

RFU Safeguarding Bulletin

August 2019

USEFUL LINKS & CONTACTS

[England Rugby Safeguarding](#)

For DBS enquiries:

dbseapp@rfu.com

For general safeguarding help:

Safeguarding@rfu.com

For GMS assistance:

GMSSupport@RFU.com

RFU 24 hour child protection message service – Tel 0208 831 6655.



[@RFUSafeguarding](#)

NEW SEASON, NEW REGULATIONS, NEW START!

In this edition of our Safeguarding Bulletin, we thought you might benefit from some guidance in relation to some the changes to the new RFU regulations. These came into effect on August 1st and although not all of the changes relate to Regulation 21 - Safeguarding, some of the amendments do have a bearing on club safeguarding procedures that you will need to be aware of. Your CBs will already have been notified of the changes and should have shared details with you.

As well as some changes to regulations, the start of the new season brings an opportunity to refresh our memories in regards to correct safeguarding processes, so this edition also brings a reminder about how best to deal with a concern that comes your way.

Changes to DBS process - what this means for club safeguarding

DBS requirements for coaches in adult teams - First, *don't panic!* We are not suggesting that *all* coaches, even those in adult teams, will necessarily require DBS clearance. However, a coach in a team that is open to adults as well as 17 year olds who are approved to 'play up' will also require a DBS check in the same way as those who are coaching in a children-only team. This change is made to ensure the safety of all young people in rugby, and is not an

attempt to prevent young players from playing up into the adult game. Your obligations to carry out a DBS check depends **not** on whether there are currently 17 year olds playing up, but whether it is *likely* that there might be.

For a more detailed explanation of DBS applications see [DBS checks in sport - working with children](#)

Regulation 21.1 now specifies that each club with an age grade section, or which has 17 year olds playing adult rugby must complete an annual RFU safeguarding audit through GMS by 30 September 2019, or when requested by the RFU Head of Safeguarding. The safeguarding audit is now live on GMS. You will find it in the questionnaire tab of your clubs GMS page. Your CB Safeguarding Managers will continue to do a more in-depth audit of 10% of their clubs, and the RFU may request CB audits in response to casework or concerns

Important Update: You may have seen that the RFU has recently launched a new England Rugby website. If you are struggling with the accessing the site, or cannot find what you are looking for, please be aware that the site cannot be accessed through *Internet Explorer* and for the best user access should be viewed through one of the following browsers



HOW TO DEAL WITH CONCERNS

There is no set list of what might amount to a safeguarding concern. The RFU [Safeguarding Children Policy](#) states that *All incidents, suspicions and concerns regarding a child should be reported to the RFU* (best practice means this should go via your CBSM). Reports should be made at the earliest opportunity. In practice, this means that the RFU should be informed straight away, and clubs should refrain from carrying out further enquiries, investigating themselves or referring the matter to Club Discipline, at least at this early stage. Don't forget however, when someone discloses their concern to you as a safeguarding officer you are permitted to ask questions to clarify what they mean. There is help with this listed on the RFU [Safeguarding Referral Form](#). Using this form will help us at the RFU to understand more easily what your concern is and will expedite our triage process.

Sometimes we are duty bound to consult with the local authority or Police. Other times the RFU might manage the investigation. On occasion, we will refer the matter back to you at the club if it does not meet our threshold. If this is the case, we will always try to support you to manage the case internally. Have a look at [Advice for individuals who are subject of an allegation](#) for more information about our process. You may share this with individuals who are the subject of an allegation or concern to explain the RFU process.

New coaches starting this season?

Volunteers come and go, and with the Rugby World Cup 2019 fast approaching you will hopefully see a surge in interest in the children's game, meaning you may need to find new coaches. If you are thinking of recruiting new coaches this season, please remember that safer recruitment is about so much more than a DBS check.

- Consider using the [RFU Volunteer Application Form](#)
- Were they previously at another club? If so make contact and find out more, get a reference
- If prospective coaches are new to rugby, consider getting a reference from elsewhere
- Has a senior's team member offered their services to coach children? They might be a magnificent player but are they suitable to coach children?

Remember, although it might seem like more work at a time where your club may be keen to recruit volunteers, carrying out these checks in advance could prevent significant harm to a child and serious harm to your club's reputation.

If you need help with safer recruitment, ask your CB Safeguarding Manager

When should you seek help or report a concern?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you become aware of information that worries you about someone at your club, what follows might depend on what role they have at the club. RFU Regulation 21, 2019 (Safeguarding) has adapted the definition of *position of trust*. It now states that **'Position of Trust'** means a person in a position of authority over another person as defined by Child Protection in Sport Unit:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/abuse-of-positions-of-trust-within-sport/>

If you have information about a person in a position of trust that concerns you, please contact your CBSM or the RFU for advice about what to do next.

The following are examples of roles that amount to a position of trust in rugby: A children's rugby coach; an adult rugby coach in a team that is likely to have 17 year olds playing up in the adult game; a parent helper who assists a coach; a young player (such as a Colts player) who is helping a younger age-group for work experience; a team manager; a physiotherapist or First Aider; a club Safeguarding Officer; a club chairman.

If you have information relating to the behaviour of someone who is not in a position of trust, but which has resulted in harm being caused to a child, the position is less clear and so we would ask you to consult with your CBSM for advice. For example, when a parent or spectator with no other role has harmed a child.

Please also remember that when you have information about inappropriate behaviour by a person in a position of trust that does not relate to rugby, perhaps if for example they have been arrested, or involved in an incident in their private life, this is still relevant and would need to be referred to the RFU Safeguarding Team.