

Burnley R.U.F.C.

Child Welfare Policy & Procedures



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Forward

BURNLEY R.U.F.C recognises its moral and legal obligation to ensure that, the coaches and volunteers who have a responsibility for young people within the club provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

Through the implementation of a policy for the Welfare of Young People and the support of its coaches and volunteers, BURNLEY R.U.F.C will maintain the professionalism and safeguards of good practice, which are associated with the game.

The policy outlines the following key areas:

- It recognises the responsibility of all those involved in the club to safeguard and promote the interests and well being of the young people with whom they are working
- It provides a framework on the recruitment, selection, suitability and deployment of individuals working with young people
- It emphasises the value of working closely in partnership with coaches, parents, professionals and volunteers to protect children and young players from harm and discrimination.
- It 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 will further safeguard the young players, coaches and all others working within the club.

I would encourage you to read this important document, and if you have any question please contact either myself, or Frances Murphy, the club Child Protection Officer.

Rab Logue
Youth Section Chairman

Introduction

- 1.1 Anyone under the age of 18 within the club should be considered as a young person for the purposes of this document
- 1.2 The welfare of all young people is paramount
- 1.3 All young people, whatever their age gender, culture, ability, language, religious belief, racial origin, and/or sexual identity should be able to enjoy the game in a fun, environment safe from abuse of any kind
- 1.4 All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- 1.5 All individuals within the club who work with young people will be made aware of good practice in order to ensure that they are not placed in situations where unmerited allegations are made.
- 1.6 BURNLEY R.U.F.C will work with parents/carers to ensure that all youngsters within the club enjoy the game in a safe environment
- 1.7 BURNLEY R.U.F.C recognises the statutory responsibilities of Social Services Departments and the Police to ensure the welfare of young people and is committed to complying with Local Area Child Protection Committee Procedures

BURNLEY R.U.F.C acknowledge that within RFU regulations a male player is permitted to play in the adult game on reaching his 17th birthday. In these circumstances 7.2.4 and 7.3.3 of this policy cannot practically be applied. However, the club recognises its responsibility to be mindful of the safety and well-being of the player.

Recognising Abuse & Poor Practice

In order to provide young people in the club with the best possible experiences and opportunities in Rugby Union, it is imperative that all club members operate within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. This not only ensures that Rugby Union makes a positive contribution to the development of young people and safeguards their welfare, but also protects all club personnel from false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

It is not always easy to differentiate poor practice from abuse, albeit intentional or unintentional. It is not, therefore, the responsibility of adults within the club to determine whether or not abuse is taking place. **It is however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have a concern about the welfare of a young person/s.**

The four main types of abuse are:

Emotional Abuse

- 1.8 **In a rugby situation**, emotional abuse may occur when coaches provide repeated negative feedback.
- 1.9 Repeatedly ignore a young player's efforts to progress.
- 1.10 Repeatedly demand performance levels above those of which the young player is capable over emphasise the winning ethic.

Abuse by Neglect

- 1.11 **In a rugby situation** neglect may occur when:
 - 1.12 Young players are left alone without proper supervision.
 - 1.13 A young player is exposed to unnecessary heat or cold without fluids or protection.
 - 1.14 A young player is exposed to an unacceptable risk of injury.

Physical Abuse

- 1.15 **In a rugby situation** physical abuse may occur when:
 - 1.16 Coaches, Managers or helpers expose young players to exercise/training which disregards the capacity of the players immature and growing body.
 - 1.17 Coaches, Managers or helpers expose young players to overplaying, over training or fatigue.
 - 1.18 Coaches, Managers or helpers expose young players to alcohol, or give them the

opportunity to drink alcohol below the legal age.

- 2.12 Coaches, Managers or helpers expose young players to performance enhancing drugs and recommend that they take them.

Sexual Abuse

- 2.13 The close proximity of coaches and others, to young people provides opportunities for potential abusers to exploit their position of trust to sexually abuse.

Bullying

3. Bullying is not always easy to define and will not always be an adult abusing a young person. It is often the case that the bully is a young person. There are three main types of bullying:

- Physical e.g. hitting, kicking, theft.
- Verbal e.g. racist or homophobic remarks.
- Emotional e.g. persistent negative feedback.

All of these will include:

Deliberate hostility and aggression towards a victim

- 3.1 A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies.
- 3.2 An outcome which is always painful and distressing for the individual.
- 3.3 Bullying behaviour may also include.
- 3.4 Other forms of violence.
- 3.5 Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- 3.6 Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation.
- 3.7 Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- 3.8 Unwanted physical contact or abusive offensive comments of sexual nature.

The competitive nature of Rugby Union makes it a potential environment for the bully. This may manifest itself in some of the following ways:

- 3.9 A parent who pushes too hard.
- 3.10 A coach who adopts a win at all costs philosophy.
- 3.11 A player who intimidates others.
- 3.12 An official who is over officious.

The club has an anti-bullying policy

Roles & Responsibilities

The role of the Rugby Club

- To appoint a Welfare Officer who will act as the first point of contact for concerns about the welfare of young people
- To accept that all officers and committee members have a responsibility in this area and be prepared to respond to any indication of poor practice or abuse and to put in place structures and systems to ensure that this is followed in practice.
- To adopt and implement a policy of Best Practice for all adults working with young people (see section 7).
- To ensure that all relevant members who have **regular supervisory** contact with children or a **management responsibility** for those working with young people undertake a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.
- To ensure that relevant training is available for all those working with young people.
- To identify a disciplinary panel which, where necessary, will be convened to hear case
- To keep written records of player attendance, parent contact details.

Coaches Responsibility

- Be familiar with and adhere to the club Child Protection Policy and Best Practice Guidelines.
- Undertake any relevant training provided by the club.
- Undertake a CRB Disclosure.

Parents

- Ensure the club has a relevant details relating to their son or daughter.
- Share any concerns initially with the club welfare officer.
- Be involved in Club Activities.
- Assist in the supervision of the young player where able and when appropriate.

Taking Appropriate Action

CONCERNS ABOUT POOR PRACTICE AND POSSIBLE ABUSE WITHIN THE RUGBY CLUB

This relates to anyone working with young people within the Rugby Club. For example, volunteer coaches, club helpers, administrators.

The club will take all allegations seriously and appropriate action will be pursued.

Allegations will often relate to ***poor practice*** where an adult's behaviour is inappropriate and maybe causing concern to a young person/s, colleagues or parents.

POOR PRACTICE:

Constitutes any behaviour which contravenes the club Coaches Codes of Conduct and Codes of Good Practice in the Rugby setting (section 7)

- ***Infringes on an individuals rights***
- ***Is a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care***

BURNLEY R.U.F.C WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTION IF A YOUNG PERSON DISCLOSES THAT HE/SHE IS CONCERNED ABOUT SOMEONES BEHAVIOR TOWARDS THEM WITHIN THE RUGBY CLUB OR AN ADULT EXPRESSES CONCERNS ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A YOUNG PERSON/S

- 5.1 Compile full written record of what has been said, heard seen as soon as possible
- 5.2 Club welfare officer to be informed immediately
- 5.3 Club welfare officer will report the matter to the RFU Ethics and Equity Manager, with copy to the CB Welfare Manager.

Following guidance that the issue is *POOR PRACTICE* then the Club Welfare officer should follow club disciplinary procedures for a first report of poor practice

- 5.4 Forward a written report on action taken to CB Welfare Manager and RFU Ethics and Equity Manager
- 5.5 If an individual is identified by the club as being guilty of poor practice on subsequent occasions then the CB Welfare Manager in consultation with the RFU Ethics and Equity manager

may conclude that the issue constitutes abuse and should be referred to the RFU Disciplinary Officer.

Following guidance that the issue is *ABUSE* then the club welfare officer should:

- 5.6 If the young person requires immediate medical attention
 - An ambulance must be called
 - The doctor should be informed that the concern relates to Child Protection
- 5.7 Refer the allegation to Police or Social Services They will give advice relating to the contacting of parents/guardians.
- 5.8 Inform the CB welfare officer and the RFU Ethics and Equity Manager and forward a written report utilising the Incident Referral Form

Non action is not an option. “The welfare of the young person/s is paramount”

BURNLEY R.U.F.C WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTION IF THROUGH AN ADULTS OBSERVATIONS OR THROUGH A THIRD PARTY, THE CLUB BECOME AWARE OF POSSIBLE ABUSE OCCURRING AT A YOUNG PERSONS HOME OR IN SOME OTHER SETTING (OUTSIDE OF THE RUGBY CLUB).

If this happens:

- Ensure the safety of the young person – if he/she requires immediate treatment, call an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure they are aware that this is a Child Protection issue.

The following procedures will then be followed:

- 5.9 Concerns reported to Club Welfare Officer.
- 5.10 Club Welfare Officer may seek advice from RFU Ethics and Equity Manager CB Welfare Manager, RFU Child Protection Helpline or NSPCC. If there is any delay in receiving advice contact must be made with Social Services.
- 5.10 If a formal referral is made, make it clear to Social Services/Police that this is a Child Protection referral.
- 5.11 All police forces have dedicated Child Protection Teams (CPTs) which deal with allegations of abuse within family setting and by people in a position of trust. In a real emergency dial 999.
- 5.12 Parents/carers should only be contacted following advice from Social Services.

Non action is not an option “The welfare of the young person/s is paramount” Delay in acting can increase the risk to the child

In all cases BURNLEY R.U.F.C recognises that:

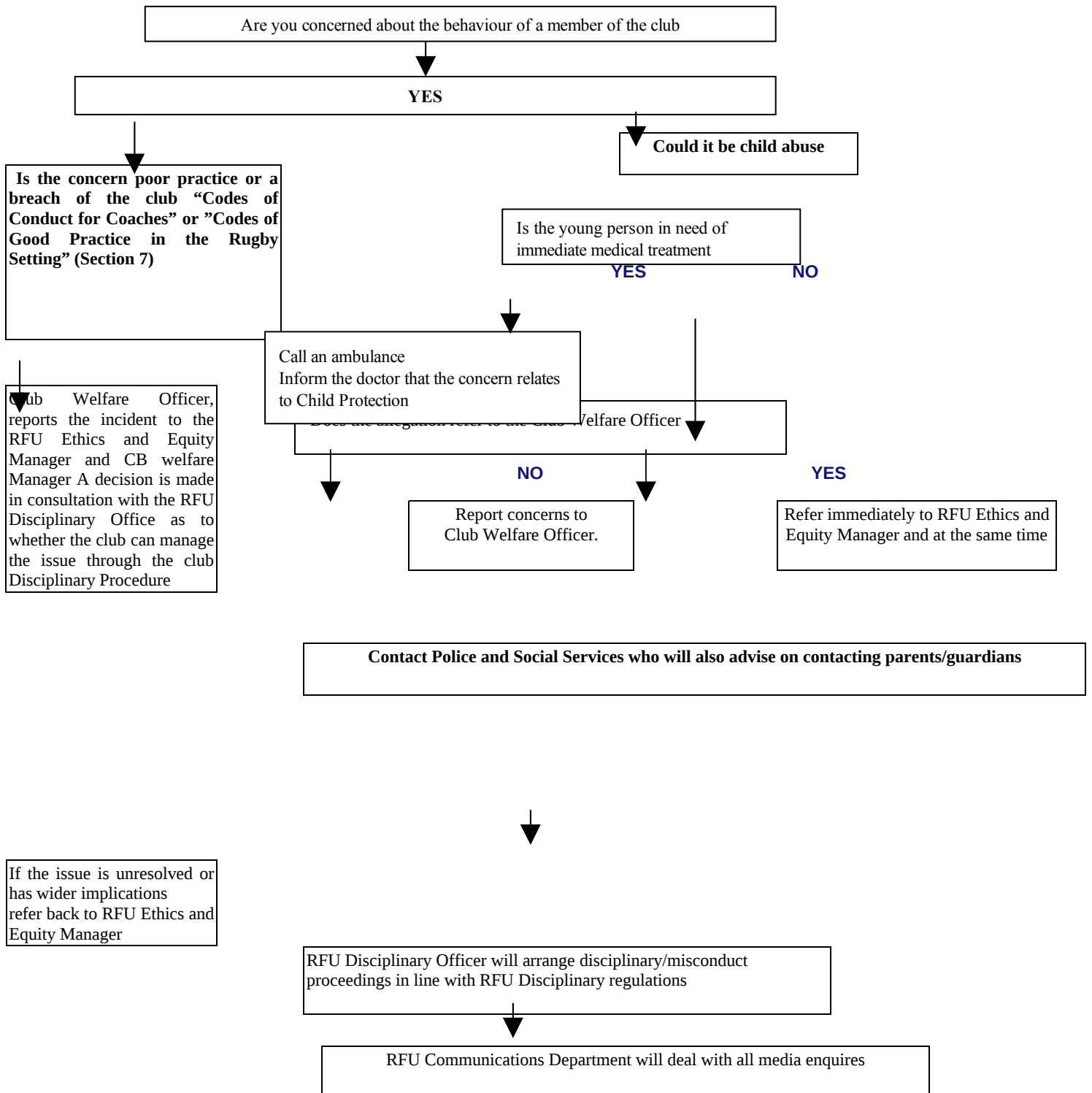
- It is often more difficult for some young people to disclose abuse than others. Young people from ethnic minorities may have regularly experienced racism which may lead them to believe that certain groups including those in authority roles do not really care about their well being. They may well feel they have good reason to question whether the response may be different.
- Disabled young people may have to overcome additional barriers before feeling that that they can disclose abuse. They may rely on the abuser for their daily care and not know of alternative sources of care. The abuse may be the only attention/affection they have experienced. There may be communication difficulties and they will almost certainly have to overcome prejudices which block our willingness to believe they may be abused or to use their medical condition to explain away indicators which in an able bodied young person would concern us.

5.13 In all cases every effort will be made by the club to ensure that confidentiality is maintained

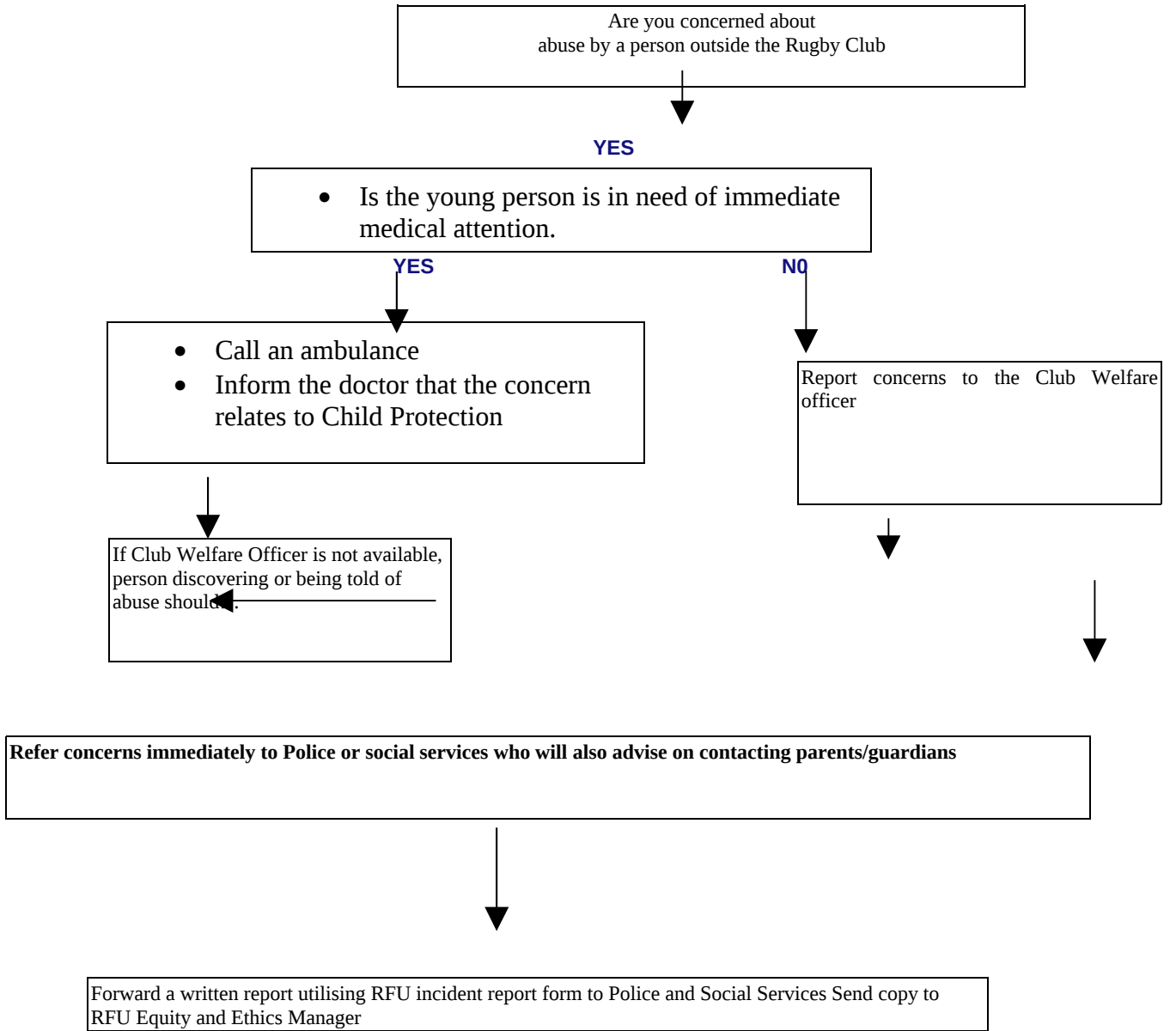
Information will be handled and disseminated on a **need to know basis**. This will include the following people.

- The Club/CB welfare Officers
- Designated Officers within the RFU
- Person making the allegation
- Social Services and police
- Parents of the young person alleged to have been abused

DEALING WITH CONCERNS, DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATIONS RELATING TO ANY ADULT WITHIN



DEALING WITH POSSIBLE ABUSE OCCURRING OUTSIDE OF THE RUGBY CLUB



Recruitment & Selection of Coaches and Volunteers

BURNLEY R.U.F.C recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse young people in some way and BURNLEY R.U.F.C will therefore ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people within the Rugby Club. The club recognises that under the Protection of Children Act 1999 all individuals working on behalf of the club are treated as employees whether paid or volunteers.

BURNLEY R.U.F.C will carry out the following recruitment checks

6.0 Advertising

If any form of advertising is used to recruit staff, it will reflect the

- Responsibilities of the role
- Level of experience or qualification required (e.g. working with children an advantage)
- The club stance on Child Protection

6.1 Applications

- All adults who are in contact with young people, whether paid or voluntary, should complete an application form (See appendix 5).

6.3 Checks and References

- All adults within the club who have **“regular supervisory contact with young people”** will undertake CRB disclosure. These people will include:
 - Professional Staff (if relevant)
 - All coaches/assistant coaches
 - Heads of Mini/Midi Rugby sections
 - Heads of Youth Rugby Sections
 - Team Managers
 - All referees who manage mini/midi and youth games
 - Welfare Officers
 - Physiotherapists

6.4 A minimum of two written references will be taken up and at least one will be with former work with young people. If an applicant has no experience of working with children, training is strongly advised.

6.5 Interview/induction

- **Where appropriate** e.g. all professional appointments for full or part time will undergo formal interview
- All staff paid or voluntary working with young people will undergo an induction process where
 - Coaching qualifications, if applicable verified
 - Training needs are identified
 - Codes of Conduct and Codes of Good Practice are signed up to
 - The roles, responsibilities and expectations of the role are clarified
 - Child Protection Procedures are explained and training needs established

6.6 Training

BURNLEY R.U.F.C will offer training which will enable all adults working with young people to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting poor practice or concerns of possible abuse.

BURNLEY R.U.F.C will offer the following opportunities to adults working with young people

- **“RFU Guide to Best practice and Child Protection”**
- **“An appropriate RFU Coaching Course”**

It is vital that all staff working with young people in Rugby Union are conversant with

- **Player centred Coaching techniques**
- **How to work with young people safely and effectively**

6.7 Monitoring and Appraisal

BURNLEY R.U.F.C will provide appropriate feedback to adults working with young people which will;

- Identify training needs
- Set new goals
- Highlight concerns about inappropriate behaviour

Good Practice at Burnley R.U.F.C.

The following section sets out Good Practice Procedures which all those involved in the delivery of Rugby Union to young people at BURNLEY R.U.F.C will adhere to;

7.1 Good Practice Procedures

- 7.1.1 The club has in place a Welfare Policy with an implementation and monitoring programme
- 7.1.2 A designated officer (Club Welfare Officer) is appointed with representation on relevant club committees
- 7.1.3 The Welfare Policy will be publicised and available to show the clubs commitment to providing a safe environment
- 7.1.4 The club has in place procedures in place to deal with complaints or concerns which is available to all club members
- 7.1.5 The Club will provide training opportunities for adults who work with young people
- 7.1.6 The club has Codes of Conduct and Codes of Practice in place and will ensure that all coaches sign up to the relevant codes
- 7.1.7 Parents/carers will be made aware of what the organisation and coaches are doing and also of the correct procedures to express any concerns they may have
- 7.1.8 The club will ensure that there is an Equity Policy and that all discrimination is challenged and prohibited
- 7.1.9 The club will ensure that all adults who regularly supervise young people undertake CRB disclosure
- 7.1.10 The club will ensure guidelines are in place to control and monitor the use of photographic images of children
- 7.1.11 The club has an anti-bullying policy which is actively promoted
- 7.1.12 The club will monitor coaches and provide them with feedback with particular reference to “poor practice”

7.2 BURNLEY R.U.F.C Codes of Good Practice for Coaches and Officials

- 7.2.1 **Always** be publicly open when working with young people. Avoid situations where you and an individual child are completely unobserved.
- 7.2.2 Rugby is a physical game. Situations will occur when, in order to teach or coach certain techniques, it is necessary to make contact with the player. However the following must apply
 - **Parents and young players must be made aware of situations in which this**

may happen when they join the club

- **Physical handling should only be used for safety reasons or where there is no other way of coaching the technique**

7.2.3 Contact or touching which is inappropriate (not directly related to the coaching context) or aggressive, will not be tolerated

7.2.4 If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that individuals work in pairs, and that gender is appropriate. Ideally young people should not have to change at the same time or in the same place as adults

7.2.5 Where mixed teams compete away from home they should always be accompanied by at least one male and one female adult.

7.2.6 Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the player above the development of performance. Coaches should:

- Avoid overplaying of players (particularly talented players). All players need and deserve equal opportunity to play
- Remember that young people play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only a part of it
- Motivate youngsters through positive feedback and constructive criticism
- Ensure that contact skills are taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of young players.
- Never allow young players to train/play when injured.
- Ensure equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the players.

7.2.7 Coaches should hold current RFU coaching awards or a recognised qualification.

7.2.8 Coaches should keep up to date with knowledge and technical skills and should be aware of their own limitations. Coaches should only work within the limitations of their knowledge and

qualifications

7.2.9 Coaches must ensure that the activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the players.

7.2.10 Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of their sport (eg fair play), and never condone law violations or use of prohibited substances.

7.2.11 Coaches must consistently display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance

7.2.12 Coaches should never overtly criticise players or use language or actions which may cause the player to lose self esteem or confidence.

7.2.13 People should not be allowed to drink alcohol or encouraged to drink alcohol if they are under the legal age to do so.

Practice to be avoided

Everyone should also be aware that, as a general rule, it does not make sense for a coach to:

- Spend amounts of time alone with young people away from others.
- Take young people alone on car journeys, however short.
- Change or shower with players (agree a timetable, or use separate facilities where available)

If it should arise that such situations are unavoidable they should only take place with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club/governing body and/or a person with parental responsibility for the player.

If you accidentally hurt a player, or cause distress in any manner, or the player appears to respond in a sexual manner to your actions, or misunderstands, or misinterprets something you have done, report the incident to a colleague supported by a written report of the incident as soon as possible. Parents/carers should also be informed of the occurrence.

7.3 Practice that is prohibited by the RFU/W

Individuals should never;

- 7.3.1 Take young people to their home or other secluded places where they will be alone.
- 7.3.2 Engage in rough, physical games, sexually provocative games or horseplay with young people.
- 7.3.3 Take part as player in any dynamic contact games or training sessions with young people. If there is a need for an adult to facilitate learning within a coaching session through the use of coaching aids e.g. contact pads, this should be done with the utmost care and with due regard to the safety and well being of the young players.
- 7.3.4 Share a room with a young person unless the individual is the parent/guardian of that young person.
- 7.3.5 Allow any form of inappropriate touching. (not specifically related to the coaching of the game) .
- 7.3.5 Make sexually suggestive remarks to a young person even in fun.
- 7.3.6 Use inappropriate language or allow young players to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- 7.3.7 Allow allegations by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- 7.3.8 Do things of a personal nature for a young person that they can do for themselves unless you have been requested to do so by the parents/carer (*Please note that it is recognised that some young people will always need help with things such as lace tying, adjustment of Tag belts, fitting head guards*).
- 7.3.9 Depart the Rugby Club until all the safe dispersal of all young people is complete.
- 7.3.10 Cause an individual to lose self esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
- 7.3.11 Treat some young people more favourably than others.
- 7.3.12 Agree to meet a young person on your own on a one to one basis.

7.4 POSITIONS OF TRUST

All adults who work with young people are in a position of trust which has been invested in them by the parents, the sport and the young person. This relationship can be described as one in which the adult is in apposition of power and influence by virtue of their position.

In Rugby Union most adults in a position of trust recognise that there are certain boundaries in the coach/player relationship which must not be crossed in terms of the relationship with the young player. The relationship is no different to that between a school teacher and the pupils in their care.

RFU Code of conduct on the Abuse of Trust

- 7.4.1 Any behaviour, which encourages a physical, or emotionally dependant relationship to develop between the person in a position of trust and the young person in their care must be avoided.
- 7.4.2 All those within the club have a duty to raise concerns about the behaviour by coaches, officials, volunteers, administrators which may harmful to the young people in the club, without prejudice to their own position.
- 7.4.3 Allegations relating to a breach of the code of conduct will be investigated according to RFU disciplinary procedures.

Useful Contact Details

The Club Welfare/Child Protection Officer

Frances Murphy

Telephone: 07761 652266

Email: franhome@hotmail.com

The RFU Helpline and e-mail

0208 831 6655

childprotection@therfu.com

NSPCC Helpline

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Asian Helpline: 0800 096 7719

Welsh Helpline: 0800 100 2524

Deaf Users Textphone: 0800 056 0686

www.nspcc.org.uk

This is a 24 hour free and confidential telephone Helpline that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

3 Gilmour Close, Beaumont Leys, Leicester LE4 1EZ

Telephone: 0116 234 7200

www.sportprotects.org.uk