



Tottonians Rugby Football Club

Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy

Tottonians RFC acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children & vulnerable adults involved in the club from harm.

Tottonians RFC confirms it adheres to the RFU's Safeguarding Policy & procedures, recommended practices & guidelines & endorses & adopts the statements contained in these documents. These can be found at:

Safeguarding Children (<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding/>)

For the definitions under 'Child Protection', a child is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any rugby union activity. However, where or if a 17-year-old male player is playing in the adult game it is essential that every reasonable precaution is taken to ensure his safety & wellbeing under Regulation 15 & 21. Approval for a male to play adult rugby is required under Regulation 15 by completing the **Playing Adult Rugby – Player Approval Form**.

To achieve club approval for players to play into the adult game; All members of the Adult playing section will be expected complete the GMS online Safeguarding e-learning & complete a DBS check.

All players under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a parent or guardian. If a parent/guardian cannot be present it is their responsibility to name an appropriate adult to act on their behalf. Parents must inform relevant Team Managers of whom the named adult is for that match or training session.

The Key principles of the RFU Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy are that:

- The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult (as appropriate) is paramount.
- All participants regardless of age, gender, ability or disability, race, faith, size, language or sexual identity have the right to protection against harm.
- All allegations, suspicions of harm & concerns will be taken seriously & responded to swiftly, fairly & appropriately.
- Everyone working in partnership with other organisations, statutory agencies, parents, carers, children & young people is essential for their welfare.
- Children have a right to expect support & personal & social development delivered by an appropriately recruited, vetted person & managed in relation to their participation in rugby union, whether playing, volunteering or officiating in the community or professional areas of the sport.

- Tottonians RFC recognises that all children have the right to participate in sport in a safe, positive & enjoyable environment whilst at the same time being protected from abuse, neglect, harm & poor practice. Tottonians RFC recognises that this is the responsibility of everyone involved, in whatever capacity at the club.
- Tottonians RFC will implement & comply with the RFU Code of Conduct & the Codes of Conduct for Coaches, Spectators & Officials as appropriate.
- Tottonians RFC will ensure its spectators, parents, members & officials are all aware of & have accepted the club guidance on the use of photographic images, social media & that relevant permissions have been sought to share images. We will adhere to the Best Practice guidelines & adopt the RFU Photographic Guidance Statement. The recommendations are available to view on the RFU website @ www.rfu.com & paper copies including the signed Tottonians RFC Photographic Policy for 2024-25 is kept in the policy folder in the Clubhouse & held by the Safeguarding Officer.
- Tottonians RFC will endeavour to comply with the Guidance for Websites as set out on the RFU website
- The Club Safeguarding Officer is **Laura Keily**. If you witness or are aware of an incident where the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult has been put at risk you must in the first instance inform the Club Safeguarding Officer. They will inform the CB Safeguarding Manager & the RFU Safeguarding Executive. If an incident involves the Club Safeguarding Officer you should inform the Junior Club Chairman, **Mark Parsons** & either the CB Safeguarding Manager or the RFU Safeguarding Executive.
- All members of Tottonians RFC who carry out Regulated Activity or have contact with children or a management responsibility for those working with children will be subject to undertake an RFU Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) disclosure & must also be ISA-registered in accordance with the RFU ISA-registration policy. They will also be required to complete the **RFU Volunteer Application Form**. When recruiting employees or volunteers to the Tottonians RFC workforce all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure only suitable persons are recruited. Safer recruitment procedures will ensure to reduce the risk of abuse to children.
- Tottonians RFC will ensure all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials comply with the Best Practice as issued by the RFU. In summary, the following are **NOT** acceptable & will be treated seriously by the club & may result in disciplinary action being taken by the club, CB or the RFU
 - Working alone with a child, children or vulnerable adults
 - Consuming alcohol whilst responsible for children or vulnerable adults
 - Provide alcohol to children or allowing its supply
 - Smoking in the presence of children
 - Humiliating children or vulnerable adults
 - Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult
 - Participating in or allowing contact or physical games with children or vulnerable adults
 - Having an intimate or sexual relationship with any child or vulnerable adult developed as a result of being in a position of trust
 - Making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material

- Tottonians RFC manages the changing facilities & arranges them to be supervised by two adults (RFU DBS checked) of the appropriate gender for the players using the facilities. Tottonians RFC ensures coaches, parents, officials & spectators are aware that adults must not change at the same time, or use the same changing facilities as the children or vulnerable adults.
- Tottonians RFC will ensure that all those working in rugby at, or for Tottonians RFC are provided support, through education & training considered appropriate to their position & role.
- Any events held on Tottonians RFC premises must comply with this Policy & if appropriate a Safeguarding Plan should be discussed & circulated to those affected. Any tours undertaken by Tottonians RFC albeit, overseas or domestic must comply with the relevant RFU Regulations & Guidelines relating to tours.
- Tottonians RFC has adopted the RFU's Anti-Bullying policy. This can be viewed on the RFU website at www.rfu.com also paper copies held in the policy folder in the Clubhouse & by the Safeguarding Officer.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The welfare of children at Tottonians RFC will only be protected properly if guidance is implemented effectively.

Tottonians RFC has devised these written policies which cover its own particular circumstances & meet its particular needs & will ensure they are followed in full.

Policies are widely publicised, displayed on Tottonians RFC website, the policy document folder held in the clubhouse & on the Safeguarding notice board. Also copies to be held in a Safeguarding folder with the Safeguarding Officer **Laura Keily** available to view at any time. Requests for copies will be fulfilled by the Safeguarding Officer either by hard copy or email.

Tottonians RFC have clear written procedures that set out how its policies are implemented. Procedures do not have to be publicised in the way that policies are, however the Committee of Tottonians RFC ensures individual responsibilities are clearly defined & people know precisely what is expected of them to carry out those duties/responsibilities.

A club needs to make it easy for children, their parents or any individual to raise a child protection concern. Tottonians RFC has a designated individual with child protection responsibility, **Laura Keily**, & any concerns will be raised with her. Contact details are on the club website & on display in the clubhouse & notice board.

Signed.....
Chairman

Signed.....
Chief Safeguarding Officer



Tottonians Rugby Football Club

Changing Room Policy

This policy is in place to Safeguard Tottonians RFC's young persons & vulnerable adults using the changing facilities. It is also in place to protect Coaches, Team Managers & Volunteers in relation to safeguarding, whilst taking place in rugby activities.

At no time should a child or children be left unsupervised in the changing rooms. When children occupy a changing room the **TWO PERSON RULE MUST** be adopted at all times i.e. two responsible adults must be present, both of whom must hold a valid RFU DBS certificate. The ladies & girls team changing rooms are to be those located at the end of the corridor furthest from the main entrance.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES, regardless of a current RFU DBS, can coaches, managers or volunteers use the showers or changing facilities whilst players are still in the changing room. Where possible a separate room will be allocated, e.g. referees' room.

Parents or carers needing to access an **EMPTY** changing room may only do so when accompanied by a vetted person with a current DBS Certificate.

Where the club has arranged allocated staff to clean the changing rooms this will be carried out on days where the Mini/Junior teams are not present. If the children were to be present, staff will be supervised at all times by at least two vetted persons with a current RFU DBS Certificate.

Junior team members using the changing rooms are **NOT** permitted to have a mobile phone or other electronic device with them. Mobile phones & other devices which hold personal information should be handed to parents or guardians prior to entering the changing rooms. Players are responsible for handing in their own devices before changing.

NO UNAUTHORISED ADULTS ARE ALLOWED TO BE IN THE PLAYERS CORRIDOR, CHANGING ROOMS OR SHOWERS AT ANY TIME.

AUTHORISED ADULTS WILL BE ISSUED WITH A PHOTOGRAPHIC ID BADGE.



Tottonians Rugby Football Club

Photographic & Video Recording Policy

This policy applies to all mini/junior age groups.

Tottonians RFC have adopted the RFU Best Practice Guidelines for photographic & recorded images, including those taken on mobile phones.

As part of our commitment to ensure the safety of all children we will not permit photographs or recordings to be taken without the consent of the parent/guardian of the child. Implicit in our commitment to provide a safe & enjoyable environment for all children & ensure that all photographs or recordings represent participants appropriately & with respect.

Tottonians RFC will ensure parents/guardians have granted permission for the taking & publication of photographs & recordings either via the permissions on GMS or the Membership Application form. Coaches & club officials will be informed of any child where permissions are denied.

Parents/guardians will ensure children are appropriately dressed for the activities taking place.

Photographs & recordings should be focused on the activity & not on an individual child. Where an individual has received success in the game or achieved significant team selection for example, permission must be gained from the parent/guardian & also the child to use the photograph/recording & relevant details.

Personal details which may make a child vulnerable i.e. address, contact details or interests must never be revealed.

Tottonians RFC will use its best endeavours to ensure photographs or recordings are used solely for the purpose they were intended, which is the promotion & celebration of rugby activities & may be used on official club press releases or various publications within the club to include: within a club newsletter, club website or official social media outlets.

Where possible & to reflect the RFU Equity Policy, photographs or recordings should represent the diverse range of children participating in rugby.

If at any time a parent/guardian wishes their child's photograph/recording to be removed the club Safeguarding Officer should be informed.

If you or anyone you know becomes aware that images are being used inappropriately you should inform the club Safeguarding Officer or any Club Official.

Use of video, film or photography at matches & training sessions!

Along with the adherence to our Photography Policy, it is a requirement that any person wishing to engage in photography, filming or videoing at any match, training session or event connected with Tottonians RFC gain permission before the event from the Safeguarding Officer, Head Coach & parents of both teams.



Tottonians Rugby Football Club

Anti-Bullying Policy

Tottonians RFC aim to create a safe & secure learning environment where individuals treat each other with respect & understanding, creating a positive ethos within the club based on mutual respect & trust. Bullying will not be tolerated at any level within the club. Bullying will be taken seriously, responded to quickly & procedures followed to deal with the situation. The club will recognise what bullying is & provide effective measures to address any issues. It is the responsibility of every adult within rugby union to ensure all young people can enjoy the sport in a safe enjoyable environment.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the deliberate use of aggression or hurtful behaviour with the intent of hurting another & causing the victim to feel distressed.

A child may indicate signs of behaviour that he/she is being bullied. Children have described bullying as;

- Being called names
- Being teased
- Being hit, pushed, pulled, punched or kicked
- Having their bag, phone or other possessions taken
- Receiving abusive text messages either via mobile or social media
- Being forced to hand over money
- Being forced to do things they don't want to do
- Being ignored or left out
- Being victimised or attacked because of religion, disability, gender, sexuality, appearance, ethnic or racial origin

Bullying can be Emotional, Physical, Racist, Homophobic, verbal & Sexual;

Emotional - being unfriendly & tormenting (hiding kit, threatening gestures sending threatening text/social media messages)

Physical - pushing, kicking, punching, hitting or any other form of violence

Racist- racial taunts, gestures, graffiti

Homophobic- focusing on the issue of sexuality

Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Sexual- unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Establishing a positive Club Ethos;

The most important aspect of our strategy to combat bullying is to create a positive & inclusive club ethos. This begins with how adults at Tottonians RFC treat each other, parents & players: with respect & understanding even in difficult situations.

Concerns expressed by parents are always listened to carefully & taken seriously.

Tottonians RFC promotes & follows the RFUs Codes of Conduct for players, parents, spectators & Match Officials & upholds the RFU Core Values:

(<http://www.englandrugby.com/news/rugby-core-values-1288344>)

Everyone involved in rugby in England, whether as a player, coach referee, team manager, parent or spectator is expected to uphold the Core Values of our sport:

Teamwork – Respect – Enjoyment – Discipline – Sportsmanship

- Play to win – but not at all cost
- Win with dignity, lose with grace
- Observe the laws & regulations of the game
- Respect opponents, referees & all involved
- Reject cheating, racism, violence & drugs
- Value volunteers & paid officials alike
- Enjoy the game

We aim to be constantly promoting & reinforcing positive behaviour developing all children's self-esteem through celebration of achievement. In this way & by aiming to 'include' everyone in the club community, it is much less likely either those children will become a focus for bullying, or that others may resort to bullying.

We encourage children, parents & volunteers to report any suspected instances of bullying to one of the coaching staff or the club Safeguarding Officer. Children in particular need to be assured not to keep their worries to themselves, but to tell a parent and/or coach. The whole club community needs to be assured that all instances are taken very seriously & investigated thoroughly.

It is essential that the first adult involved in the situation reassures the victim & informs the club Safeguarding Officer.

Parents of every child involved should be informed at the earliest opportunity, so that their support can be encouraged. Parents are encouraged to:

- listen carefully to their child, reassuring them action will be taken
- stay calm whatever the concerns
- discuss issues with the club at the earliest opportunity & review actions regularly
- give the club time to address the issue

In the case of a looked after child it is essential that their Social Worker be involved at the earliest opportunity.

Continuation of Bullying

In the event that any child involved continues to bully others, then it will be necessary to initiate further action. Further parental involvement would be essential. If all of these processes were tried & failed, then this could ultimately lead to permanent exclusion from the club.

It is essential that all volunteers, committee members, coaches, parents & children are aware of this policy.

When this policy is revised all those involved with children should be involved. New coaches & volunteers must be aware of the policy.



Tottonians Rugby Football Club

Communication & Social Media Policy

This policy is designed to provide practical advice to members in respect of using phone/mobile communication & social media positively & effectively. Tottonians RFC encourage the responsible use of social media. Social media is defined as Websites & applications that enable users to create & share content or to participate in social networking.

Communication with Players (phone/email)

There are many ways for people to communicate & in addition to land-lines, there are now mobile phones for voice & text. Online communication can be email, instant messaging, chat rooms & social networking sites.

Club officials & coaches should not communicate with individual children by phone, text or indeed online at any time.

All contact with Under 18's is to be via the parent with the exception of Colts where communication is via Snapchat & is a player only group.

When communication by phone is needed, Club Officials & Coaches should speak to the parent of a child. Club Officials or Coaches can speak to individual children on mobile phones provided the child is old enough to understand & they have prior permission from the child's parent.

Emails must be sent to the parent/guardian of players & the Bcc option to be used where possible.

If sending emails regarding club-related information (such as training/match details) the club should use email groups with addresses given by parents. Such emails should come from designated individuals i.e. coaches: children & their parents should know who these designated individuals are. Individuals & parents/guardians must be removed from the lists if they wish to leave.

Websites & Social Media

Social media has become increasingly popular in today's society as it a flexible way to communicate with children given their wide accessibility. It can be greatly beneficial in communicating information about the club and/or specific age groups.

In the same way that Tottonians RFC has responsibility for the physical safety of junior members whilst on our premises it will also ensure there is nothing on its website which could harm a child either directly or indirectly. Tottonians RFC is responsible for the content of its own website.

This policy is applicable club wide & includes all social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat & Whatsapp & to include any site that provides community or group communication which can be accessed from a desktop, laptop or mobile device.

Social media covers a wide range of platforms including internet forums & blogs, social blogs, mobile applications, podcasts & pictures & video.

Groups should be organised so that they are **adult/coach/parent** only or **child/player** only. Tottonians RFC's preferred method of contact between Coaches & parents/players is private Whatsapp or email. Whatsapp is to be headed by a DBS cleared adult & or the Safeguarding Officer & parents/guardians are to be the main contact, Coaches must ensure that players are not present on the group & that the group is set to **PRIVATE** or **CLOSED** (not open to the public or invite only)

Tottonians RFC will adhere to RFU recommendations regarding photo & video images & will obtain written consent from the appropriate responsible persons before using any images of children or vulnerable adults on the website.

If a child is to be named on the Club site, do not include an image (individual or group). If a child features in an image on the site, don't use the child's first or last names either in text or in the image file name.

Only use images of children in suitable dress as to minimise the risk of the image being adapted inappropriately.

Anything you write has the potential to enter the public domain & we would request that all social media content relating to Tottonians RFC is of a positive nature. We would request that you do not use negative comments regarding, players, parents, coaches, team managers, referees, opposing teams etc.

If a negative comment is made, we please ask you not to comment on it in any way or escalate an issue further.

Think carefully before making comments that may lead to unintended consequences.

The club will not involve itself or pass comment on any social media content, messages or events that occur outside of the club unless they have direct impact on peers & other players.



Tottonians Rugby Football Club

Tour Policy

The club promotes & encourages individual age groups to arrange tours, provided all the necessary procedures & policies are followed. This is considered a way to promote bonding & friendships with other groups & aides in the personal coaching & playing development of players.

For the purposes of this policy a tour is defined as any Tottonians RFC age group that travels to a game, tournament or any other visit that includes an overnight stay. This policy applies to all mini/junior groups & it will also apply to all tours in the senior section where players under the age of 18 are playing.

All tours are to be managed by the age group; the age group must appoint a Tour Manager who is accountable for the tour. The Tour Manager should notify the club Mini/Junior Chairperson & Safeguarding Officer as soon as they begin the planning process.

Tours must be approved by the club & HRFU **no later than 6 weeks prior to departure.**

Players of the touring party must be registered with the club & the RFU.

Attention is drawn to the requirement that all tours are to be signed off on the appropriate form by the club & Hampshire RFU. In addition, any international tour also requires the explicit consent & approval of the RFU.

It is the responsibility of the Tour Manager to ensure all safeguarding requirements are fully met prior to & during the tour. Further details can be found on the RFU & Hampshire RFU websites

More information can be found on www.englandrugby.com (Touring with Children & vulnerable adults)

Hampshire RFU forms can be found at: www.hampshirerugby.co.uk/safeguarding/tours

Club approval, including that of the Safeguarding Officer & Youth Chair will only be given subject to the age groups disciplinary record & confirmation from the Tour Manager that all necessary procedures will be undertaken & all relevant club, RFU & Hampshire policies, procedures & guides followed.



Tottonians Rugby Football Club

Equity Policy

Tottonians RFC will follow & adhere to any Equity Policy issued by the RFU & will seek advice from the RFU Equity Manager where appropriate to ensure the correct procedures are implemented when necessary.

Tottonians RFC aims to ensure that all people irrespective of their **age, gender, ability, race, religion, ethnic origin, creed, colour, nationality, social status or sexual orientation**, have a genuine & equal opportunity to participate in Rugby Union at all levels & within all roles.

This aim includes all players, team managers, coaches, volunteers, referees, officials & spectators.

In its relationships with members & volunteers & in its provision of services Tottonians RFC aims not to disadvantage any individual by imposing any conditions or requirements which can't be justified.

The club will make available support in certain cases for funding of players. These cases will be discussed on an individual basis with the players parent/guardian where they may be asked for proof of income & subsequent benefits.

All those who represent the club have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour & promote equality of opportunity.

The club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy the sport of rugby in an environment free from threat of intimidation, harassment & abuse.

Ensuring we adhere to this policy & to comply within the RFU guidelines Tottonians RFC reserves the right to discipline any of its members who practice any form of discrimination on the grounds of the **Protected Characteristics**, listed above.



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

2024 - 2025

