



# Child Protection Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Rugby brings fun and enjoyment to thousands of young people each year. It is a sport which is justifiably proud of the core values that it imparts - teamwork, diversity, fairness, discipline, respect, personal courage, fun and enjoyment.

Club volunteers work hard to deliver programmes of rugby activity for youngsters at all age groups and performance levels. Our club is committed to providing a safe and positive, quality experience to the young people involved and to support the volunteers who make this possible.

All of those involved with providing rugby activity for young people are aware of the Club's Child Protection Policy and codes of conduct.

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Watsonian FC is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures a child is someone under the age of 18 years.

Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

The policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern and Watsonian FC acknowledges its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all children in Watsonian FC from harm.
- Watsonian FC recognises that all children have the right to participate in rugby union in a safe, enjoyable and positive environment whilst at the same time being protected from abuse, neglect or poor practice.
- Watsonian FC confirms that it adheres to the Scottish Rugby Child Protection Policy and the procedures, guidelines, and practices contained in that document and any successor policy.
- Watsonian FC confirms that it will appoint a Child Protection Officer (CPO) at the club. Their details will be available within the clubhouse and on the club website. The CPO will undergo Child Protection training as directed by Scottish Rugby.

- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Organisations shall work in partnership together with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

#### Watsonian FC:

- agrees that all allegations or suspicions of abuse, neglect, harm or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.
- recognises that all children have the right to expect that their participation in rugby union will be supported and delivered by suitably recruited, vetted and managed staff, whether they are volunteering or officiating.
- confirms that all members of Watsonian FC who undertake regulated work must be member of the PVG Scheme with a Scheme Record Update if necessary.
- acknowledges the Disclosure Scotland referrals process and agrees to action a referral if required.
- agrees that any tours, overseas or domestic must comply with the relevant Scottish Rugby Regulations and Guidance relating to tours.
- promotes the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities to take part in rugby safely.
- respects and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- promotes and implements appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
- recruits, trains, supports and supervises its staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- requires staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures.
- responds to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- observes guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children.
- regularly monitors and evaluates the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any changes within Scottish Rugby.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within Scottish Rugby
- In all other circumstances, at least every three years.

## KEY CONTACTS

In line with its obligations under the Scottish Rugby Participation agreement a child protection officer (CPO) has been appointed to co-ordinate child protection and welfare on behalf of Watsonian FC and to provide a main point of contact for staff and volunteers, parents and children in need of support, advice or training or if they need to report a concern.

- Douglas Weir (07979 963266) – [doug\\_weir@btinternet.com](mailto:doug_weir@btinternet.com)

Although matters relating to the welfare of children at Watsonia FC should ordinarily be referred in the first instance to the club CPO the Scottish Rugby Lead officer for Child Protection and Welfare may also be contacted for support and advice on any child protection matter by any CPO, child, parent, staff member or volunteer at any time.

- Karen Burnett - Lead Officer Child Protection and Welfare - Scottish Rugby  
[karen.burnett@sru.org.uk](mailto:karen.burnett@sru.org.uk) - 0131 346 5168

Scottish Rugby acts as the umbrella body for the purposes of processing applications for the disclosure check of volunteers working with children at rugby clubs in Scotland. Accordingly a PVG administrator has been appointed to process applications for club volunteers and to advise and support Club Child Protection officers on matters relating to the PVG scheme.

Situations where the immediate safety of a child and/or children is a concern should be reported without delay to the appropriate statutory agency – the local police and/or social services child protection team.

## RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES

### Risk Assessment

In order to provide opportunities for children to participate safely and to implement appropriate procedures to safeguard their wellbeing, we must be aware of the areas of risk and adequately assess these risks. This will:

- Make sure children are safe
- Protect staff and volunteers
- Make sure we comply with legislation
- Reduce or remove liability
- Give our sport a good reputation.

### What Does the Law State?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that all children have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and exploitation at all times. Section 5 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 states that if you are 16 or over and have children in your care or control, then you must do what is reasonable in all circumstances to safeguard their health, welfare and development.

### What Does All This Mean in Practice?

When children are taking part in our activities we have a responsibility to make sure they are safe from harm. We fulfil this duty by:

1. Accepting we have this duty.
2. Agreeing policies, procedures and practices which tell us what action we need to take in order to keep children safe from harm.
3. Telling all relevant persons about safe practices; for example, through training.
4. Putting them into PRACTICE.
5. Ensuring they are being followed and reviewing them.

We can't be expected to eliminate every possible risk. Rugby is a contact sport and we don't want to wrap children in cotton wool or have so many procedures and so much paperwork that staff and volunteers are prevented from carrying out their roles, or worse, put off altogether. Risk assessments of youth rugby should allow us to focus on the things which are important. By doing what is 'reasonable', we will give people the confidence to know they are following good practice, and, therefore looking after themselves too.