



Northumberland Rugby Union Referees' Society Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1.0 Keeping Children and Adults Safe

- 1.1 Safeguarding is a matter taken very seriously by Northumberland Rugby Referees' Society (NRURS) and all its members. We will use the [RFU Safeguarding policy](#) as the framework that we work within.
- 1.2 NRURS understand that when officiating rugby where children are playing, we will look to ensure that we provide a safe, secure and enjoyable environment, and adhere to the principles laid out in section 7 of the [Age Grade Rugby Code of Practice](#) and [RFU Regulation 21](#).
- 1.3 NRURS has a dedicated Safeguarding Officer, if you have any concerns or questions please contact them on the contact e-mail address or telephone number below in Section 2.0.
- 1.4 To endeavour to ensure we deliver this safe environment for both young players and young match officials to enjoy their rugby experience we will undertake the following activities and actions:
 - 1.4.1 We will, wherever practicable, appoint a DBS checked referee to U18 matches. As part of their DBS checking process they will have undertaken the RFU e-Learning "Introduction to Safeguarding" course and have read and will adhere to the RFU Safeguarding Policy.
 - 1.4.2 NRURS will run "Play it Safe" Courses and seminars for its members and CMODs, in line with RFU Best Practice.
 - 1.4.3 Safeguarding will be a standing item on the agenda of all NRUR Limited Management Meetings.
 - 1.4.4 Under 18 Match Officials will only be managed and mentored by members whom have a current DBS and have undertaken the "Introduction to Safeguarding" course.
 - 1.4.5 Under 18 Match Officials will have a Chaperone appointed to all of their Appointments [RFU Regulation 12.1.4]. [Link](#)
 - 1.4.6 Under 18 Match Officials will receive a presentation on what NRURS will do to support them to be safeguarded themselves, we will also invite their parents.
 - 1.4.7 Videoing Games/Referees for Training/Development:
 - If the society wishes to video an U18 Game – they must have permission from BOTH clubs.
 - If the society wishes to video an U18 Referee – they must have the referee's parent/guardian permission.
- 1.5 NRURS will review the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy annually and update as required.

2.0 Contact numbers

NSPCC 24 hour Freephone: [0800 800 5000](tel:08008005000)

RFU Safeguarding Line (an unmanned 24 hour answerphone service): [0208 831 6655](tel:02088316655)

Northumberland Rugby Referees' Society Safeguarding Officer: James Ritchie, [07785 915687](tel:07785915687)

RFRU Safeguarding Manager, Bruce Marshall: [Link to RFRU website](#)

3.0 Resources to be consulted for up to date safeguarding advice and recommendations

England Rugby – [Safeguarding Children](#)

England Rugby – [Safeguarding Adults](#)

England Rugby – [Sharing Concerns and Reporting an issue](#)

The Child Protection In Sport Unit (CSPU) - [Keeping Children Safe in Sport](#)

NSPCC – [What to do if you suspect abuse or are concerned about the welfare of a child](#)

If you suspect any concerns around safeguarding, do not hesitate to seek advice.

In an emergency, if a child is in immediate danger, call 999.

4.0 Child protection policy

4.1 Northumberland Rugby Referees' Society have adopted the RFU's Safeguarding Policy.

4.1.1 When refereeing young players, match officials should:

- Recognise the importance of fun and enjoyment when officiating young players
- Appreciate the needs of the players
- Be a positive role model
- Recognise that safety is paramount
- Provide positive verbal feedback during games
- Explain decisions – most young players are still learning
- Not tolerate verbal abuse

5.0 Match Officials MUST NOT:

- Change in the same area as young players or Young Match Officials
- Shower with young players or Young Match Officials – agree with the coaches a timetable
- Be alone with young players or Young Match Officials at any time – if a young player or Young Match Officials comes into the dressing room ensure another adult is present
- Unless in an emergency, administer first aid
- Check studs without the coach being present
- Allow a young player to continue playing if you have doubts about their fitness to do so
- Tolerate bad language from young players
- Use Bad Language
- Overtly criticise young players or use language which may cause the player to lose confidence or self esteem
- Make sexually explicit remarks to young players even in fun
- Engage in any inappropriate contact with young players
- Give a lift to a player or Young Match Official unless there are other young people or adults in the car and the parents are aware and informed
- Take a young player or Young Match Official to your home

6.0 Match Officials MUST ALWAYS:

- Report, in writing, to the Club or CB Safeguarding Officer and/or the RFU Safeguarding Team, behaviour by adults which you feel contravenes the RFU Safeguarding Policy
- Report verbal bullying by coaches/parents/spectators
- Report physical abuse by coaches/parents/spectators
- Report inappropriate or aggressive contact by an adult to a young person
- Report verbal abuse directed at you by young people or adults

REMEMBER “The welfare of all young people is paramount”



Signed:

James W Ritchie, NRUR Limited Director and Safeguarding Officer
(on behalf of Northumberland Rugby Union Referees' Society)

Start Date of Policy: 1 August 2025

Review by: 31 July 2026