

# Roehampton Club

## Child Protection Guidance



### 1. Key Information

- 1.1 Roehampton Club Ltd is referred to in this document as the Club.
- 1.2 A reference to a child in this document is a reference to anyone under the age of 18.
- 1.3 Where applicable, references in this policy to members include a reference to guests or any other persons visiting the Club or using Club facilities (other than employees).
- 1.4 The Club's Welfare Officer is the Human Resources Manager and is identified on the Club's website along with two assistant Welfare Officers the General Manager and Health Club Manager. Each department also has a lead welfare officer who can be identified as the Middle Manager

### 2. Policy aims

- 2.1 This Guidance is intended to promote the objectives and principles set out in the Club's Child Protection Policy Statement which may be found in the "Contact Us" and Junior Sections on the Members website. It will also be available at the main Reception in the Clubhouse.
- 2.2 It applies to Club members or anyone visiting the Club. Club employees are subject to separate and more extensive guidance and training requirements.

### 3. Promoting good practice

- 3.1 Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions. It is important that any concern or issue which arises is dealt with calmly and objectively.
- 3.2 Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or contact with young people in order to abuse or harm them. An employee or Member of the Club is likely to have regular contact with children. Members have an important role to play in supporting the Club's efforts to safeguard children.

### 4. Good practice guidelines

- 4.1 All Members are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour both in the interests of children and in order to protect themselves from unjustified allegations.
- 4.2 The following are common sense examples:
  - 4.2.1 Where possible, avoid private or unobserved situations, interactions or communications with unaccompanied children.

- 4.2.2 Treat all children equally with respect and dignity.
  - 4.2.3 Put the welfare of the child first.
  - 4.2.4 Adults should respect children's privacy and right to be safe from abuse and harm and not do anything harmful or age inappropriate with or in front of them.
  - 4.2.5 Set a good example showing sport to be fun, enjoyable and based upon fair play.
  - 4.2.6 Whilst providing informal coaching or instruction avoid any form of manual/physical contact with any child other than you own.
- 4.3 The following are unacceptable forms of behaviour at the club:
- 4.3.1 Spending time alone in private with any child (other than your own) at the Club unless engaged in coaching or caring capacity with the prior permission of parents
  - 4.3.2 Engaging in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
  - 4.3.3 Engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
  - 4.3.4 Striking any child.
  - 4.3.5 Acting or dressing immodestly or engaging in any behaviours with sexual connotations in the presence of any child.
  - 4.3.6 Engaging in exhibitionist behaviours involving nudity in the presence of children.
  - 4.3.7 Subjecting any child to physical intimidation.
  - 4.3.8 Using inappropriate language in the presence of children.
  - 4.3.9 Making sexually suggestive comments to or about a child or children.
  - 4.3.10 Humiliating or shouting at a child or reducing him or her to tears.
  - 4.3.11 Allowing allegations relevant to this guidance made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon.
- 4.4 *Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events*
- 4.4.1 Only film or take photos of children (other than your own) with the express consent of their parents or the child and be clear what the photos/videos will be used for. Only publish/onwardly transmit with the permission of their parents or the child.
  - 4.4.2 There is general evidence (not related directly to the Club) that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children. Any concerns should to be reported to the Child Protection Officers or the Chief Executive.
  - 4.4.3 There is no intention to prevent Club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, participants and their parents will be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and such films will be stored safely.

## **5. Information for Members relating to the recruitment and training of staff**

### **5.1 Recruitment**

5.1.1 The Club recognises the necessity of ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from having contact or working with children.

5.1.2 For employees pre-selection checks will include the following:

- (a) All employees must complete an application form against a clear job specification. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- (b) Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- (c) Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references will be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact prior to commencement of employment.
- (d) Evidence of identity should be provided (eg passport or driving licence with photo).

### **5.2 Interview and induction**

All employees will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees should receive a formal or informal induction, during which:

5.2.1 A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).

5.2.2 Their qualifications should be substantiated.

5.2.3 The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.

5.2.4 Child protection/Safeguarding procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

### **5.3 Training**

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help employees to:

5.3.1 Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from unjustified allegations.

5.3.2 Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible child abuse.

5.3.3 Respond to any concerns expressed by a child.

5.3.4 Work safely and effectively with children.

## **6. Incidents that must be reported/recorded**

- 6.1 If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to a member of staff who will record the incident and normally inform the child's parents, or arrange for the child's parents to be informed (unless doing so may place the child at increased risk of abuse or harm):
- 6.1.1 If you accidentally hurt a child.
  - 6.1.2 If he/she seems distressed.
  - 6.1.3 If you witness any incident which raises any concern that anyone has acted inappropriately in relation to the Club's Child Protection Policy.

## **7. Dealing with allegations or suspicions - General**

- 7.1 It is not the responsibility of the Club or any employee or officer of the Club to decide whether or not child abuse, or any harm to children has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns. This may include, for example, reports to the police or robust measures to manage any possible risk of abuse or harm to children.
- 7.2 The Club will seek to communicate with a child in a sympathetic and appropriate way, normally in close consultation with the child's parents.
- 7.3 The Club assures all employees and Members that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that an employee, Member or visitor has abused or harmed or may be abusing or harming a child. The Club will view any victimisation or threatened victimisation (whether direct or indirect) of any person raising any concern or providing relevant information as a very serious matter.
- 7.4 The Club will expect any Member who is the subject of any complaint or allegation to provide full and constructive cooperation to the Club in seeking to resolve any issues arising. Every member is expected to support the Club's child protection objectives.
- 7.5 The procedures set out in sections 8 and 9 below may be varied if, in the Board's opinion, the particular circumstances require it. The Club's approach will be based upon the Board's view of the risks in all of the circumstances.
- 7.6 The Club will not be precluded from taking appropriate child protection measures solely on the basis that a Member has not been convicted of any criminal offence nor been the subject of a finding of serious misconduct.
- 7.7 The Club will seek to keep information concerning the allegations and the identity of any children or members involved confidential. The Club may, however, provide information to the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Services in order to safeguard and promote a child's welfare.
- 7.8 Any concern relating to an employee will be dealt with in accordance with the Club's employment procedures.

## **8. Dealing with child abuse/harm allegations or suspicions – Initial Process**

- 8.1 Any concern relating to a member or visitor should be reported immediately to the Welfare Officer, Club's Duty Manager or the Chief Executive. Any urgent concern should be referred to the police or LADO.
- 8.2 The Welfare Officer or Duty Manager will take any action urgently required to make the child or children safe and refer the concern to the HR Manager and Chief Executive at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.3 If the concerns are not serious and there is no concern relating to harm or abuse, the Chief Executive and HR Manager will seek to resolve issues and this may include a discussion and/or advice to any of the individuals concerned. In these circumstances the following provisions of this section 8 may not apply. However, we reserve the right to report all concerns to the police/LADO or NGB of the respected sport if we deem necessary.
- 8.4 If there are concerns that a child is being or may be being harmed or abused, the Chief Executive will consult with the Club's Chairman (and the full Board if necessary) with a view to urgent safeguarding action. This may include the relevant member's immediate suspension, the involvement of police or LADO or referral to NGB. The interests of any child will be considered to be of paramount importance throughout.
- 8.5 Where appropriate, the Chief Executive may, in consultation with the Chairman, inform the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services, and consult with the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services as to what to do. It is likely to be appropriate where there is a suspicion that a criminal offence may have been committed or there is a possible risk of harm to a child that a report to the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services will be required.
- 8.6 If a report to the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services is made, the Club will refrain from any action which might hinder any related Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care investigation.

## **9. Dealing with child abuse/harm allegations or suspicions – Further Process**

- 9.1 Once the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care have completed their investigation(s) and confirmed that the following actions regarding the member involved would not impede any such investigation (and subject to any Children's Social Care Plan), the Chief Executive will:
- 9.1.1 investigate the allegations or suspicions and collate relevant information; and
  - 9.1.2 give the relevant member an early opportunity to provide an open oral explanation and account of events at the time of any alleged incident(s). The Club will expect the Member to be truthful and co-operative in seeking to resolve any issues.
- 9.2 If the Chief Executive considers that any allegations or suspicions are credible and does not consider any explanation offered by the relevant member satisfactory, the member will be provided with written information as to any allegations or suspicions, and related evidence, and be given an opportunity to attend a meeting with three directors of the Club to provide a further

explanation and/or representations. The member may be accompanied by a friend or representative who may be legally qualified.

9.3 The matter will then be referred to the Board for consideration. Before the Board considers the matter the Member will be given a reasonable opportunity to provide a further written explanation and written representations to the Board.

9.4 When considering the matter:

9.4.1 the Board will adopt a risk based approach and consider the best interests of the Club as a whole, taking into account all of the circumstances including but not limited to a paramount concern for the interests of any children concerned and junior members generally, the member's representations and response generally, the outcome of any police and/or children's social care investigation and fairness to all those involved; and

9.4.2 the Board will consider the circumstances generally and whether any allegations remain credible or whether concerns have been resolved; and

9.4.3 the Board will decide what measures, if any, are appropriate.

9.5 The Board shall not attempt to determine whether the Member is, or is not, guilty of any criminal offence or other misconduct.

9.6 Any decision to suspend or terminate a membership may be subject to reconsideration in accordance with the Club's Rules.

9.7 Any decision to terminate a membership will be communicated in confidence to the Member and the parents of any child concerned in writing with a summary of reasons.

## **10. Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse**

10.1 Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. In addition to Children's Social Care and GP and Health Services, the following may be useful in this regard:

*The British Association for Counselling Directory* is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189.

*Childline* – Tel: 0800 1111

*Victim Support* – Tel: 0845 30 30 900

*NSPCC* – 0808 800 5000

*Or contact the appropriate National Governing Body of the sport*

10.2 Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

## **11. Allegations of previous abuse/harm**

11.1 Allegations of abuse or harm to children may be made long after the relevant event.

11.2 Where such an allegation is made, the Club should follow the procedures as detailed above (including reporting the matter to the Police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services if appropriate). This is because other children may be at risk of being harmed or abused by this person.

**12. Action to help the victim and prevent bullying**

12.1 The Club's Guidance for employees deals with issues relating to bullying at length. Staff are expected to take the lead in combating bullying behaviours.

12.2 Members should, however, be aware of the issue and avoid any behaviour which may amount to bullying of children. If any member witnesses any behaviour they consider to amount to bullying they should report it immediately to a member of staff.

**13. Status of the Policy, Guidance and Procedures**

The Club may from time to time change and update these documents. They represent the Club's approach to the matters with which they deal but are not intended to create any legally enforceable obligation upon the Club or any member. Insofar as they are inconsistent with the Club's Rules or Memorandum and Articles, then the Rules or Memorandum and Articles prevail.

March 2021