club's Child Protection Co-Ordinator, who will liaise as necessary with the relevant external agencies. If any member is unsure about whether they should share information they should seek advice from the Club's Child Protection Co-Ordinator.

PVG Scheme

The PVG Scheme is a membership scheme for people doing regulated work with children and/or protected adults in Scotland.

Stewartry Rugby Club has a legal responsibility to ensure that any individual who will be in regulated work with children or protected adults is not listed on the Children's List and/or Adult's List, which bars them from working with children and/or protected adults. 5

For an organisation to check an individual against a list, they can request an individual becomes a PVG Scheme member by applying for a Scheme Record. A Scheme Record disclosure will provide the organisation and individual with any vetting information, criminal conviction information, if they are on the Sex Offender's Register, relevant non-conviction information from police forces and any prescribed civil orders. This information may then help employers to make safer recruitment decisions.

The PVG Scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland. Organisations can register directly with Disclosure Scotland to access this vetting information.

4. SIGNS AND INDICATORS

Coaches/volunteers in a variety of settings are in a good position to notice signs or symptoms indicating a child or young person may be in need of protection.

Signs or symptoms of physical injury or abuse may include –

- injuries not consistent with child's age or parent's explanation
- bruises on soft tissue areas – upper legs, buttocks, lower back, cheeks- also neck, mouth, genitals
- burns/scalds
- black eyes
- any injury with an outline suggesting it was caused by an implement
- secretive/defensive behavior
- aggressive behavior
- a child who appears to be flinching/frozen
- medical attention delayed or avoided

Signs or indicators of sexual abuse may include –

- sexually explicit behavior and language
- knowledge beyond age and stage of development
- sexually transmitted disease
- itchy or painful genital area
- self-harming
- depression
- poor personal hygiene
- a child who appears to be withdrawn

Signs or indicators of emotional abuse may include –

- negative parental attitude .
- nervousness/anxiety
- a child who appears to be withdrawn
- poor self-confidence/ self-esteem
- unusual fears/panic attacks
- emotionally unresponsive
- a child who is socially isolated

- self-harming
- nightmares
- aggressive behaviors towards others
- obsessive/compulsive behaviors
- attention-seeking or needing behaviors.

Signs or indicators of physical neglect may include –

- a child who is hungry/thin/underweight
- stealing food
- untreated illness or injury
- attention-seeking behaviors.
- poor concentration
- age-inappropriate self-care skills
- shabbily or inappropriately dressed
- dirty/smelly
- a child who is unhappy/distressed
- victim of bullying

No list of signs can be exhaustive. It is important to bear in mind that other explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms described.

5. RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES OR CONCERNS

It is important to listen to children and to know what to do if a child discloses or alleges abuse. Whoever receives the information from the child (or another person) should –

- listen carefully
- not show disbelief or panic
- take the allegation seriously
- support the child/ young person, reassuring them they are not to blame
- avoid expressing your own views on the matter
- do not guarantee confidentiality, explaining the reasons for this
- explain that you will need to share the information with someone else (the Child Protection Co-Ordinator)
- do not question the child – this is the responsibility of social work and/or police as the investigating agencies who are trained in investigative interviewing of children

Recording of Information

- Child's name, address and date of birth
- Date and time of incident
- What the child has said to you in a legible and accurate manner
- Facts and observations, not your opinion
- Exactly what the child said and what you said
- Any actions taken and contact with parents/agencies, ensure you record name, addresses and contact details for any other person(s) you have spoken with
- Ensure you date and sign the record
- Personally hand the incident sheet to the Club's Child Protection Co-Ordinator

6. ROLE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR

- Date and countersign the Incident Sheet when received from the person reporting the concern
- On the basis of the collected information arrive at a judgment as to whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child is at risk of abuse and in need of protection
- Consider what action the Club needs to take to provide support for the child
- See further information/clarity from other people/witnesses, if necessary
- Record any additional relevant information gathered
- Discuss with parents (if appropriate) the nature of concerns and why you need to refer to Social Work.
- ***Do not contact parents if you consider he/she could be the abuser***
- If the parents do not give consent to make referral to Social Work the Child Protection Co-Ordinator will advise parents that he intends to do so but will represent the parents' views when making the referral
- Make a telephone referral to Children and Families Social Work (24-hour service), ensure you record the name and designation of the person you speak with. A list of contact numbers, and a telephone referral checklist is attached as an Appendix.
- Follow the advice given by Social Work/Police
- Ensure that the referral is followed up in writing the next working day
- Support the coach/volunteer who raised the concerns and ensure they are kept informed of decisions made and actions taken

If at any time you think that a child or young person might be in immediate danger, telephone Police Scotland on 101.

7. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Social Work and Police have a legal responsibility to investigate any concerns which suggest any child or young person has been abused or is at risk of harm.

When a referral is made Social Work and Police may talk to colleagues in Health and/or School Services to gather information to help them piece together a picture of what life is like for the child and to make decisions. Social Work will let the referrer know what happens but will not be able to provide details.

The investigating agencies – Social Work and Police – will make an initial assessment based on the referring information and that obtained from other relevant agencies and will make decisions about the most appropriate course of action.

If a child is thought to be at risk, Social Work or Police will arrange a *Strategy Meeting* to plan and co-ordinate the Child Protection Inquiry. The Child Protection Co-Ordinator or other relevant coach/volunteer may be asked to attend the Strategy Meeting to ensure that the most relevant information is available to assist the investigative agencies to make the best decisions for the child.

APPENDICES

TELEPHONE REFERRAL CHECKLIST

1. Ask to speak to the Children and Families Duty Worker or Duty Manager in that order, stating clearly you wish to make a child protection referral
2. If none of the above are available immediately provide the details of the child, you wish to refer (this will allow for any records to be located) and establish how soon you will be contacted.
3. When you speak with the relevant worker, note their name and designation.
4. If details not left previously, identify the child, spelling out their name/date of birth/ address/ parents (carers)/ siblings if known
5. Inform the Duty Worker if you are aware that the child is staying anywhere other than the address you have already provided
6. Explain clearly the exact nature of your concern about the child – detailing how, when and why you came to be concerned and what action you have already taken.
7. Provide details of all others who are aware of this information
8. Establish any immediate action social work intend to take
9. Establish who will inform parents/carers and when this will be done
10. Check whether the child should be collected from the Club as normal and establish what should happen if this is not to be the case.

11. Check what you are able to say if parent/carer arrives before any action is taken by social work/ police

12. Establish what further action will be required from the referrer
13. Submit a written referral to Social Work within 24 hours

NOTIFICATION OF INCIDENT FORM

This form must be completed where members are concerned about an incident involving a child or vulnerable adult. This form must be completed as soon as possible after the incident and passed to the Club`s Child Protection Co-Ordinator. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

Details of person making report:

Name.....
.....

Position.....
.....

Contact telephone
number.....
.....

Details of Child/Vulnerable Adult:

Name.....
.....

Date of Birth.....Contact telephone
number.....

Address.....
.....

Names and address of parents/guardians/
carers.....

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Details of incident/concerns:

Date.....Time.....
Place.....

Names and address of other people who may have information about the incident/
concern.....

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Details of action taken:

Detail what action (if any) has been taken following receipt of this information:

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Any other relevant details:

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.....

.....
.....

Signature.....**Date**.....
.....

**Child Protection Co-Ordinator's
signature**.....

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

If you at any time think that a child or young person might be in *immediate danger* please telephone Police Scotland on: 101

The Club's Child Protection Officer (Co-Ordinator) is:-

Clare Dooley – doolron@yahoo.co.uk - 07826854374

The Club's secretary is:-

Iain McDonald – iainmcdonald22@gmail.com

Children and Families Social Work (Stewartry)

122-124 Irish Street
Dumfries
DG1 2AW

Tel: 030 33 33 3000 (Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm only) – Ask for Duty Social Worker

Email: CFEast@dumgal.gov.uk (Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm only)

Social Work Out of Office Hours Freephone: 0800 811 505

Police Scotland (ask for Public Protection Unit)

Loreburn Street Police Station
Loreburn Street
Dumfries
DG1 1HP Tel: 101

24 Hour Freephone Child Protection Line

Tel: 0800 022 3222

Child Line

Tel: 0800 1111

Parentline

Tel: 0808 800 2222

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES

1. Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every person and that each equally within the context of sport.
2. Coaches must place the well-being and safety of each player above all other consideration, including the development of performance.
3. Coaches must adhere to all guidelines laid down by governing bodies.
4. Coaches must develop an appropriate working relationship with each player based on mutual trust and respect.
5. Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
6. Coaches must encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance. This extends to all times when the children and young people are representing the club, e.g. travelling to and from matches.
7. Coaches must ensure that the activities they direct, or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players.
8. Coaches should, at the outset, clarify with the players (and where appropriate, parent) exactly what is expected of them and also what they are entitled to expect from their coach.
9. Coaches must co-operate fully with other specialists, e.g. other coaches, officials, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interest of the player.
10. Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport, e.g. fair play and never condone violations of the Laws of the Game, behaviour contrary to the spirit of Laws of the Game or relevant rules and regulations or the use of prohibited substances or techniques.
11. Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
12. Coaches must not use or tolerate inappropriate language.
13. Coaches, managers or players should not expose young players to alcohol or give them the opportunity to drink alcohol below the legal age.

Where a coach or manager of the Club becomes aware that any representative of the Club become involved in inappropriate behaviour, or behaviours that otherwise has, or is likely to bring the Club into disrepute they must inform the President at the earliest opportunity. These behaviours do not need to have occurred while the individual is representing the Club at the time of the incident.

Any coach or manager in breach of the Code of Conduct or bringing the club into disrepute may be removed from their position.

Continual misconduct could lead to suspension of the coach/manager from their position, and in exceptional circumstances, where the behaviour is deemed as wholly unacceptable or their behaviour has been persistent, ongoing or disruptive, the Club reserves the right that they cease to hold their position.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS

Players are the most important people in any sport. Playing for the team, and for the team to win, is the most fundamental part of the game. But not winning at any cost – Fair Play and respect for all others in the game is essentially important.

Responsibility towards the game, as a player you should –

1. Make every effort to develop their own sporting abilities, in terms of skill, technique, tactics and stamina.
2. Give maximum effort and strive for the best possible performance during a game, even if the team is in a position where the desired result has already been achieved.
3. Set a positive example for other, particularly young players and supporters.
4. Avoid all forms of gamesmanship and time wasting.
5. Always have regards to the best interests of the game.
6. Not use inappropriate language and behaviour.

Responsibility towards your own team, as a player you should –

1. Make every effort consistent with Fair Play and the Laws of the Game to help your own team win.
2. Resist any influence which might or might be seen to bring into question your commitment to the team winning.

Where a player of the Club becomes aware that any representative of the Club becomes involved in inappropriate behaviour, or behaviours that otherwise has, or is likely to bring the Club into disrepute they must inform the President at the earliest opportunity. These behaviours do not need to have occurred while the individual is representing the Club at the time of the incident.

Any player in serious breach of the Code of Conduct or bringing the club into disrepute may be refused the right to train, play or be selected for any team, for an appropriate period of time.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

Ensure that parents/spectators within our Club are always positive and encouraging towards all of the children, not just their own.

Parents/Spectators have a great influence in children's enjoyment and success in rugby. All children play rugby because they enjoy the game. It is important to remember that however good a child becomes at rugby within the Club it is important to reinforce the message to parents/spectators that positive encouragement will contribute to –

- Children enjoying rugby
- A sense of personal achievement
- Self Esteem
- Assist to improve the child's skills and techniques
-

A parents'/spectators' expectations and attitudes have a significant bearing on a child's attitude towards –

- Other players
- Officials
- Manager
- Spectator
-

Encourage parents/spectators to –

- Applaud the opposition as well as their own team
- Avoid coaching the child during the game
- Not to shout and scream
- Respect the referee's decision
- Give attention to each of the children involved in rugby and not just the most talented

Any parent/guardian in serious breach of the Code of Conduct or bringing the Club into disrepute may be excluded from the Club and its premises; and have their child refused the right to train, play or be selected for any team, for an appropriate period of time.

DISPUTES AND GRIEVANCES

In the event of any dispute arising which may harm the good name of the Club, the President must be informed as soon as possible by the coach, manager or Committee member.

If the dispute is of such a nature that action is required, the team coaches and managers have delegated authority to make a decision and carry out remedial action they deem appropriate in the circumstances following discussion with those concerned.

If the dispute cannot be resolved, then the team coaches and managers will inform the club President and the committee will start an investigation.

Initial Investigation:

Upon receiving a report, the designated safeguarding officer or a committee member will conduct an initial investigation to gather relevant information. This may involve speaking with witnesses, gathering evidence, and documenting the details of the reported incident or concern.

Discipline Panel:

If the initial investigation substantiates the reported concerns, a disciplinary panel will be convened by the club committee. The panel will consist of at least three impartial members, excluding those directly involved in the incident under investigation.

Disciplinary Proceedings:

The disciplinary panel will conduct a thorough review of the evidence and provide the accused individual with an opportunity to present their side of the story. The panel will then determine whether the individual has breached the club's code of conduct or policies.

Recommendations to Committee:

Following the disciplinary proceedings, the panel will make recommendations to the club committee regarding appropriate disciplinary action. These recommendations may include but are not limited to:

- Verbal or written warnings
- Suspension from club activities
- Termination of membership
- Referral to external authorities if necessary

Approval of Action:

The club committee will review the recommendations made by the disciplinary panel and approve appropriate disciplinary actions. The committee will ensure that any actions taken are fair, proportionate, and consistent with the club's values and policies.

Appeals Process:

Individuals subject to disciplinary action have the right to appeal the decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the club committee within a specified

timeframe. The committee will review the appeal and may convene a separate appeals panel to reconsider the decision.

Confidentiality:

All parties involved in the disciplinary process, including the accuser, accused, witnesses, and members of the disciplinary panel, must maintain strict confidentiality to protect the privacy and reputation of individuals involved.

Review and Revision:

This disciplinary policy will be reviewed regularly by the club committee to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Any necessary revisions will be made in consultation with club members and safeguarding authorities.

Conclusion:

Stewartry Rugby Club is committed to promoting a culture of respect, fairness, and accountability. This disciplinary policy is designed to uphold these values and ensure the safety and well-being of all members. Any breaches of this policy will be addressed promptly and appropriately to maintain the integrity of the club.

They must notify the President of the Club outlining the circumstances, the nature of dispute, what action was required to resolve the dispute and the reasons for the action.

If the dispute is of such a serious nature that immediate action is required which has or could require police involvement, the President must be informed immediately and may then make an immediate decision as is appropriate in the circumstances following discussion with those concerned.

DECLARATION

I have read the Child Protection Policy and Codes of Conduct attached. I agree to the Code of Conduct for Coaches/ Players/ Parents and Spectators in my role with Stewartry Rugby Club. By doing so I will place child protection at the forefront of the role I carry out:

SIGNED: _____

NAME: _____

DATE: _____