

## LBRFC Child Protection Policy

Everyone working in Rugby Union has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of young people under the age of 18 playing rugby and preventing abuse of players. The welfare of youth players is paramount and all players or individuals under 18, whatever their age, culture, disability, religious belief, sex or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse. All adult members, rugby coaches and other volunteers dealing with youth rugby at Leighton Buzzard Rugby Football Club, LBRFC ("the Club") or anyone who may have contact with youth members of the Club can be an important link in identifying cases where a youth player may need protection. The Club has an obligation to ensure that it provides youth players with the highest possible standard of care when they are involved in Club activities.

In this policy Youth refers to all players or individuals below the age of 18. Youth teams mean all teams under 18. The policy refers to male and female players, teams and individuals equally.

The Club recognises it has a responsibility:

- To safeguard and promote the interests and well being of youth players in rugby.
- To take all reasonable practical steps to protect youth players from harm, discrimination, or degrading treatment.
- To respect the rights, wishes and feelings of youth players. As a result, the Club is committed to a policy of child protection procedures that will ensure viable safeguards to youth players, coaches, volunteers and Club members by establishing proper recruitment, provision of support, and appropriate training.

Additionally, all new youth rugby coaches and other youth rugby volunteers at the Club will complete a registration form and submit to vetting by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The Club's Child Protection Policy and the Club's Code of Conduct for youth rugby coaches and other youth rugby volunteers (together with any other codes or policies introduced by the Club from time to time relating to its youth players) will be available for inspection.

The codes and policies may be amended from time to time by the Club. All youth rugby coaches and other youth rugby volunteers involved at the Club are required to familiarise themselves with the Club's Child Protection Policy and abide by it. Allegations of a breach of the Club's Child Protection Policy will be investigated in accordance with RFU disciplinary procedures.

The details of the Club's Child Protection Policy are:

- The Club recognises the value of working closely in partnership with youth coaches, parents, professionals and volunteers to protect its youth players from harm and discrimination.
  
- The Club acknowledges that abuse does take place in sport and that raising awareness and understanding of the main forms of abuse and establishing communication and reporting procedures if abuse is suspected within the Club will further safeguard youth players, youth rugby coaches, youth rugby volunteers and all others working within the game of rugby.
  
- A Welfare Officer has been appointed to act as the first point of contact for concerns about the welfare of youth players within the Club. The welfare officer is a member of the Club's Mini and Junior Section Management Committee.
  
- The Club accepts that all officers and committee members have a responsibility in respect of child protection and is prepared to respond to any indication of poor practice or abuse in line with RFU policy and to put in place structures and systems to ensure that this is followed in practice.
  
- The Club has adopted a Code of Conduct for youth rugby coaches and other youth rugby volunteers and will implement and enforce its terms. The Club may introduce, from time to time, other codes or policies relating to its youth players. All codes and policies will be posted on the Club's website and may be subject to amendment.
  
- All youth rugby coaches and other youth rugby volunteers at the Club are required to complete a Disclosure and barring services form.

- A disciplinary panel, made up of 3 Club members in line with RFU criteria and with powers laid down by the RFU, will be convened as and when required to conduct a disciplinary hearing in connection with child protection matters.

- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

- All youth rugby coaches and first aid volunteers have a duty of care to the children taking part in activities and must ensure that their physical well-being is not at risk and take appropriate action should this be the case.

- The Club acknowledges that appropriate training will enable individuals within the Club to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of poor practice or concerns of possible abuse. All the Club's coaches working with youth players will be expected to complete an appropriate RFU coaching course as well as the RFU's Play it safe, safeguarding course. Other youth rugby volunteers will be encouraged to seek appropriate training to assist them in the conduct of their role at the Club.

- The Club will encourage youth rugby coaches and youth rugby volunteers to stay up-to-date with rugby, coaching, and child protection issues.

- The Club will keep written records of parental consent and accidents.

- The Club will promote fair play and playing within the spirit of the Laws of the Game and the letter of the Continuum.

Claire Long

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