



Ryde Saints Football Club in Conjunction with Hampshire Football Association

Safeguarding Children Policy, Welfare Officer Role and Responsibilities

Date Reviewed: September 2023

Date of Next Review: September 2025



Part 1: Hampshire FA's Safeguarding Children Policy

Ryde Saints Football Club acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care. We are committed to working to provide a safe environment for all members and equally committed to fully supporting the Hampshire FA's Safeguarding Children Policy, which is detailed below. Ryde Saints accept that the key principles apply to everyone involved at the club; from paid staff through to volunteers, from players and coaches through to supporters, and including those who assist on case-by-case matters.

Every child or young person who plays or participates in football should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved at Ryde Saints and beyond, thus every club is required to endorse and adhere to The Hampshire Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy.

The Hampshire Football Association recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children and young people who play or participate in football by protecting them from abuse and harm. The Hampshire Football Association is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children and young people to participate in the sport to the best of their abilities for as long as they choose to do so.

The Safeguarding Children Policy is supported by The Hampshire Football Association's Respect programme to address verbal abuse and bullying of youngsters by parents and coaches on the sidelines.

The Hampshire Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy key principles, which are fully supported by Ryde Saints are that:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration;
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their

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age, gender, disability, culture, language, race, faith, belief or sexual orientation;

- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately; and
- Working in partnership with other organisations, children, young people, their parents and carers is essential.

The Hampshire Football Association is committed to working in partnership with the Police, Children's Services Departments, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in accordance with their procedures. This is essential to enable these organisations to carry out their statutory duties to investigate concerns and protect all children and young people.

The Hampshire Football Association's Safeguarding Children Policy is in response to government legislation and guidance, developed to safeguard the welfare and development of children and young people.

Clubs and Leagues with youth teams must appoint a Welfare Officer in line with The Hampshire Football Association affiliation requirements. A Club's Welfare Officer must sit on the management committee of that Club.

All League and Club Welfare Officers are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct for volunteer Welfare Officers.



Part 2: Volunteer Welfare Officers Role Profile and Code of Conduct

The role of the Welfare Officer is to:

1. Be clear about the Club's/League's responsibilities when running activities for children and young people
2. Help those actively involved with children and young people understand what their duty of care means on a day to day basis.
3. Act as a role model to others in accordance with the roles and responsibilities of their position, in line with The Hampshire Football Association Rules and Regulations, the Respect codes of conduct for officials and the laws of the game.
4. **Play a proactive role in increasing awareness of the FA's 'Respect' Policy, poor practices, and abuse amongst club members.**
5. **To be the first point of contact for all club members regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person, to be the liaison with the Hampshire FA Welfare Officer and familiar with the process of referring concerns.**
6. If the issue is one of poor practice the Club Welfare Officer may either deal with the matter themselves or seek advice from the CFA Welfare Officer. If however the concern is more serious or refer to possible child abuse, they should contact the CFA Welfare Officer first, then immediately contact the Police or Children's Social Care.
7. If the Welfare Officer becomes aware of an urgent concern where a child needs immediate medical treatment, they should take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. All instances where this occurred should be shared with the Ryde Saints Chairman, Secretary and Club Welfare Officer (if not already aware) who will in turn will inform the CFA Welfare Officer.

In fulfilling the role at Ryde Saints, they accept that within the role of Welfare Officer they will:

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- Be child-centred' at all times and promote a fun safe environment for children and young people.
- Follow all of The Hampshire Football Association policies and in particular procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns including discrimination.
- Act appropriately in all situations brought to their attention.
- Champion Best Practice within their Club/League.
- Communicate and positively engage with the CFA WO on all poor practice/ safeguarding matters brought to the attention of CFA /The Association.
- Attend meetings as reasonably required by the Club Committee, Youth League and CFA.
- Manage and deal with poor practice issues in an appropriate and timely manner.
- Ensure appropriate levels of confidentiality and data security are maintained at all times.
- Implement and manage a responsible recruitment process in line with The Association's policy and procedures.
- Attend continued personal development (CPD) opportunities as offered by their CFA and show a commitment to keeping their training up to date.
- **Ensure that all persons requiring DBS or CRB checks have completed these processes and that these checks are in date.**

If they do not follow the above code any/all of the following actions may be undertaken by their Club, League, County FA or The Association (This is not an exhaustive list):

- Required to meet with the Club/League Committee, YLWO or CFA WO.
- Required to follow an action plan monitored by the YLWO/CFA WO.
- Required to complete an FA education course.
- Imposing a fine or suspension.
- Required to leave the Club/League they represent.
- Removed from role by the Club/League/County FA/The Association.
- On appointment, all League and Club Welfare Officers agree to uphold the Code of Conduct for volunteer Welfare Officers and understand the actions that may be taken should they fail

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to act in accordance with the Code. In agreeing to fulfil the role they confirm that they meet the criteria outlined within The Association's Suitability Checklist for YLWO/CWOs.

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Part 2: Volunteer Welfare Officers Person Specification and Suitability Checklist

Person Specification:

- Experience of dealing or working with young people.
- Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children issues.
- A good communicator in a variety of situations with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Committed to and ability to abide by The Association Rules and Regulations and promote The Hampshire Football Association Respect programme and safeguarding children education.
- Empathy when dealing with individuals, sometimes in demanding situations
- Ability to listen and assess situations fairly.
- Ability to handle confidential information sensitively and with integrity
- Reasonable level of administration experience and how to deal with confidential documentation.
- Willingness to attend any in-service training facilitated by either The Association or the local County FA

Suitability Checklist:

- Understanding of child protection issues and some knowledge of safeguarding legislation.
- Knowledge of and positive attitudes to equal opportunities.
- Willing and able to provide relevant current references.
- Previous experience of dealing or working with children.
- Commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern.
- Physical health – appropriate to carry out tasks.
- Integrity and flexibility.
- At least 18 years of age.
- Completion of The Hampshire Football Association Criminal Records Checks (CRC) process



and acceptance by The Association of the outcome.

- Understanding of the need for confidentiality when dealing with issues
- Reasonable level of administration experience and how to deal with confidential documentation.
- Completion of The Hampshire Football Association Safeguarding Children Workshop and Welfare Officer Workshop.
- Willingness to update skills and knowledge and attend in-service training facilitated by The Association or the local County FA.
- Has agreed to and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for volunteer Welfare Officers.

N.B. If anyone is known to be unsuitable to work with children his/her application should be refused by the Club/League. If in any doubt about an applicant contact your County FA Welfare Officer.



Part 3: Terms of Reference

The Hampshire Football Association recognises that the terms 'child or young person', 'abuse' and 'harm' are open to interpretation and challenge but for the purpose of this Safeguarding Children policy they are defined as follows:

A child or young person shall be defined as:

'anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.'

Abuse shall be defined as:

'a violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons and, for the purposes of safeguarding children, shall include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, bullying and hazing.'

Harm shall be defined as:

'ill treatment and forms of ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical) and also the impairment of or an avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.'

'Harm' may be caused by acts of commission and acts of omission.



Part 4: Further Information and Footnote References

If you need any further advice or information please contact the Hampshire Football Association Designated Safeguarding Officer Melanie Gill via telephone 07885807321 or online via Melanie.Gill@HampshireFA.com who will be happy to help you.

Alternatively, if Ian Binks is unavailable, please do contact the Hampshire FA Safeguarding Administrator, Callum Amos callum.amos@HampshireFA.com or call 01256 853006.

More information about the role of the Welfare Officer is available on www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding and clicking on Welfare Officer FAQs under the Welfare Officer section and also on the Respect pages under 'My Role' simply click on Welfare Officer. This can be gained through Safeguarding Children Education Programme; see www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding for further information or speak to the Hampshire Football Association's Designated Safeguarding Officer.

In accordance with the FA, The Hampshire Football Association Policy on CRCs has been amended in light of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. For more information please visit www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks or e-mail FAchecks@thefa.com or call 0845 210 8080.

Some people with a history of offending can still be considered for roles in football that involve children. For more information please visit www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/criminal-records-checks or e-mail FAchecks@thefa.com or call 0845 210 8080.

In accordance with the Football Association, Hampshire Football Association reserves the right to prevent an individual from becoming a Welfare Officer or remaining as a Welfare Officer where it

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deems the individual does not meet the suitability criteria, or it reasonably believes there is another compelling reason why that individual is not suitable.