

Devizes Rugby Football Club

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Devizes Rugby Football Club acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children involved from harm.

Devizes RFC confirms that it adheres to the Rugby Football Union's Safeguarding Policy and the procedures, practices and guidelines and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document and any successor policy.

A child is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any rugby union activity - where a 17 year old male or female player is playing in the adult game it is essential that every reasonable precaution is taken to ensure his safety and wellbeing are protected.

The Key Principles of the RFU Safeguarding Policy are that:

The welfare of the child is, and must always be, paramount to any other considerations.

All participants regardless of age, gender, ability or disability, race, faith, culture, size, shape, language or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse or harm.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.

Working in partnership with other organisations, statutory agencies, parents, carers, children and young people is essential for the welfare of children.

Children have a right to expect support, and personal and social development delivered by an appropriately recruited, vetted and managed in relation to their participation in rugby union, whether they are playing, volunteering or officiating in the community or professional areas of the sport.

Devizes RFC recognises that all children have the right to participate in sport in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment whilst at the same time being protected from abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice. Devizes RFC recognises that this is the responsibility of everyone involved, in whatever capacity, at the club.

Devizes RFC will implement and comply with the RFU Code of Conduct and the Codes of Conduct for Coaches, Spectators and Officials as appropriate.

The Club Safeguarding Officer is James O'Sullivan and Safeguarding Deputies are Chris Dyer, Will Owen and Laura Potter – contact details for the Safeguarding Team are displayed at the club, on the club website and in the club handbook.

If you witness or are aware of an incident where the welfare of a child has been put at risk you must, in the first instance, inform the Club Safeguarding Officer or their deputies. They will then inform the CB Safeguarding Manager and the RFU Safeguarding Team. If an incident involves the Club Safeguarding Officer you should inform the Junior Chairman and either the CB Safeguarding Manager or the RFU Safeguarding Team.

Devizes RFC will ensure that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials will comply with the Best Practice Guidance as issued by the RFU. In summary, the following are NOT acceptable and will be treated seriously by the club and may result in disciplinary action being taken by the club, the CB or the RFU:

- Physical abuse – Physical assault, physical punishments or forcing a child to play or train in a situation which is beyond their physical capacity and risks injury to them.

- Sexual abuse - Having an intimate or sexual relationship with any child developed as a result of being in a 'position of trust. This also includes making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material.
- Emotional abuse –subjecting a child to constant criticism or making them the butt of sarcasm or bullying, consistently not recognising their efforts or pressuring them to perform to unrealistically high standards.
- Neglect – Failing to provide a safe training / playing environment, unnecessary exposure to severe weather conditions, failing to provide appropriate clothing and equipment for the conditions, failing to address injuries.
- Bullying – By other children, parents of coaches – including over-focus on “winning at all costs”. This can take place via cyber channels as well as within the confines of the Club.
- Working alone with a child.
- Consuming alcohol whilst responsible for children.
- Providing alcohol to children or allowing its supply.
- Smoking in the presence of children while responsible for them.
- Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child.
- Participating in, or allowing, contact or physical games with children.
- Inappropriate use of social media groups set up for club business.
- Distributing inappropriate images of children

All members of Devizes RFC who work with children in Regulated Activity must undertake an RFU Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in accordance with RFU Regulation 21. _ see DRFC Volunteering Policy.

Devizes RFC will ensure that its coaches and team managers will receive the support and training considered appropriate to their position and role. The RFU “Managing Challenging Behaviour” Policy has been adopted and circulated amongst the club workforce both, voluntary and paid and all coaches and team managers will attend a “Play it Safe” safeguarding training course as part of their professional development.

Devizes RFC recognizes that social media channels are useful options for coaches and team managers to manage the administration of age group training and fixtures. But, social media channels set up for club purposes should comply with the DRFC Social Media Policy.

Devizes RFC manages the changing facilities and arranges for them to be supervised by two DBS checked adults of the appropriate gender for the players using the facilities. Devizes RFC ensures that all its coaches, parents, officials and spectators are aware that adults must not change at the same time, using the same facilities as children.

Any events involving children held on Devizes RFC premises or equivalent club activities elsewhere must comply with this Policy in full and if appropriate a Safeguarding Plan should be discussed and circulated to those affected. Any tours, overseas or domestic, undertaken by Devizes RFC must comply with the relevant RFU Regulations and Guidance relating to tours – See “Guidance for junior tours”

[APPROVED & ADOPTED BY DEVIZES RFC]

RECRUITMENT POLICY

Volunteers

Volunteers by definition offer to do something. The key to recruiting volunteers must therefore be to make them want to be involved with Devizes Rugby Football Club, by helping to run a successful happy Club:

Recruitment of Volunteers will come mainly from a pool of people who are attached to the game of rugby and have an interest in its growth and development, usually players, ex-players, their friends, parents, other relations and supporters.

It is incumbent on the established volunteers to attract more assistance.

Devizes Rugby club must first take stock and decide:

- Which areas of our club's infrastructure need more support.
- People with special expertise could do what jobs better.

Devizes Rugby Club must recognise that people like to help and that people like to be valued.

By gently approaching both members and supporters with requests for assistance within their particular area of expertise and within their capabilities we can encourage volunteers to come forward. By showing them that they are valued we can perhaps enlist a committed volunteer.

There is an untapped reservoir of help among people who do not ensure that every opportunity is taken to advertise our existence not just as a Rugby Club but as a focal point of a community (our current membership role is 4% of the Devizes Town population), an asset to which everyone who wishes can belong and be made welcome.

Ideally it should be the responsibility of any volunteer relinquishing a position in the Club to identify and recruit a replacement. A period of joint responsibility would assist a smooth change over.

Adult Players

Player recruitment will evolve down several pathways: -

- Returning players from higher levels
- Retention of mini/juniors after schooling
- Attraction of school players after leaving school
- Recruiting players new to the district
- Attracting university students
- Personal recruitment by established members within their work and leisure environments

The main feature is that Devizes Rugby Club has a club that players want to play for. An amateur club in every respect with a policy of providing good facilities and playing to the highest possible standard.

In order to get this across to as wide an audience as possible Devizes Rugby Club need to advertise not only that we exist but we welcome new players of all abilities.

Junior Players

Player recruitment (boys and girls) will evolve down several pathways: -

- Encouraging current players and parents to recommend Devizes RFC to others as a family-focused centre of excellence for junior rugby.
- Attraction of school players through coaching and refereeing within schools, our Community Program run in 17 local schools, and coaching sessions
- Recruiting players new to the Town

- Personal recruitment by established members within their own schools
- Personal recruitment by established members parents within their friendship groups
- POS advertising on Club premises
- Jointly funded posters and fliers supplied by Wiltshire County Council and sited at local leisure facilities

Every child or young person, who plays or participates in rugby union at Devizes Rugby Club, should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse.

In order to get this across to as wide an audience as possible Devizes Rugby Club need to advertise not only that we exist but we welcome new players of all abilities.

It is not club policy to "poach" junior age group players from other clubs.

Coach Development Plan

The aim of the club is to assist all those involved with the Training and Development of players at any level by encouraging them to participate, funded by the Club, in RFU Coaching courses with the objective of obtaining as high a coaching qualification as they wish to achieve.

Volunteers to coach in junior rugby age groups will need to meet particular requirements in respect of child safety and safeguarding before they are fully accepted onto the Devizes coaching team and must only coach under the supervision of a suitably qualified existing coach until the following have taken place:

- A formal introduction session with a junior club official
- An RFU Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as per RFU Regulation 21.
- Completion of an RFU "Rugby Ready" course.
- (Optional at club's discretion) A reference from a previous club where they held coaching responsibilities.

Players will be encouraged to consider extending their career by becoming involved in coaching.

Referee Development Plan

Devizes Rugby Club will encourage the Club referees and any interested supporter to participate in the RFU qualification programme.

Devizes Rugby Club will also endeavour to assist players wishing to take up refereeing as an extension of their rugby career.

DRFC SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Devizes RFC recognizes that social media channels are useful options for coaches and team managers to manage the administration of age group training and fixtures. But, social media channels associated with children also cover safeguarding risk and those set up for club purposes must be run on the principles set out in the [RFU SafeGuarding toolkit – section 9](#)

The risks posed by social media are well-established: 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, the difficulty in knowing truly who you are communicating with and the speed of proliferation of rumours and accusations of improper conduct.

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.

Club social media facilities

The club website - <http://devizesrfc.rfu.club/> - provides a central news and information point for all sections of the club and we also operate a Twitter account *#devizesrfc*.

The club uses the RFU GMS system for storing and managing players' and other club members personal data. Coaches / team managers can use GMS to access records of the players that they coach so there should be no need for separate, individual databases of player personal information.

All of the above are appropriately access-controlled and moderated.

Social media groups

Social media groups run for club or age group administration should be established with:

- A clear, club rugby-connected purpose.
- Controlled access to membership for adults only – e.g. coaches and parents, coaches only.
- For groups for parents, open access to all parents within the age group – including both parents involved in child custody arrangements – but with an alternative communication for those who want to opt out.
- A clearly identifiable administrator / monitor with control of access rights to the group who is also an age group team manager, coach or parent.
- All group members being easily visible to all other members.

Good uses of social media groups are:

- Administration of training and fixtures
- Planning and review coaching sessions
- Planning tours and social events
- Sharing pictures of the group in action – see "Images" below.

Social media groups should not be used as a forum for:

- Exchanging personal data.
- Criticism of officials
- Criticism of individual players.
- Discussion of children's lives outside of rugby.
- Sharing of inappropriate images or non-rugby images of children.

All group users need to remember that comments they make are on the record and they should conduct themselves in the spirit of rugby and be as circumspect in expressing their opinion as they would be when writing a letter or email.

Communication between coaches and players

It is club policy that all communication between coaches, team managers and other club officials (all referred to here as "coaches") and players should be through their parents or with parents copied in.

When communicating by phone, 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 coach 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 and /or social media groups set up as above. 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 should not communicate with children through social networking sites such as Facebook. Coaches should not be "friends" with the children they coach.

It is impossible to address every issue or cover every scenario a 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.

Coaches are not required to monitor players' social media activity but if they are made aware of online bullying involving players from their age group they should treat this as a reportable safeguarding issue.

DRFC CLUB PHOTOGRAPHIC POLICY

Devizes RFC and 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 might not be acceptable or where distributing photographic images could put the child at risk. 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.

Taking photographs

While spectator photography at Devizes RFC fixtures and training is permitted, a photographer may legitimately be asked to cease taking pictures if:

- Their photography is proving disruptive to the purpose of the game / session
- They are obstructing or distracting players or match officials
- They put themselves in danger by stepping beyond safety barriers.

Photographs of children

A "child" is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any rugby union activity at Devizes RFC or as a Devizes RFC club member.

Again, parents and families are encouraged to take photographs of their children playing rugby at Devizes RFC. In addition to the above general rules it is club policy that:

Parental consent for photographs to be taken whilst a child is either at the club or at away fixtures is obtained through junior membership application and renewed through annual payment of membership subscription.

A parent has a right to withdraw this consent by informing the age group team manager or lead coach- in which case the child should not be photographed until permission has been re-granted.

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.

if images are distributed outside of the club or to media or social media:

- Personal information which can lead to a child being identified should never be published alongside a photograph. 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.
- Photographs should ideally be "rugby action" or team photos, not of one individual.

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.

Some junior rugby festivals require separate parental consent for children participating to be photographed. The team manager / lead coach should liaise with parents to let them know and on the administration involved and parents should be aware that they may be asked to register their intention to take photographs.

Professional Photographers & Local Media

Where the club commissions professional photographers or invites the press to cover an activity, the club will:

- Ensure that the photographer has been appropriately vetted prior to the event.

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Inform them of the club's commitment to safeguarding children. Establish who will hold the recorded images and what they intend to do with them.
- Issue the professional photographer with identification, which must be worn at all times.