



**ROTHERHAM UNITED
COMMUNITY TRUST**

Paul Douglas

13/04/2026

ROTHERHAM UNITED COMMUNITY TRUST

POLICY / PROCEDURE

NAME: Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

VERSION: V6

Version	Date	Review details	Authorised by	Board of Trustee Signature
1	2018	Creation	Jamie Noble, Head of Community	
2	2020	Reviewed	Jamie Noble, Head of Community	
3	2023	Reviewed	Jamie Noble Head of Community	
4	2024	Reviewed	Jamie Noble, Head of Community	
5	2024	Updated version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Modern Slavery Section	Jamie Noble, Head of Community	
6	2026	Full review and update. Merged Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. Adapted to be more user friendly and to reference related policies. Changes made in line with new safeguarding responsibilities, team & structure.	Julie Shore Safeguarding Manager	

Rotherham United Community Trust Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

RUCT Safeguarding & Child Protection Statement

ROTHERHAM UNITED COMMUNITY TRUST

[https://rufctrust.sharepoint.com/sites/Trustee/Shared Documents/Policy Review/Education & Safeguarding/RUCT Safeguarding Policy V6 \(Draft\).docx](https://rufctrust.sharepoint.com/sites/Trustee/Shared Documents/Policy Review/Education & Safeguarding/RUCT Safeguarding Policy V6 (Draft).docx)

Rotherham United Community Trust Board of Trustees and Chief Executive Officer acknowledges and accepts that RUCT have a statutory obligation and responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people who participate in activities organised or supported by Rotherham United Community Trust (RUCT).

We acknowledge that every child and young person who takes part in RUCT activities should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

This is the responsibility of every adult working in a paid or voluntary capacity on behalf of RUCT.

This policy is reviewed and endorsed annually by the board of trustees and signed by the Chair as evidence of our knowledge, understanding and commitment to this responsibility.

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1. KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Internal Safeguarding Team:

RUCT Safeguarding Manager – Julie Shore - 07921472271

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RUCT Designated Safeguarding Lead – Dan Wilson – dan.wilson@ruct.co.uk

RUCT Departmental Designated Safeguarding Officers:

Education: John Whitehead – john.whitehead@ruct.co.uk

Health: Emma Schofield – emma.schofield@ruct.co.uk

Children & Young People: Stephen Johnson – stephen.johnson@ruct.co.uk

Inclusion: Dylan Hadley – dylan.hadley@ruct.co.uk

RUFC Senior Safeguarding Manager – Paul Douglas – pdouglas@rotherhamunited.net

RUCT Safeguarding Champion (Trustee) – Carole Foster safeguarding@ruct.co.uk

External Safeguarding Contacts

Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board (MASH TEAM) - 01709 336080

The FA/NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000; Textphone 0800 056 0566

NSPCC SMS 88858

The English Football League

Alex Richards EFL: Safeguarding Manager – arichards@efl.com

Tara Lawson: EFL in The Community Safeguarding Advisor – tlawson@efl.com

2. DEFINITIONS

- A **'child'** or **'young person'** is any person under the age of 18.
- **'Children with disabilities or additional needs'** refers to children and young people with a range of very different conditions and identities, some of whom may not identify as being disabled. This includes children who are deaf, have a neurological condition such as autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and/or children who have a long-term illness.
- **CPOMS** is our secure safeguarding management system.
- **Significant harm** refers to children and young people who might be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. The Children Act 1989 defines the term significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of a child/children.
- **Child abuse** and **neglect** are generic terms encompassing all ill treatment of children and young people including cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development. Children may be abused or suffer neglect through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm.

3. AIMS & KEY PRINCIPLES

The aims of RUCT's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy are:

- To protect all children and young people who interact with the trust from harm and/or risk of harm
- To demonstrate best practice in safeguarding in all areas of work within the trust to enable children and young people to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment
- To positively reflect and promote the club standards and values in safeguarding children and young people
- To ensure that all staff, volunteers, parents and other adults who directly or indirectly encounter children and young people through their work for the trust, understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

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- To provide and monitor appropriate levels of training and pre-employment checks for all staff/volunteers
- To inform children and young people about their rights and empower them to access support and report concerns
- To foster collaborative and cohesive working relationships with partnership organisations and external agencies
- To promote listening to and acting on the experiences of stakeholders to continual improvement

The key principles underpinning this policy are:

- The Child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- All Children and young people and adults at risk have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity
- All allegations of abuse or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to efficiently and proportionately
- Everyone, including staff, participants (including education learners), employers and other stakeholders will be made aware of and supported to understand the safeguarding policies and procedures implemented by RUCT

3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Has overall responsibility for the safeguarding of children at RUCT.
- Reports directly to the Board of Trustees on policy changes and strategic decisions, lessons learned and an overview of current safeguarding data and context.
- Supports the Safeguarding Manager role and ensures sufficient resources are provided to fulfil the requirements of that role.

Safeguarding Manager

- Provide safeguarding expertise to all stakeholders.
- Responsible for the day-to-day management and quality of RUCT's safeguarding provision.
- Undertake regular monitoring and risk assessments of activities involving children and young people (or will designate this task to a trained DSO as appropriate).
- Manage the Safeguarding Management System (CPOMS) and monitor effective use of it.
- Lead on complex cases and incidents in all departments.
- Make the decision to refer to an appropriate statutory agency (Police, Social Care, EFL, FA).
- Ensure all staff and volunteers undertake regular and appropriate internal and external training for their role.
- Identify key trends and patterns to form part of an action plan to continuously improve safeguarding.
- Responsible for ensuring evidence and compliance with Section 9 of the EFL Code of Practice.
- Monitor and quality assure compliance of the trust's Single Central Record (SCR) & Safer Recruitment policy.

Designated Safeguarding Officers

In relation to their departments safeguarding provision:

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- Responsible for monitoring staff understanding and awareness, training, quality and provision
- Address any immediate safeguarding and child protection issues
- Ensure staff are trained on the trust's safeguarding policy and guidance
- Ensure they undertake regular and appropriate training for the role
- Undertake regular monitoring and risk assessments of activities involving children and young people at risk (or will designate this task to a trained activity lead, as appropriate.)
- Access all incidents logged and ensure all updates, actions and outcomes are completed and recorded in line with the reporting and recording policy.

Anybody with a concern about a child or young person's welfare should contact the DSL or DSO direct, or their line manager for advice in the first instance. Contact details can be found at the end of this policy.

All employees, partner organisations, contractors and volunteers:

- Be alert to signs of abuse and radicalisation and take individual responsibility for referring concerns to the Safeguarding Manager
- Be prepared to listen to and take seriously, the concerns of children and young people
- Abide by the codes of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Promote the health, safety and welfare of children and young people;
- Report and record incidents, worries or concerns either through CPOMS if accessible or via email to the Safeguarding Manager.
- Ensure all behaviour both online and in person promotes the safety, welfare and inclusion of children and young people.
- All staff and volunteers will ensure confidentiality and respect of participant information in line with the trust's GDPR & Data Protection Policies.

RUCT's commitment to Safeguarding is outlined and responsibilities for safeguarding clarified in any agreements with alternative or additional providers where those services relate to children and young people.

Contractors

All external contractors engaged by RUCT undergo a suitability test prior to commencing work including insurance documents and DBS checks. Wherever possible work will be undertaken when children are not present.

4. POSITION OF TRUST

As a result of the roles and authority that many members of our workforce hold, they **are said to be in a Position of Trust** in relation to those in their care. This means that where staff, or other members of the workforce, are in a position of power and influence over children or adults at risk they must not abuse their position for personal advantage or gratification or that of others.

Staff must also report any concern they have about another member of the workforce directly to a member of the safeguarding team.

Intimate or sexual relationships between a member of the workforce and a child or adult at risk in their care is prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action. A breach to this rule is considered an act of gross misconduct and will result in a referral to the relevant statutory agencies.

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For the absence of doubt, this applies to members of the workforce, paid or voluntary and participants who may have travelled overseas from their country of origin or those travelling abroad as representatives of Rotherham United.

5. SAFER RECRUITMENT

As part of RUCT's recruitment and selection process, all roles (paid and voluntary) are subject to at least 2 appropriate references and a satisfactory Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Criminal Records Check at the level deemed suitable for the position offered in line with the trust's Safer Recruitment policy.

RUCT recognises its legal duty to refer any staff member or volunteer who are removed from employment due to safeguarding concerns either internally or presented by the Local Authority or any other governing bodies (ie The FA).

In addition to this all staff are required to complete and sign an EFL Self-Declaration Form annually.

6. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

RUCT is committed to providing equal opportunities for all staff, volunteers and participants in line with our Equality, Diversity & inclusion Policy.

Children and young people who have disabilities and/or additional needs are at an increased risk of being abused compared with their non-disabled peers. They are also less likely to receive the protection and support they need when they have been abused.

Professionals sometimes have difficulty identifying safeguarding concerns when working with disabled children. We acknowledge that it is vital that everyone who works with children and young people understands how to safeguard those who have disabilities and special educational needs to protect them from harm.

7. RATIOS AND SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Any activity undertaken by RUCT will give full consideration to the appropriate number of staff present depending on the age and numbers of children involved, the degree of risk the activity involves, and whether there are any additional needs to support.

Regardless of these ratios a minimum of 2 members of staff or delivery partner will be available to supervise an activity to ensure adequate provision in the event of an incident.

Where RUCT is taking responsibility for the care of the children, parents/carers should not be included in supervision calculations.

Recommended minimum ratios are:

- Children 4 to 8 - 1:6 - *Ofsted*
- Children 9 to 12 - 1:8 - *Ofsted*
- Children over 12 - 1:10 - *Ofsted*
- Academy activities - 1 Coach to 8 Players (over 8s) - *EFL Youth Development Rules*
- Trust activities - 1 Coach to 16 Players – *FA*
- Matchday Organised U18 Groups - 2:20 - *EFL Matchday Guidance*

8. LONE WORKING

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Working 1:1 with children and young people should only occur in exceptional circumstances and where it is deemed in the best interest of the child. A staff member must alert their line manager and report it on CPOMS immediately including reasons for the decision and action taken.

9. GIFTS AND GIFT ACTIVITIES

- Staff and volunteers should **not accept or give any gift** that might lead a child or young person to believe their relationship is anything but a professional one where the staff member is in a 'position of trust'.
- RUCT recognises that there are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff on special occasions, for example at Christmas or as a thank you, and this is acceptable providing parents are aware.
- Staff should inform their department DSO of all gifts received. DSO should provide guidance as to the suitability of accepting or refusing the gift.
- Rewards given to a child or young person must first be agreed with the staff member's line manager only as part of a structured reward system and in line with the departmental policy and must not be based on favouritism.
- Small gifts may be given to children and young people by staff on special occasions. These gifts must be to whole groups of children, of low monetary value and be approved by their departments DSO beforehand.eg. Sweets
- No staff member should participate in sweepstakes or group gift giving activities with service users under any circumstances.

10. USE OF IMAGES

RUCT takes its guidance on the use of images from guidelines issued by the FA, EFL, Local Safeguarding Board and the UKCIS 2020 guidance. All images are taken by RUCT staff on organisation registered devices only. These staff are aware of the following protocols when responsible for filming and photography:

- Parental consent is sought in writing either during registration of an event/activity or prior to a specific planned session. Parents/guardians are responsible for informing RUCT of any change of circumstances within the season which may affect consent
- Parents/guardians are informed of how the image may be used. RUCT will not allow an image to be used for something other than that for which it was initially agreed
- All children featured in RUCT's publications must be appropriately dressed
- Images will focus on the activity taking place and not a specific child; where an individual child image is used explicit parent/guardian permissions will be collected.
- Images should represent the broad range of people participating safely in the event
- Staff undertaking the role of photographer will have a valid DBS certificate and have attended Safeguarding Training.
- Staff undertaking the role of photographer will be personally responsible for keeping up to date with the latest guidelines on the Use of Images policies issued by RUCT and government and local authority guidance
- Children who are subject to family, care or legal proceedings, or who are under a court order will not have their images published in any Club/Trust document without explicit legal guardian consent for the individual photo and where it will be used
- No images of children featured in Club/Trust publications will be accompanied by personal details such as their school, full name or home address

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- Recordings of children for the purposes of legitimate coaching aids are only filmed by trust staff and are stored safely and securely at RUCT's premises
- Any instances or reports of inappropriate images in football should be reported to RUCT's Safeguarding Manager immediately
- RUCT does not put young player profiles with images and personal information on its website.

11. TRANSPORT

- The Trust has a Transport Policy that should be followed when children are being transported on behalf of the Trust.
- Under no circumstances will a member of staff use a private vehicle to transport children in relation to their work with the trust.
- The Trust has qualified drivers on staff who are fully DBS and licence checked and have read and understood the trust's transport policy. These staff members are approved to drive trust transport.
- When children and young people are being transported on behalf of RUCT they shall be accompanied by at least 2 adults and at least one of those must have an RUCT DBS Certificate.
- In exceptional cases, such as an emergency incident, where it is in the best interest of a child or young person, they may need to be transported by a single staff member. This must only be done by an approved driver with explicit permission from their departmental DSO and their parent/guardian prior to the journey.

12. MEDICAL

- RUCT require medical consent forms to be completed prior to all activities. This information will be stored securely and provided to staff where necessary to ensure the correct support is in place for participants.
- Sessions will have at least one suitably trained first aider in attendance who will seek specialist medical advice and further information when necessary.
- All medical support will be logged in the venues first aid log. Incidents that require professional medical attention will also be logged on CPOMS.

13. WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN ABUSE CAN OCCUR

- Abuse can occur anywhere by anyone including within a family, within peer groups or in an institutional or community setting
- Abuse can take place in any setting, by someone known or unknown to the child, of either sex, of any sexual orientation and of any age.
- Perpetrators of abuse are often very adept at masking their intentions and actions and are usually not easily identifiable.

14. RESPONDING TO A CONCERN OR DISCLOSURE

Further advice is available in the RUCT Reporting & Recording Policy

Staff who receive a concern or disclosure:

Do:

- Ensure the child or young persons immediate safety
- Consider whether letting them leave the session/activity would place them at risk of further harm and if so contact police/social care (MASH Team) for advice before allowing them to leave
- Ensure you are in a private, secure space with access to further support if you or they should need it

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- Always treat any allegations or disclosures extremely seriously and act towards the person as if you believe what they are saying, although do not directly say the words "I believe you"
- Reassure them they are right to tell you and that they are not to blame
- Ask questions that will assist other professionals to understand where, when, what and who is involved
- Be aware of the possible medical needs that might arise following sexual assault, such as physical mental and sexual health problems and unwanted pregnancy
- Be aware that children and young people might not find it easy to talk about their abuse verbally. Look out for none verbal signs and behaviours that might indicate abuse
- Be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why
- Tell them what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening
- Take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse. **Doing nothing is not an option; it is your responsibility to act.**
- Make sure you tell a departmental DSO or the Safeguarding Manager immediately, they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.
- CPOMS should be used to record what has been said and done and the reporting and recording policy followed.

Don't:

- Make promises you cannot keep or agree to keep secrets
- Ask too many direct questions that might make the child feel uncomfortable – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be done by the Police and/or Children's Services who have experience in this, any questions should be of an open format so as not to lead the child in their answers.
- Cast doubt on what they have told you, don't interrupt or change the subject
- Say anything that makes the person feel responsible for the abuse
- Inform parents/carers – the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Officer will make this decision based on whether there is suspicion of their involvement
- In the event of suspicion of sexual abuse do not let the person bathe or shower until given permission to do so. Washing can destroy valuable evidence

DSO's & Safeguarding Manager receiving a report:

- Must maintain confidentiality and sharing information using CPOMS and on a need-to-know basis with relevant individuals and cooperating fully with statutory agencies
- Signpost useful helplines and websites, counselling or other avenues of external support
- Follow the guidance and procedures in other safeguarding related policies including low-level concerns, whistleblowing, complaints and allegations of abuse against staff policies.
- Nominate a case lead (Departmental DSO) who will keep all parties informed and be the central point of contact
- Where a member of staff is the subject of an allegation made by a learner or participant, case leads will be either the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Manager to avoid any conflict of interest and the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy must be followed.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY

No guarantee of confidentiality can be given to a child (although this does not necessarily mean that the parents or carers must be told). A safeguarding matter is confidential on a need-to-know basis and nobody should have any reservations about referring any issue to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Manager.

The key issue is that the welfare of the child is protected.

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A child should never be pressured to give information or show physical marks unless they do so willingly. If they choose to show markings, two members of staff should be present and any marks raising concern should be recorded in detail (size, colour, amount) on the incident log and the body map completed.

Injuries/marks should never be photographed by staff or volunteers.

16. COURT ORDERS & SUPERVISION ORDERS

It is important that if staff become aware of any court orders in place relating to a child or young person that a copy of that order is requested to enable staff to support the child in relation to that order. The order should be uploaded to CPOMS and deleted from all other documentation.

17. REPORTING & RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS

Detailed procedures are written in the RUCT Reporting and Recording Policy.

Important points include:

- Child words should be reported exactly as they are said
- Full names should be used on CPOMS and staff roles identified
- Any opinion, interpretation or judgement should be clearly stated as this
- Any actions or what you have said to or done for the child must be reported.

18. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF & LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

If the concern involves an allegation about any member of RUCT's staff (whether full time, part time, paid, unpaid, contracted, engaged, voluntary etc.) and RUCT believes that the report could demonstrate that the member of staff in question has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates he or she is unsuitable to work with children

Then our Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy must be followed.

All other concerns by way of poor practice should prompt the use of our Low-Level Concerns Policy.

19. COMPLAINTS

If any learner, participant or their family wishes to raise a concern about poor practice in sessions or on programmes by our organisation or an individual then our complaints procedure should be followed. Details of the complaints procedure and an initial enquiry form can be found on the RUCT website under 'Policies & Procedures'

Should you feel unconfident in reporting to RUCT OR that you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern you can approach the following people/organisations:

FA Safeguarding

Tel: 0800 169 1863 # 6300 (during office hours Mon-Fri excluding bank holidays)

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or

Designated Safeguarding and Welfare Officer, Sheffield and Hallamshire County FA - support@SheffieldFA.com

Tara Lawson, English Football League, EFL House, 10-12 West Cliff, Preston, PR1 8HU, tlawson@efltrust.com

Charity Commission - Charity Commission –
whistleblowing@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk

NSPCC

Contact the Advice Line

Call 0800 028 0285 Email help@nspcc.org.uk

Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000

20. LEGAL FRAMEWORK – RULES, REGULATIONS & GUIDANCE THIS POLICY SUPPORTS

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Data Protection Act 1998
Equality Act 2010
Children Act 1989 & 2004
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2017)
Keeping Children Safe in Education
FA Safeguarding Children standards and guidance
EFL in the Community Safeguarding standards and guidance
Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board

21. RELATED RUCT POLICIES

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents. These policies can be located in the Employee Handbook, Staff SharePoint, RUCT website or from your line manager.

Safeguarding Adults At Risk Policy
Low-Level Concern Policy
Reporting & Recording Policy
Safer Recruitment Policy
Recruitment Of Ex-Offenders Policy
Transport Policy
Allegations Of Abuse Against Staff Policy
Anti Bullying Policy
Behaviour Policy
Home Visiting Policy
Lockdown & Intruder Policy
Prevent Policy
Online Safety Policy
Health And Safety Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Information Sharing Policy
Staff & Participant Codes Of Conduct

This policy is reviewed bi-annually and was last reviewed:

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Chairman of RUCT:

Dated: September 2023

Head of Community:

Dated: September 2023

APPENDIX ONE: Signs & Indicators of Harm & Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

In respect of children, the Football Association of England defines abuse into five categories. These help to explain what abuse and harm is. The categories are based on the Working Together 2015 mandatory guidance published by the UK Government. They also form the foundation of the "International Safeguards" framework and are: **neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.**

The FA regard **bullying** within football as the as the 5th form of child abuse and incidents of bullying should be given equal importance when reporting concerns regarding a child's welfare and safety.

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Should you have any concern that child abuse is occurring you should contact a member of the Safeguarding Team immediately

RUCT recognises 'hazing' as a form of abuse; "hazing is any action or situation, with or without the consent of the participants, which recklessly, intentionally, or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or academic health or safety of a person"; this is a term that originates in the United States but is becoming more widely used.

NEGLECT

Neglect takes place if adults fail to meet a child or young person's basic physical needs, e.g. for food, warmth and clothing, or emotional needs such as attention and affection. It occurs if children or young people are left alone or inadequately supervised or where they are exposed to danger, injury or extreme weather conditions.

In Group activities, neglect could occur if children or young people do not have proper supervision, clothing or are allowed or encouraged to play whilst injured. It could occur if a child or young person's needs are disregarded before, during, or after a game or training.

Examples of neglect could include:

- Not ensuring children or adults at risk are safe
- Exposing them to extremes of heat, cold or extreme weather conditions without ensuring adequate thermal protection or hydration
- Exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury by ignoring safe practice guidelines or failing to ensure the safe use of equipment.
- By requiring young people to participate when injured or unwell

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse occurs if people physically hit, throw, bite, scald, suffocate, drown, burn, poison, shake or in some way hurt or injure children and young people, or fail to prevent these injuries from happening. This category of abuse can also include when a parent or carer reports non-existent symptoms of illness or deliberately causes ill health in a child they are looking after, known as fabrication and induced illness.

In sport, physical abuse could happen where training methods are inappropriate for the developmental age of the child or young person, where they are allowed to play with an injury or where inappropriate drugs or alcohol are offered or accepted. It would clearly happen if a child or young person is hit or physically restrained or manhandled by those supervising the game or training session.

Examples of physical abuse in sport may be:

- When the nature and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.
- Where the child is given drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty.
- When sanctions imposed by coaches involve inflicting pain.
- When harmful physical initiations or challenges are set by peers. (Hazing)

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Examples of emotional abuse include frequent and/or persistent threatening, taunting or sarcastic behaviour, along with with-holding affection or being extremely over-protective. It includes racist or sexist behaviour and demeaning initiation

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ceremonies. It can be inflicted by other children and young people as well as by adults. Children and young people who are being abused or bullied in any way will also experience emotional abuse.

In sport, coaches or parents emotionally abuse children and young people if they constantly criticise, abuse their power, or impose unrealistic pressure to perform to a high standard. It may also occur if a club allows members to deride people with disabilities or from minority cultures and use derogatory language about them.

Examples of emotional abuse in sport include:

- Subjecting children to constant criticism.
- Name-calling.
- Sarcasm.
- Bullying.
- Racism.
- Putting a child under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high
- Expectations.
- When a child's value or worth is dependent on sporting success or achievement.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse occurs if children or young people are used to meet another person's sexual needs. This includes any form of sexual behaviour with a child or young person (by an adult or another child or young person), the use of sexually-explicit language and jokes, inappropriate touching and exposure to pornographic material.

Sexual abuse can occur in sporting settings. For example, where there is inappropriate touching, or where sexually-explicit jokes occur between adults and children or young people or if indecent images are taken or adapted and placed on child pornography sites.

The following are all examples of sexual abuse:

- Rape, sexual assault.
- Engaging in sexual activity with a child.
- Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity, such as encouraging them to have sexual activity with another person, or to perform sexual acts on-line.
- Engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child.
- Causing a child to watch a sex act, which may include pornographic videos or online pornography.
- Making, possessing or distributing indecent images of a child.
- Sexual Communication with a Child. This new offence criminalises a person aged 18 years or over who, for sexual gratification, communicates with a child under 16 if the communication is sexual or if it is intended to elicit from the child a communication which is sexual. (It will apply to oral communications and written notes as well as to e-mails and text messages).
- Grooming - when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.
- Coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children can create situations where sexual abuse can be disguised or go unnoticed. A child or young person may feel unable to refuse sexual advances if they feel their future within a team could be jeopardised.
- Sexting - sharing sexually explicit images, videos or messages via mobile phones.
- Relationships of trust, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people, (or a third person or persons) receive something, (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.

Violence, coercion and intimidations are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child's or young person's limited availability of choice, resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Key facts:

- Sexual exploitation often starts around the age of 10 years old. Girls are usually targeted from age 10 and boys from age 8 and it affects both girls and boys and can happen in all communities.
- Any person can be targeted but particularly: Adults at risk, Looked after Children, Children Leaving Care and Children with Disabilities.
- Victims of Child Sexual Exploitation may also be trafficked (locally, nationally and internationally).

CSE disclosures should follow normal safeguarding reporting protocols.

FORCED MARRIAGE:

Where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. This is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic and/or sexual violence against women and men and is a serious abuse of human rights. Where it affects children and young people it is child abuse.

HONOUR BASED ABUSE/VIOLENCE:

Honour based abuse (HBA) or violence (HBV) can be described as a collection of practices, which are used to control behaviour within families or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such violence can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It is a violation of human rights and may be a form of domestic and/or sexual violence. Where it affects children and young people it is child abuse. It can be distinguished from other forms of abuse and violence, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members. Women, men and younger members of the family can all be involved in the abuse. Victims of honour-based abuse are more likely to be abused multiple times by multiple perpetrators. Honour based abuse and violence manifests itself in a diverse range of ways with children and young people, it can lead to a deeply embedded form of coercive control, built on expectations about behaviour that are made clear at a young age. Often the control is established without obvious violence for instance through family members threatening to kill themselves because of the victim's behaviour. Honour based abuse can also include forced marriage (approximately 1 in 5 cases), domestic and/or sexual violence, rape, physical assaults, harassment, kidnap, threats of violence (including murder), witnessing violence directed towards a sibling or indeed another family member, and female genital mutilation. Do not underestimate the potential risk of harm.

'ONE CHANCE RULE':

All staff working with suspected or actual victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence need to be aware of the "one chance" rule. That is, they may only have one opportunity to speak to a victim or potential victim and may possibly only have one chance to save a life. If the victim is allowed to leave without the appropriate support and advice being offered, that one chance might be wasted.

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FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

If you suspect a child or woman has experienced FGM you must report your concerns so appropriate support and action can be taken. If you think a child may be at risk there are steps you can take to help protect them and prevent them from experiencing FGM. Reporting your concerns, if you think that a child may be at risk of female genital mutilation or if you suspect that FGM has already happened, even if it's not recently, you must seek help and advice following the reporting procedure. The legislation for this is the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or have been in a relationship. It can also happen between adults related to one another. It can seriously harm children and young people, and experiencing domestic abuse is child abuse.

It's important to remember that domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Types of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, economic, coercive or psychological, such as:

- kicking, hitting, punching, cutting or throwing objects
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill someone or harm them
- threatening to another family member or pet.

GROOMING

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with an individual to gain their trust for the purposes of abuse or exploitation.

Many children or adults at risk don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse. Grooming happens both online and in person. Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time (this could be years) gaining an individual's trust. They may also try to gain the trust of the whole family so they can be alone with the person.

Grooming activity may include:

- offering advice or understanding

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- buying gifts
- giving the child attention
- using their professional position or reputation
- Taking them on trips, outings or holidays.
- using secrets and intimidation to control children

Once they have established trust, groomers will exploit the relationship by isolating the individual from friends or family and creating a dependent relationship. They will use any means of power or control to make the individual believe they have no choice but to do what they want. Groomers may introduce 'secrets' as a way to control or frighten the individual. Sometimes they will blackmail them, or make them feel ashamed or guilty, to stop them telling anyone about the abuse.

RADICALISATION:

The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Anybody from any background can become radicalised. The grooming of Children, Young People and Adults at Risk for the purposes of involvement in extremist activity is a serious safeguarding issue.

CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE):

Child Criminal Exploitation can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others.

COUNTY LINES:

The organised criminal distribution of drugs by gangs from the big cities into smaller towns and rural areas using Children, Young People and Adults at Risk. Gangs recruit Children, Young People and Adults at Risk through deception, intimidation, violence, debt, bondage and/or grooming. Gangs also use local property as a base for their activities, and this often involves taking over the home of an Adult at Risk who is unable to challenge them. County line gangs pose a significant threat to Children, Young People and Adults at Risk upon whom they rely to conduct and/or facilitate such criminality.

CUCKOOING:

Cuckooing is a term often linked to county lines. Cuckooing is when gangs establish a base in the location they are targeting for drug dealing and to operate their criminal activity from, often taking over the homes of adults at risk by force or coercion. People exploited in this way will quite often be exposed to physical, mental and sexual abuse, and in some instances will be trafficked to areas a long way from home as part of the network's drug dealing business. Victims of 'cuckooing' are often drug users but can include older people, those suffering from mental or physical health problems, female sex workers, single mums and those living in poverty. Victims may suffer from other forms of addiction, such as alcoholism.

BULLYING & HAZING (IN LINE WITH THE ANTI-HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY)

Although anyone can be the target of bullying, children and young people who are perceived as "different" from the majority may be at greater risk of bullying. This includes children and young people from minority cultures or children and young people with disabilities. Victims are often shy and sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Bullying can be defined as:

Bullying can include:

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- Physical: hitting, kicking and theft, taking of possessions
- Verbal: name calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racist or homophobic taunts, threats
- Emotional: tormenting, mobile text messaging, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, constant teasing and Racist or homophobic taunts. Also threats or gestures and sexually abusive or insulting comments.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments and online "cyberbullying," using abusive texts or humiliating images.

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate further if a child:

- says he or she is being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions
- Regularly presents with clothing torn or training equipment damaged.
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Action to Help the Victim and Prevent Bullying

RUCT has a duty of care and should:

- Take all signs and complaints of bullying very seriously. Bullying is not "banter"
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Create an open environment.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else. Keep records of what is said - What happened? Who is involved? When & Where? (Using the CPOMS report form).
- Report any bullying concerns or allegations to the Safeguarding Officer who will report the incident to the Safeguarding lead who will coordinate the investigation and assess whether the circumstances require the involvement of Police or Social Services.
- Seek advice from the Safeguarding Manager as to further action and who is to inform parent/carer of the child.
- With the guidance of the Safeguarding Manager, assist in the Investigation of allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe and supported.
- Report any signs of self-harm, or intentions to self-harm, immediately.
- Preserve any evidence e.g. torn clothing, abusive text messages etc.
- Regularly reinforce the trust's anti-bullying stance, and expected level of behaviour and conduct, to players and parents.
- Encourage teamwork, inclusion, tolerance and acceptance of other's differences and promote communication and collaboration among players.

Action towards the Bully (ies):

Following consultation with the Safeguarding Manager the following actions may be taken, where appropriate:

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- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated, risk assessed and steps to stop the bullying behaviour will be put in place immediately. If necessary and appropriate, the police and/or Social Services will be consulted
- Parents of the bully (ies) will be informed and asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour and to understand the consequences of their actions. Seek an apology to the victim(s) and, where appropriate, insist on the return of any borrowed items and that the bully (ies) compensate the victim for any loss.
- Issue a warning as to future conduct: If the bullying continues a more severe approach will be taken under the disciplinary policy.
- Hold meetings with the family (ies) involved to report on progress.
- Impose sanctions or exclude the offender(s), where necessary.
- Ensure relevant coaching staff are aware of the outcome and that they monitor the situation to reduce the chances of re-occurrence.
- A written record of action taken and outcome of the complaint will be kept by on CPOMS for future reference.

Bullying can take place anywhere but is more likely to take place where there is inadequate supervision. In sport it is more likely to take place in the changing rooms or on the way to and from the pitch - but can also take place at a training session or in a competition. Attention must be given to potential for child-on-child bullying and abuse.

Hazing involves coercing, requiring, forcing or wilfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity that serves as a condition for joining a group or being socially accepted by a group's members.

Sport's competitive nature can create and even support an environment for the bully if individuals and the Club are unaware. The bully in sport can be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach or manager who has a win-at-all costs philosophy; a child or young person intimidating another; or an official who places unfair pressure on a child or young person. The victim is often weaker and less powerful, and the outcome is always painful and distressing.

RUCT acknowledges that all settings in which children are provided with services, or are living away from home, should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place. Bullying can lead to physical injury, social problems, emotional problems, and even death. Children and adolescents who are bullied are at increased risk for mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, headaches, and problems adjusting to school. Bullying also can cause long-term damage to self-esteem.

Children can be bullied by an adult or by another child (ren), however, any allegations of bullying by a member of staff towards a child or young person will be fully investigated and dealt with as a potential breach of the Clubs code of conduct. Disciplinary action will be considered if appropriate. In serious cases of bullying, for example where physical or sexual assaults have allegedly occurred, then those cases will be referred to Children's Services and/or the Police by the Club's Lead Safeguarding Officer.

General Signs and indicators

Children and young people are reluctant to tell someone when they are being abused, so it is essential that every adult is aware of the possible signs and indicators that a child and young person's welfare or safety is being threatened. However, there is rarely a clear sign, and you may often have to piece together various snippets of information and rely on your instinct that something does not seem quite right. Never allow a child or young person's disability or cultural difference to explain away concerns.

You may have one piece of information that, when added to that of others, forms a clear picture of abuse. This is often compared to fitting pieces of a jigsaw together. Only when you have a few pieces can you start to see the true picture.

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Remember, it is not your job to decide whether a child or young person is being abused - however it is your responsibility to share your concerns.

There are some behaviours that are commonly seen in children and young people who have been abused:

- The child appears distrustful of a particular adult, or a parent or a coach, with whom you would expect there to be a close relationship.
- He or she has unexplained injuries such as bruising, bites or burns – particularly if these are on a part of the body where you would not expect them.
- If he or she has an injury which is not explained satisfactorily or properly treated.
- A deterioration in his or her physical appearance or a rapid weight gain or loss.
- Pains, itching, bruising, or bleeding in or near the genital area.
- A change in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unexpectedly aggressive. Such changes can be sudden or gradual.
- If he or she refuses to remove clothing for normal activities or wants to keep covered up in warm weather.
- If he or she shows inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour for their age.

Some disabled children may not be able to communicate verbally about abuse that they may be experiencing or have witnessed and so it is important to observe these children for signs other than 'telling'. Remember that the above signs should be seen as a possible indication of abuse and not as a confirmation. Changes in a child's behaviour can be the result of a wide range of factors. Even visible signs such as bruising or other injuries cannot be taken as proof of abuse without expert opinion. For example, some disabled children may show extreme changes in behaviour, or be more accident prone, because of their impairment. However, if you are concerned about a child or young person you have a responsibility to act on those concerns. A child or young person may also try to tell you directly about abuse. It is very important to listen carefully and respond sensitively.

CYBERBULLYING:

The use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, humiliate, spread rumours or target another person. By definition, it occurs among Children and Young People. When an adult is the victim, it may meet the definition of cyber harassment or cyberstalking.

DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE:

Abusive or bullying behaviour because of discrimination occurs when motivated by a prejudice against certain people or groups of people with protected characteristics. This may be because of an individual's ethnic origin, colour, nationality, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability. Actions may include unfair or less favourable treatment, culturally insensitive comments, insults and 'banter'. Discriminatory behaviour is unacceptable and will be reported to The FA. This includes incidents on and off the pitch (including social media).

CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE:

Children and Young People can be taken advantage of or harmed by another child or young person. Child-on-child abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between individuals and within relationships (both intimate and non-intimate).

APPENDIX TWO – Safeguarding Flowchart

Rotherham United Community Sports Trust Safeguarding Procedure

Safeguarding concern identified/raised



If you cannot ensure the immediate safety of the person(s) involved, do not hesitate to contact the Emergency Services on 101 or 999



If you can ensure the immediate safety of the person(s) involved, follow the guidelines as per the Rotherham United Community Trust Safeguarding Policy.

Remember to reassure the person, take what they say seriously but do not make promises not to tell, make a full record of what was said, seen or heard and keep questions to a minimum (Who, What, Where and When?)



Inform departmental DSO immediately. Complete your CPOMS log as soon as possible
(maximum 12 hours)



The issue may be reported to external organisations if relevant such as RMBC Safeguarding Team /County Football Association/ English Football League Safeguarding Officer etc by the Safeguarding Manager. They may require further information from you so please cooperate fully and keep your DSO informed of any updates.



Updates and outcomes of your referral will be given to you when and where appropriate and necessary. Please ask if you feel an update is overdue.

If you require any support personally RUCT are more than happy to provide this along with any suitable external support pathways

