

Rochdale Tennis Club - Safeguarding Policy

November 21

Rochdale Tennis Club is committed to prioritising the well-being of all children and adults at risk, promoting safeguarding in our club at all times, including all programmes and events we run.

This Policy strives to minimise risk, deliver a positive tennis experience for everyone and respond appropriately to all safeguarding concerns/disclosures.

Everyone has a responsibility to help keep others safe, in particular children, other vulnerable people and adults at risk. The committee will be constantly vigilant to prioritising the wellbeing of all members, guests, visitors and other engaged contractors from being exposed to risk, abuse, harassment or harm.

Terminology

Child - a person under the age of eighteen years.

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect - a person aged eighteen years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is, or may be, unable to take care of, or unable to protect him or herself against abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding children - protecting children from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Safeguarding adults at risk - protecting adults from abuse and/or neglect. Enabling adults to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices without coercion. Empowering adults at risk, consulting them before taking action, unless someone lacks the capacity to make a decision, or their mental health poses a risk to their own or someone else's safety, in which case, always acting in his or her best interests.

Harm and Abuse (definitions)

Harm and abuse is identified in several ways:

Physical - This is when someone is deliberately hurt or injured by someone else

Sexual - This is when someone is influenced or forced to take part in a sexual activity. This can be a physical activity or non-physical (such as being made to look at an inappropriate image). This may be as a result of the action of an adult or (another) child and includes any sort of 'grooming' behaviour.

Emotional - This is when someone is made to feel frightened, worthless or inadequate. It can be by shouting at, using threats or making fun of them. It can also be when children, or vulnerable adults, see or hear violent or aggressive situations that may upset them.

Bullying – This is behaviour that hurts someone through things such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, making threats or undermining. It is usually repeated over a sustained period of time and can hurt the victim both physically and emotionally.

Financial – Taking money or goods or property without permission. This can include theft, fraud, exploitation or coercion to carry out a financial transaction.

Grooming - This is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child or vulnerable adult to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation.

Harm and abuse can take place online, on social media platforms or face to face, by a stranger or someone known to the victim.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: NOT RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN IS NOT AN OPTION.

Our club's committee has overall accountability for this Policy and its implementation. All individuals involved in/present at the club are required to adhere to the Policy.

Where there is a safeguarding concern:

The individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern is responsible for following the Reporting a Safeguarding Concern procedure. Unless someone is in immediate danger, they should inform the club Welfare Officer or the LTA Safeguarding Team.

- The club Welfare Officer is responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns to the LTA Safe Safeguarding Team.
- The LTA Safeguarding Team is responsible for assessing all safeguarding concern/disclosures that are reported to them and working with the club Welfare Officer and national Safeguarding Leads to follow up as appropriate on a case-by-case basis, prioritising the well-being of the child/ adult at risk at all times. Dependent on the concern/disclosure, a referral may be made to:
 - The police in an emergency (999)
 - Local Authority Children's Services
 - Local Authority Adult Services
 - Designated Officer (England only) for concerns/disclosures about a member of staff, consultant, coach, official or volunteer
 - Disclosure and Barring Service for concerns/disclosures about a member of staff, consultant, coach, official or volunteer

Breaches of the Safeguarding Policy

Breaches of this Policy and/or failure to comply with the outlined responsibilities may result in the following:

- Disciplinary action leading to possible exclusion from the club, dismissal and legal action
- Termination of current and future roles within the club and roles in other clubs, the LTA, Tennis Wales, Tennis Scotland and the Tennis Foundation.

Actions taken by players, parents or carers, staff, consultants, volunteers, officials, coaches inside or outside of the club that are seen to contradict this Policy may be considered a violation of this Policy.

Where an appeal is lodged in response to a safeguarding decision made by the club, the individual should adhere to the club's Complaints Procedure.

Whistleblowing

Safeguarding children and adults at risk requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. As a club, we are committed to encouraging and maintaining a culture where people feel able to raise a genuine safeguarding concern and are confident that it will be taken seriously.

In the context of safeguarding, "whistle blowing" is when someone raises a concern about the well-being of a child or an adult at risk.

A whistle blower may be:

- a player;
- a volunteer;
- a coach;
- other member of staff;
- an official;
- a parent;
- a member of the public.

Reporting Guidelines

If you think that the safeguarding code of conduct (policy) has been breached at any time, you must report it. Not reporting is not an option!

If anyone discloses a concern:

Stay calm - This will help the immediate situation

Remove them from further harm - Get to a safe place for both of you and seek medical help/further support if required

Reassure – Take any concerns made seriously, they have done the right thing to tell someone and it is not their fault.

Never make promises not to tell – Confidentiality is not an option. You will have to tell someone who can help.

Ask few questions - Let them talk. Don't become an investigator; simply clarify what you have been told/ what they have said.

Make a note – Record what was said at the earliest opportunity. Only note the facts and not your own view.

Contact the Welfare Officer at the earliest opportunity – If it is a serious concern you may need to contact the police or social services immediately.

Be patient - The club will try to keep you informed, when possible, but the club will act in a way that protects all those involved.

Please note – It is **not** your responsibility to investigate allegations of harm or abuse. Questions must be kept to a minimum and any leading questions avoided as this may cause problems for any subsequent investigation. Because the club has legal responsibilities to report harm and abuse to outside agencies, promises of confidentiality must not be given.

Procedure for Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

If a child or an adult at risk is in immediate danger or risk of harm, the police should be contacted by calling 999.

Where a child or an adult at risk is not in immediate danger, any concerns about their well-being should be made without delay to the Club Welfare Officer, Sue Davenport, on 07917 834944. The Club Welfare Officer will pass the details of the concern on to

the LTA Safeguarding Team at the earliest opportunity and the relevant local authority and the police will be contacted, where appropriate.

If, however, the whistle blower does not feel comfortable raising a concern with the Club Welfare Officer, the whistle blower should contact the LTA Safeguarding Team directly on 020 8487 7000, the Rochdale Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO, lado@rochdale.gov.uk) or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

Information to include when raising a concern

The whistle blower should provide as much information as possible regarding the incident or circumstance which has given rise to the concern, including:

- their name and contact details (unless they wish to remain anonymous);
- names of individuals involved;
- date, time and location of incident/circumstance; and
- whether any witnesses were present.

What happens next?

All concerns raised by a whistle blower about the well-being of a child or an adult at risk will be taken seriously and every effort will be made to deal with each concern fairly, quickly and proportionately.

If the whistle blower does not believe that the concern has been dealt with appropriately and wishes to speak to someone outside the club or the LTA Safeguarding Team, the NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line should be contacted on 0800 028 0285 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.

Support

The club will take appropriate action to protect whistle blowers when they raise a concern in good faith. The club will not tolerate any harassment, victimisation or unfair treatment of whistle blowers.