

Sale Sharks Foundation Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

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Section 1: Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Policy Statement

The Sale Sharks Foundation believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status.

The Foundation is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution. We acknowledge that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved.

The Sale Sharks Foundation recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.

The Sale Sharks Foundation recognises that there is a legal framework within which sports need to work to safeguard adults who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

Actions taken by The Sale Sharks Foundation will be consistent with the principles of adult safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to recognise that the welfare and interests of children and young people are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that all children and young people:

- Have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at the Sale Sharks Foundation in a safe and child centred environment.
- Are protected from abuse whilst participating in rugby provided by the Sale Sharks Foundation or outside of the activity.
- And their families, staff and volunteers are provided with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

We acknowledge that some children, including disabled children or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

The Sale Sharks Foundation is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding children and young people.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding children and young people.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person within the organisation.

Scope

This safeguarding children policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in The Sale Sharks Foundation including Trustees, Staff, Coaches, and Volunteers and to all concerns about the safety of children and young people whilst taking part in our organisation, its activities and in the wider community.

We expect our partner organisations, including for example, affiliated clubs, suppliers and sponsors to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice as set out in this Safeguarding Children Policy and associated procedures.

Commitments

In order to implement this policy The Sale Sharks Foundation will ensure that:

We promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

- Everyone involved with The Sale Sharks Foundation is aware of their roles and responsibilities in respect to safeguarding children and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns related to children and young people.
- We value, listen to and respect children.
- Robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.
- We provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about our policies, procedures and behaviour codes and follow them confidently and competently.
- Appropriate action is taken in event of all incidents or concerns, both lower and concerns of abuse, and support provided to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern.
- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- The Sale Sharks Foundation acts in accordance with best practice advice, for example, from UK Sport, Sport England, the RFU, NSPCC, Ann Craft Trust.
- The Sale Sharks Foundation will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard an child or young person.
- The Sale Sharks Foundation uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of volunteers and staff to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation and within the sporting community.
- They appoint a nominated safeguarding lead for children and young people, a deputy and a trustee for safeguarding.
- When planning activities and events The Sale Sharks Foundation includes an assessment of, and risk to, the safety of all children and young people from abuse and neglect and designates a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.
- They share information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their parents via leaflets, posters, group work and one to one discussions.
- That children, young people and their parents/carers know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed by the Board and senior management team on an annual basis.
- Sale Sharks Foundation recognises its duty of care under the Online Safety Act 2023. We are committed to promoting safe online behaviours, preventing online grooming, harm and abuse, and ensuring that any digital platforms, communication channels or online learning environments used by staff, volunteers or participants are safe and appropriate.
- This policy, related policies (see below) and the Safeguarding Children Procedures are reviewed no less than on a two yearly basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Board, UK Sport, Sport England and the RFU or as a result of any other significant change or event.

Implementation

The Sale Sharks Foundation is committed to developing and maintaining its capability to implement this policy and procedures. In order to do so the following will be in place:

- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for the safety and welfare of all children and young people.
 - Access to relevant legal and professional advice.
 - Regular management reports to the Board detailing how risks to child safeguarding are being addressed and how any reports have been addressed.
 - Safeguarding children and young people procedures that deal effectively with any concerns of abuse or neglect, including those caused through poor practice.
 - A Safeguarding Lead (see Appendix 1).
 - A delegated Safeguarding Lead for events /camps/ festivals.
 - Arrangements to work effectively with other relevant organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, including arrangements for sharing information.
 - Codes of conduct for Trustees, Staff, Coaches, and Volunteers that specify zero tolerance of abuse in any form.
 - Risk assessments that specifically include safeguarding of children and young people.
 - Policies and procedures that address the following areas and which are consistent with this Safeguarding Children policy.
- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Safeguarding Adults✓ Bullying and harassment✓ Social Media✓ Equality, diversity and inclusion✓ Safe activities risk assessments✓ Code of Conducts and a process for breach of these - Staff, Coaches, Volunteers✓ Discipline and grievance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Health and Safety✓ Concerns, Complaints and Compliments✓ Whistleblowing✓ Safe recruitment and selection (staff and volunteers)✓ Contract compliance✓ Information policy, data protection and information sharing |
|--|---|

Section 2: Supporting Information

Safeguarding Children

Legislation

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance.

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023/24

Local safeguarding partners are responsible for child protection policy, procedure and guidance at a local level. The local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory safeguarding partners:

- the local authority
- the integrated care board (ICB, previously clinical commissioning group or 'CCG')
- the police.

At the Sale Shark Foundation, for any activity involving Rugby Union the RFU safeguarding team will lead communication with local safeguarding partners after a [referral](#) is made. Whilst any our partner Education providers will lead communication with local safeguarding partners after a referral is made on an Education programme.

Definition 'child' and 'young person'

In England a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their **18th birthday**.

Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- living independently
- in further education
- a member of the armed forces
- in hospital; or
- in custody in the secure estate

they are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (Department for Education, 2018a).

Roles and responsibilities

All staff, and volunteers working on behalf of the Sale Sharks Foundation must recognise their duty around safeguarding. They should also feel confident to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children and young people and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner. Sale Sharks Foundation acknowledges it has a responsibility to:

- Set clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people through the provision of training, education, policies and procedures.
- Ensure robust Safer recruitment procedures are in place taking into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, including arrangements for appropriate checks on staff and volunteers.
- Create a culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with children and young people seeking their views in ways appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Provide safeguarding training for all staff from the point of their induction, and this will be updated regularly, to ensure they are confident in:
 - The Foundation's legislative responsibilities
 - Their personal responsibilities
 - The Foundation's policy and procedures
 - The need to recognise, respond, record.
 - How to support and respond to a child who tells of abuse
- Ensure a senior member of staff is the Foundation's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and has had the relevant training including the RFU's Play it Safe and In Touch courses.
- Have contingency arrangements in place for when the DSL is unavailable.

Abuse and harm

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the child or young person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance.

The NSPCC list the following as types of abuse:

- Bullying / Cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child trafficking
- Criminal exploitation and gangs (County Lines / cuckooing)
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Grooming
- Neglect (Wealth neglect)
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, children who see, hear or experience domestic abuse are recognised as victims in their own right. Any disclosure or concern about domestic abuse involving a child or their family must be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported to the DSL without delay.

Abuse can take place within a sporting context and the person causing harm might be any other person. For example: a member of staff, a coach, a volunteer, a participant or a fan.

Wellbeing Principle

The success of sport, in terms of helping people achieve their potential, making the most of existing talent, and attracting new people to sport relies on putting people – their safety, wellbeing and welfare – at the centre of what sport does. (Duty of Care in Sport Independent Report to Government Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE, DL.)

The concept of 'well-being' is threaded throughout UK legislation and is part of the Law about how health and social care is provided. Our well-being includes our mental and physical health, our relationships, our connection with our communities and our contribution to society.

Being able to live free from abuse and neglect is a key element of well-being.

The legislation recognises that statutory agencies have sometimes acted disproportionately in the past. For example, removing a child or young person at risk from their own home when there were other ways of preventing harm. In the words of Justice Mumby 'What good is it making someone safe when we merely make them miserable?' What Price Dignity? (2010)

For that reason any actions taken to safeguard a child or young person must take their whole well-being into account and be proportionate to the risk of harm.

Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty

In 2010 the Government published the Prevent Strategy, which addresses the specific need to safeguard adults and children from extremism. SSF values freedom of speech and expression of beliefs as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values.

SSF seeks to protect learners from the messages of extremism including, but not restricted to, those linked to political extremism, religious extremism, and animal rights extremism. We are committed to supporting those who are vulnerable to radicalisation and their friends and family.

Increased online learning, use of digital technology and communication can present additional risks to learners in relation to extremism and radicalisation. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, learners may face heightened risks in relation to:

- exposure to hate crime;
- increased vulnerability to radicalisation online; and
- engagement with extremists and fake news.

However, some of these factors may be related to other safeguarding concerns.

Concerns about extremism should be referred to the DSL or Deputy who is the single point of contact. Referrals, where appropriate, will be made through Channel

Peer on Peer Abuse

Children can abuse their peers and this is known as peer-on-peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying).
- Physical abuse, such as, hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm.
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Up skirting – which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. This is now a criminal offence.
- Sexting (also known as Youth Produced Sexual Imagery – YPSI).
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Research indicates that girls and young women are more frequently identified as those who are abused by their peers, whereas boys and young men are more likely to be identified as perpetrators. However, boys and young men report high levels of victimisation in gang-affected neighbourhoods. While young men and young women experience peer-on-peer abuse they do so in gendered ways.

Peer on peer abuse will be minimised by learners understanding British Values and SSF inclusive and strong approach to Equality and Diversity.

Peer on peer abuse will not be tolerated and should never be defined as 'banter, having a laugh or part of growing up.' Instances of Peer-on-peer abuse will be dealt with through the appropriate policies and procedures.

Recording and Information Sharing

All sports organisation must comply with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Information about concerns of abuse includes personal data. It is therefore important to be clear as to the grounds for processing and sharing information about concerns of abuse.

Processing information includes record keeping. Records relating to safeguarding concerns must be accurate and relevant. They must be stored confidentially with access only to those with a need to know.

The Sale Sharks Foundation use the reporting management tool MyConcern. It allows anyone responsible for the protection of children, young people and adults at risk to easily manage and record all safeguarding and wellbeing concerns.

Sharing information, with the right people, is central to good practice in safeguarding Children and Young People. However, information sharing must only ever be with those with a 'need to know'. Including any concern or allegation involving child sexual abuse, which must be reported immediately to the Police and RFU Safeguarding via the DSL. No internal investigation should take place prior to referral.

This does **NOT** automatically include the persons spouse, partner, adult, child, unpaid or paid carer. Information should only be shared with family and friends and/or carers in line with the agreed safeguarding action plan.

The purpose of Data Protection legislation is not to prevent information sharing but to ensure personal information is only shared appropriately. Data protection legislation allows information sharing within an organisation. For example:

- Anyone who has a concern about harm can make a report to an appropriate person within the same organisation
- Case management meetings with the RFU or external agencies to co-ordinate actions by the organisation

If you are in doubt as to whether to share information seek advice from the RFU safeguarding team. Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons to share or not share information.

Positions of Trust

An adult, aged 18 or over, in a position of authority or responsibility over a child or young person is in a position of trust. This is defined by the activity that they carry out in relation to the child, namely, coaching, teaching, training, supervising or instructing, whether they are a paid member of staff or a volunteer. This relationship can be described as one where the adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their role.

It is a criminal offence for any person in a position of trust to have a sexual or intimate relationship with a child or young person under 18 years old, even if the relationship is deemed to be consensual.

Any sexual activity, including online activity between someone in a position of trust and a child or young person should be reported.

Further information

This policy is supported by the following documents:

- Sale Shark Foundation whistleblowing policy
- Sale Shark Foundation Code of Conduct
- Sale Shark Foundation Disciplinary policy
- Sale Shark Foundation flow chart for reporting concerns
- Sale Shark Foundation flow chart for concerns referral
- Sale Shark Foundation GDPR policy

Appendix 1 – Example Role Description: Safeguarding Lead

The designated person within a sports organisation has primary responsibility for putting into place procedures to safeguard adults at risk, supporting club, county and regional welfare/safeguarding leads, where relevant and for managing concerns about adults at risk.

Duties and responsibilities include:

- Working with others within the organisation to create a positive inclusive environment within the sport.
 - Play a lead role in developing and establishing the organisation's approach to safeguarding adults and in maintaining and reviewing the organisation's implementation plan for safeguarding children and young people in line with current legislation and best practice.
 - Coordinate the dissemination of the safeguarding children and young people, procedures and resources throughout the organisation.
 - Contribute to ensuring other policies and procedures are consistent with the organisation's commitment to children and young people.
 - Advise on the organisation's training needs and the development of in-house training.
 - Receive reports of and manage cases of poor practice and abuse reported to the organisation – including an appropriate recording system.
 - Support the RFU in the case management process.
 - Manage liaison with, and referrals to, external agencies in conjunction with the RFU.
- Create a central point of contact for internal and external individuals and agencies concerned about the safety of children and young people within the organisation.

Appendix 2 – Designated Safeguarding Lead Contact Details

Jack Leech (DSL and Interim CEO)

Email: Jack.Leech@SaleSharks.com

Work Mobile: 07355092114

Appendix 3 – Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

A child or young person may confide to a member of staff, coach, volunteer or another participant that they are experiencing abuse inside or outside of the organisation's setting. Similarly, others may suspect that this is the case.

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected. There may be other explanations, but they should not be ignored. The signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- Person has belongings or money going missing.
- Person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions. You may notice that a participant in a team has been missing from practice sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches.
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance. This could be a player whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear suitable sports kit and there is a deterioration in hygiene.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person. For example, a participant may be looking quiet and withdrawn when their brother comes to collect them from sessions in contrast to their personal assistant whom they greet with a smile.
- Self-harm.
- A fear of a particular group of people or individual.
- A parent/carer always speaks for the person and doesn't allow them to make their own choices
- They may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure

Appendix 4 – Safeguarding Flowchart DSL concern referral

STEP BY STEP GUIDE

SAFEGUARDING REPORTING RECORDING A CONCERN



1 RECOGNISE

Recognise potential safeguarding concern

*This may be a direct disclosure.



2 RESPOND

Stay calm

Reassure

Listen without judgement, prompting and interruption.



3 RECORD

Record all in Myconcern within 24 hours (if not sooner) ensuring all the core elements are completed.



LOW LEVEL CONCERN

It may require no action, but ensure you add low level concerns to My Concern. These are important to build a bigger picture.



MEDIUM LEVEL CONCERN

Concerns or suspicion of harm, abuse or neglect. No immediate threat to safety or wellbeing of identified individuals or others



HIGH LEVEL CONCERN

Concerns or suspicion of harm, abuse or neglect. Immediate or significant concerns about the safety or wellbeing of identified individuals or others

Call Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to discuss in detail immediately.
Jack (work) 07355092114



Jack Leech DSL

MY CONCERN



RFU REFERRAL FORM



DSL UNAVAILABLE **CONTACT**

- a) Jack (personal/out of hours) 07763814742
- b) Faye 07355092119
- c) Abi 07355092113



ANY **UPDATES**

Log on MyConcern so we have an accurate and timely record of the situation. If adding to an existing concern you may need Jack to add you to the concern team



ANY **REFERRALS**

If the concern has been referred to an external agency (police, RFU, social services etc) the DSL will keep you updated with its progress and outcomes.



Appendix 5 – RFU Referral Form

SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL FORM



Club Name	
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Date of referral		Crib Notes
Date of incident		If your concern relates to a number of incidents, or concerns which have come to light over a period of time, then please specify.
Referrer details		Name/Club/Role of person submitting this form. Do not assume we know who you are.
Who is this report about?		It may relate to a child whose welfare you are worried about or an adult whose behaviour concerns you. Please specify which & include as much personal information as you can (name, address, DOB, RFU id, school etc). Please also specify their role at the club (player/lead coach/treasurer/barman etc) If your concern relates to more than one person, please be specific about who they are and whether they have specific needs such as any disabilities, special educational needs or additional vulnerabilities. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Child's family	Mother:		If your concern involves children please supply name and contact details for the child's family and details of which parent the child lives with. Always include RFU id if they have one.
	Father:		
	Carer/ Guardian:		
	Siblings:		
Are the child's family aware of these concerns?			You should tell us whether the club has spoken to the child's family about your concerns and whether they expressed a view about what should be done. Do they consent to you sharing this information for the purposes of safeguarding their child?
How do you know about the concerns you are reporting?			You might have directly witnessed something which has concerned you, or someone else may have told you about it. If so please state who and describe in detail in your own words how you have come into this information.

Details of your concerns	When a concern is raised, you should not immediately embark upon an internal investigation. This means that in the initial stages, there is no need to gather statements or interview anyone. However, you will need to establish and gather sufficient information to enable us to understand the nature of your concern. As a rule of thumb, you should be able to tell us the following information: 1. What has happened 2. Where did it happen 3. When did it happen 4. Who is involved, and who did what 5. Why did it happen Try to report in a chronological order. If your information has come to you from a number of individuals, please be clear about who said what. Please also detail any previous concerns about the person you are referring to.
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Has the club taken any action to manage this incident?		Include things such as: Did you call Police or Social Services? Who have you have spoken to about this matter; whether you have suspended an adult in relation to the concerns; anything else you think might be relevant.
Are there any witnesses who could give any information about your concerns?		Please give details of anyone who might have witnessed anything relevant. Include their name, RFU id, contact details and information about who they are.
Are you aware of any other evidence which supports your concerns?		This might include photographs or video footage. Or you may be aware that an injured person has seen a doctor or been to hospital to seek medical help. You can use this box to tell us about any other information which you think might be relevant

Please send this form to safeguarding@rfu.com and inform your **Club Safeguarding Officer** of this referral. If you wish to discuss the referral in advance of submitting it, please speak to your **Safeguarding Officer, CB Safeguarding Manager**, or call the **RFU Safeguarding Team** on 020 8831 7480 or 020 8831 7479

Appendix 6 – Reporting a Concern

When reporting a concern you need to ensure that you complete the report with as much detail as possible, with the minimum included being:

- Name, names of people involved

- Date of Birth – or approximate age
- Details / Key **facts** – not **opinions** – about the concern
- Location
- Any details about potential risk to themselves or others
- Are they registered with any external agencies that we know of?
- Actions taken and who has been told.

The **chronology** is a useful way of gaining an overview and for identifying **patterns** within families and children's lives. It is essential that staff log every action, call, conversation on MyConcern, under the correct concern.

The concern chronology is an analytical tool to help understand the impact, both immediate and cumulative, of events and changes on the child or adult at risk's developmental progress.

The primary function of a chronology is to record **factual information**. It should not contain contentious material, opinion or judgement. The chronology is used to inform an assessment and analysis
Never wait to report a concern or an update –the information to be **FRESH** in your mind.

Appendix 7 – Indicators of Vulnerability

Identity Crisis – the Child or Young Person is distanced from their cultural / religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.

Personal Crisis – the Child or Young Person may be experiencing family tensions, a sense of isolation and low self-esteem; they may have disassociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends; they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.

Personal Circumstances – migration; local community tensions and events affecting the Child or Young Persons country of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.

Unmet Aspirations – the Child or Young Person may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure, rejection of civic life.

Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement / reintegration.

Special Educational Need – the Child or Young Person may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

This list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all Children and Young People experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation and extremism.

More critical risk factors could include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
- Accessing extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
- Possessing or accessing extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations.
- Significant changes to appearance and / or behaviour.
- Experiencing high levels of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and / or personal crisis.