

# Milton Keynes Rugby Union Football Club

## Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

### Introduction

The objective of this document is to provide clarity to staff and volunteers on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Children are defined as anyone who has not yet reached their **18<sup>th</sup> birthday**.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing locally how relevant organisations will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

### Responsibility/Accountability

“All those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including people who do not have a specific role in relation to child protection, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children”. (What To Do If You’re Worried A Child Is Being Abused, 2005).

**Ultimate Responsibility** Milton Keynes Rugby Union Football Club  
(MKRUFC) Committee

**First Line Responsibility** Paul Darton  
MKRUFC Safeguarding Officer

**Other Responsibility** All staff and volunteers for ensuring that the policy and procedure are followed in instances where there are safeguarding children/child protection concerns.

# Safeguarding Children Policy

This policy has been compiled with reference to Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board Inter-Agency Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures 2008. It is based on "Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health Guidance, 2006).

## Confidentiality

In order to protect and safeguard children, all staff and volunteers **must** be aware that it may be necessary to share information that would be regarded as confidential in other circumstances.

## Framework for safeguarding children

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

**Child protection is** a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare; it refers to activity taken to protect children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

**Children in Need** are children defined under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 as those whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services. It includes children who are disabled.

**Significant Harm** is the threshold which justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the children. There are no absolute criteria to define significant harm - it may be a single traumatic event or more commonly a compilation of significant events. Consideration should be given to the severity of ill treatment, duration and frequency of abuse or neglect, extent of premeditation and the presence of threat, coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements. The Local Authority has a duty to make enquiries where it has reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (Section 47, Children Act 1989).

## Background

All children deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential by being enabled to:

- be as physically and mentally healthy as possible
- gain maximum benefit from good quality education
- live in an environment safe from harm
- experience emotional well-being
- feel loved and valued
- become competent in looking after themselves and coping with everyday living
- have a positive image of themselves and a secure sense of identity, including racial and cultural identity
- develop good interpersonal skills and confidence in social situations

Only in exceptional circumstances should there be compulsory, (i.e. Local Authority), intervention in family life and the focus of any intervention must always be the welfare of the child/children.

All staff and volunteers have a key role to play in actively promoting the health and well-being of children. They **must** understand the risk factors, recognise children in need of support and/or safeguarding and know how to respond accordingly. This is important even when staff/volunteers do not work directly with a child but may be seeing their parent, carer or other significant adult.

### **Awareness of Abusive Situations**

Research shows that many families under great stress are able to bring their children up in a warm and caring environment. Nevertheless, stress can have a negative effect on children in some families, either directly or indirectly, particularly when there **is no significant adult** to respond to the child's needs.

#### **Such sources of stress may include:**

**Social factors** – families can be disadvantaged by poor accommodation, low income, health problems or disability, loss and bereavement, lack of access to education and leisure opportunities, racial harassment, etc.

**Domestic violence** – prolonged and/or regular exposure to domestic violence, whether physical or emotional, will have a negative effect on children.

**Mental or physical illness of parent or carer** - may have an adverse impact on children, e.g. it may restrict social and recreational activities, may place additional burdens of caring on a child, may mean the parent is not fully able to respond to the child's needs, or may be unable to protect the child.

### **Categories of Abuse**

Note – the situations given below are only examples and are not meant to be exhaustive.

**Physical Abuse** – includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding or otherwise causing harm to a child. It also includes Fabricated Induced Illness (FII) – previously known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

**Emotional Abuse** – includes conveying to children they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or not valued. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (domestic violence). It may also include inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, children feeling frightened or exposed to danger, exploitation or corruption. Emotional abuse is always involved in all other forms of abuse.

**Sexual Abuse** – involves forcing or enticing children to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. It includes: rape, buggery, touching, grooming of children, showing children pornographic material and exposing them to inappropriate images, involving them in it's production or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Cont.....

**Neglect** – the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic needs – physical, emotional and/or psychological – likely to lead to the serious impairment of the child’s health or development, e.g. failing to provide adequate food or accommodation for a child, failing to protect a child from harm, failing to ensure appropriate medical attention, etc.

## **Indicators of Abuse**

Note – the indicators below are examples and are not meant to be exhaustive.

**Child’s Social Behaviour** – examples include: social isolation, detached, withdrawn, poor concentration, truancy, sudden mood changes, frequent running away from home, self-harming, substance misuse, suicide attempts.

**Physical Abuse** – examples include: cigarette burns, fingernail marks, weal marks, severe bruising and injuries to genital area. It is important to consider if any explanation given fits the injury and the child’s age, developmental level and range of activities.

**Sexual Abuse** – examples include: injuries to breasts or lower abdomen, sexually transmitted disease, severe sleep disturbance including nightmares and crying out in sleep, overt sexual behaviour towards adults or other children, fear of men, fear of bathing, inappropriate affection between adult and child.

**Emotional Abuse** – examples include: persistent verbal or non-verbal negativity towards a child, lack of response to a child, unreasonable demands on a child, a child being continually unsure about what response he/she will get from an adult.

Research shows that children with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse due to a number of factors, including:

- they may have fewer outside contacts than other children
- they may receive intimate personal care from a number of carers
- they may have a reduced ability to resist or avoid abuse
- they may be more vulnerable to abuse and bullying from peers

## **Staff and Volunteer Awareness**

It is imperative that **all** staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They must know the procedure to be followed for reporting concerns.

## **Training**

All staff and volunteers working directly with children, e.g. coaches, should have undertaken basic Safeguarding Children awareness training.

MKRUFC may deem it appropriate that other staff members and volunteers should also undertake this training.

Cont.....

# Safeguarding Children Procedure

**\*\*Please note** - all contact numbers are at the end of this procedure.

This procedure is based on “Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health Guidance, 2006) and must be read in conjunction with the Milton Keynes RUFC Safeguarding Children Policy. A copy of this policy and procedure is available on the club website .

## Confidentiality

In order to protect and safeguard children, all staff and volunteers **must** be aware that it may be necessary to share information that would be regarded as confidential in other circumstances

## Procedure for Reporting Concerns About Children

If you have a concern that a child/children may be at risk of abuse, you should act as follows:

- If there is evidence that the child appears to be in immediate physical danger, your first duty is to notify the Police, Ambulance or Fire and Rescue Service. You must then immediately inform **Paul Darton, MKRUFC Safeguarding Officer**. If he is not available you must inform **Gavin Sturgess, Head of MKRUFC Mini and Junior Section**.
- In all other circumstances you must inform Paul Darton or Gavin Sturgess as soon as possible.
- If the allegation is against a member of staff or volunteer at the MK RUFC, you must follow the above procedure.

The person reporting the concern must keep clear and accurate records of the incident/concerns, including any injuries noted and anything said by the child or relevant adult/s. There must be clear differentiation between facts and opinions. All handwriting must be legible and all records must be signed and dated and given to the MK RUFC Safeguarding Lead or the Head of the Mini and Junior Section as soon as possible.

A record must be kept by the Safeguarding Officer or the Head of the Mini and Junior Section about what action is taken and by whom following the reporting of a concern.

### In all Circumstances -

- **Never** delay emergency action to protect a child.
- **DO NOT** attempt to do any investigative work.

**Note:** All reporting and recording of safeguarding concerns **must** be made on a “needs to know” basis only, i.e. you must only discuss concerns with those who **need** to know.

**Milton Keynes Childrens Social Care** has a responsibility to clarify with the referrer the nature of concerns, how and when they have arisen, and what appear to be the needs of the child and the family. If requested, the staff member or volunteer must participate in any subsequent investigation by Childrens Social Care and/or the Police. This may necessitate a strategy discussion followed by a Case Conference. Written reports may need to be provided.

Any concerns noted regarding a child in the Milton Keynes area must be reported to MK Council Childrens Social Care. If the concern occurs outside the Milton Keynes area, it must be reported to Childrens Services local to that area. If in any doubt, contact MKC Childrens Social Care and they will direct you accordingly.

### **Contact Telephone Numbers**

Paul Darton	MK RUFC Safeguarding Officer	07941 076008
Gavin Sturgess	Head, MKRUFC Mini and Junior Section	07917 503486

### **Children's Social Care Contact Numbers**

	<b>Office Hours</b>	<b>Out of Hours/ Emergency Duty Team</b>
Milton Keynes	01908 253169/253170	01908 265545
North Bedfordshire	01234 223599	0870 238 5465
South Bedfordshire	01582 818499	0870 238 5465
Northamptonshire	01604 790073	01604 626938

Or email [children@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:children@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

### **Allegations made against staff members or volunteers**

This policy and procedure applies to all staff and volunteers and **must** be followed.

### **Further Information can be obtained from:**

1. Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board website – [www.mkscb.org](http://www.mkscb.org). This gives more detailed information about safeguarding children.
2. Leaflet “What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused – Summary” can be downloaded from [www.education.gov.uk/publications](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications)

Cont.....

## **The Involvement of Children and Young People in Milton Keynes Rugby Club Information and Promotional Material**

Children are defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

To ensure the privacy and safety of children known to the MKRUFC is safeguarded, the following code of practice must always be followed:

- Written permission must be obtained from someone with parental responsibility for a child before using that child's image in any outlet, e.g. leaflets, videos, websites, display stands etc.
- If a photograph of a child is displayed, the child's correct name cannot be attached.