

**Thanet Wanderers Rugby Union Football Club
Safeguarding Policy**

Community Rugby Club Safeguarding Policy

(In line with RFU Safeguarding Regulations and UK Safeguarding Legislation)

1. Policy Statement

Thanet Wanderers RUFC Rugby Football Club recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk involved in rugby activities.

The club is committed to ensuring that all participants can take part in rugby union in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment free from abuse, neglect or exploitation. The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations.

This policy applies to:

- All players (junior and adult)
- Coaches and assistant coaches
- Volunteers and officials
- Committee members
- Parents, carers and spectators
- Any person acting on behalf of the club

The club adopts and implements the safeguarding policies and procedures of the RFU and complies with all RFU Regulations relating to safeguarding.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy operates in accordance with UK legislation and safeguarding standards including:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (statutory guidance)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010

In addition, the club complies with:

- RFU Safeguarding Policy
- RFU Regulation 21 - Safeguarding
- RFU Age Grade Rugby Regulations
- RFU Codes of Conduct

Under RFU regulations, anyone working with children in rugby must follow safeguarding policies and report concerns to the RFU safeguarding team where appropriate.

3. Definitions

Child

A child is defined as any person under the age of 18 participating in rugby activity.

Adult at Risk

- An adult aged 18 or over who:
- Has care or support needs
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- Is unable to protect themselves

Abuse

Forms of abuse include:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

These definitions align with UK safeguarding guidance and RFU safeguarding procedures.

4. Key Safeguarding Principles

The club adopts the following safeguarding principles:

The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount.

All individuals have the right to protection from abuse regardless of age, gender, race, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

All allegations or suspicions of harm will be taken seriously and responded to promptly.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone involved in the club.

Effective safeguarding requires partnership with parents, carers, statutory agencies and governing bodies.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Club Committee

- The committee will:
- Ensure safeguarding policies are implemented
- Appoint a Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO)
- Ensure safeguarding is a standing agenda item
- Promote safe recruitment and training practices

Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO)

The CSO will:

- Act as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Liaise with the RFU safeguarding team and statutory authorities
- Maintain safeguarding records
- Promote safeguarding awareness within the club
- Ensure safeguarding training compliance

All clubs with an age-grade section must appoint a Club Safeguarding Officer and complete an RFU safeguarding audit annually.

Coaches and Volunteers

- All coaches and volunteers must:
- Follow the club safeguarding policy
- Complete RFU safeguarding training
- Hold appropriate DBS clearance
- Promote safe and respectful behaviour
- Report concerns immediately

Individuals engaged in regulated activity with children must complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check through the RFU process.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers should:

- Support safeguarding practices
- Share relevant medical or welfare information
- Raise concerns with the CSO where necessary

6. Safer Recruitment

The club will ensure safe recruitment procedures including:

- Role descriptions for volunteers
- Completion of RFU DBS checks
- Reference checks where appropriate
- Safeguarding training requirements
- Induction and supervision

No individual may work in regulated activity without appropriate DBS clearance.

7. Codes of Conduct

The club will implement Codes of Conduct for:

- Players
- Coaches
- Parents and spectators
- Match officials

These codes promote a respectful and safe environment and support safeguarding culture within rugby.

8. Good Practice Guidelines

The club expects all adults working with children to:

- Work in open environments where possible
- Avoid being alone with a child where possible
- Ensure two responsible adults are present when supervising groups
- Maintain appropriate physical contact
- Use respectful and inclusive language
- Unacceptable behaviour includes:
 - Inappropriate physical contact
 - Bullying or humiliating behaviour
 - Providing alcohol to minors
 - Sexual or exploitative relationships with children
 - Sharing explicit material with minors

9. Changing Rooms and Facilities

To ensure safe environments:

- Children should be supervised by two DBS-checked adults
- Adults should not change at the same time as children
- Respect for privacy must be maintained

These practices align with RFU safeguarding guidance.

10. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Club Safeguarding Officer.

If a child or adult is in immediate danger, contact:

- Police (999)
- Local safeguarding authority
- The CSO may escalate concerns to:
 - RFU Safeguarding Team
 - Local Authority Children's Services
- Police

All individuals involved in rugby have a duty to report safeguarding concerns.

11. Whistleblowing

The club supports whistleblowing and encourages anyone with safeguarding concerns to report them without fear of reprisal.

Concerns may be reported to:

- Club Safeguarding Officer
- Club Chair
- RFU Safeguarding Team

12. Photography and Social Media

The club will:

- Obtain parental consent for images of children
- Ensure images are used appropriately
- Prohibit sharing images without consent
- Follow RFU social media guidance

13. Trips, Tours and Away Fixtures

For club tours or trips:

- A safeguarding risk assessment will be completed
- Adequate supervision ratios will be maintained
- Emergency contact details will be collected
- Parents will receive written information

14. Safeguarding Training

Relevant club personnel must complete RFU safeguarding training courses, including:

- Safeguarding Children in Rugby Union
- In Touch (for Club Safeguarding Officers)
- Training should be refreshed periodically.

15. Policy Review

This safeguarding policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Updated in line with RFU guidance
- Approved by the club committee

Approval

- Approved by: A Carfoot

- Position: Club Safeguarding Officer
- Date: 26.3.26
- Next review date: 27.3.27