



Newcastle Rugby Limited & Newcastle Rugby Foundation

## **Safeguarding Policy 2025/2026**

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## **1. Introduction**

Newcastle Rugby Ltd, Newcastle Rugby Foundation and Newcastle Falcons Academy are committed to the Safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk of harm. We believe that everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all. The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures is to provide a clear vision and expectations of all staff, volunteers and players about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with child welfare concerns. The policy aims to make explicit the clubs' commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures to keep children and adults at risk, safe during all activities associated with the club and foundation. We expect all staff, players, volunteers, contractors, partners and guests to share this commitment.

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to ensure every child and adult at risk is safe and protected from harm. This means we will always work to ensure that:

- The safety and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, whilst participating in or attending events organised by the club or foundation, is paramount.
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults that engage with the club or foundation, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation have the right to safety and protection from harm.
- All suspicions, reports and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly which may involve the appropriate statutory organisations and/or governing body (RFU/RFL)
- Appropriate action will be taken when necessary, following any allegation of inappropriate behaviour or poor practice.

Our Club, Academy and Foundation recognise the contribution we can make to protect children from harm and support and promote the welfare of all children who attend and participate in activities organised by the club and foundation.

## **2. Organisations**

### **Newcastle Rugby Limited, Newcastle Falcons Academy**

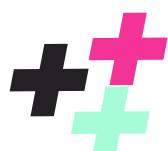
Company number 11331155 encompasses Newcastle Falcons, Newcastle Falcons Academy and all Falcons events.

### **Newcastle Rugby Foundation**

Registered charity number 1107851.

## **3. Aim of Policy**

- I.** To ensure the early identification of any safeguarding, health or wellbeing concerns regarding participants, players, customers or staff attending or participating in activities organised by the club or foundation.
- II.** To work with all staff, management and governing bodies to ensure that effective safeguarding procedures are in place and followed.
- III.** To ensure that all staff understand their own safeguarding responsibilities including recognising, responding, recording and reporting pathways.
- IV.** To develop a positive and proactive welfare programme that enables all to participate in an enjoyable, safe and welcoming environment.



- V. To ensure that up to date Safeguarding training is provided to all staff and that all staff understand their responsibilities and take appropriate action.
- VI. Where Safeguarding concerns are identified, the club and Foundation will work with the governing body and multi-agency partners to provide an effective and appropriate response.
- VII. By following this policy and associated procedures the club and Foundation will continue to maintain and promote community confidence and reassurance.

Newcastle Rugby Ltd, Falcons Academy and Rugby Foundation acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of every child, young person and vulnerable adult who has been entrusted to its care and are committed to providing a safe environment for all.

We recognise that the health, safety and wellbeing of all participants is paramount. It is important that staff, volunteers and contractors understand what factors make a child or vulnerable adult more susceptible to neglect or abuse. This includes hidden vulnerabilities which may impact on the health, safety, wellbeing and performance.

The wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults is paramount for all staff and accordingly, they must make themselves aware of the Safeguarding policy/procedures and professional standards of behaviour. Where appropriate these will be supplemented by additional training, guidance or policies.

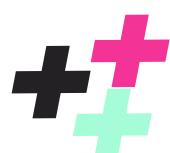
The Club, Academy and Foundation are governed by the rules and regulations set out by several governing bodies including RFU, RFL and Premiership Rugby and therefore adhere to their Safeguarding policies, codes of conduct and guidelines.

Key documents underpinning this policy include (but not limited to)

- The Children's Act (1989) (2004)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)
- What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (2015)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Children and Families Act (2018)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Education Act (2002)
- The Data Protection Act & GDPR (2018)
- Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- The Care Act (2014)
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2014)
- UN Conventions on the Rights of the child (1992)
- RFU/RFL Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Standards for Safeguarding and protecting children in Sport (2005)
- 

#### **4. Scope**

This policy applies to all Newcastle Rugby Ltd, Newcastle Falcons Academy and Newcastle Rugby Foundation employees, volunteers and contractors working on behalf of the organisations. The policy has five main elements



- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults by obtaining necessary references and carrying out appropriate enhanced RFU DBS checks.
- Raising child and adult protection Safeguarding awareness and equipping all staff with the skills and confidence needed to ensure they are keeping them safe.
- Developing and implementing procedures for recognising, responding, recording and referring all Safeguarding issues or allegations of malpractice and abuse.
- Supporting all children, young people and vulnerable adults within all Club/Foundation activities by establishing a safe environment in which they can learn, develop and thrive.
- Provide opportunities for children, young people and vulnerable adults of all backgrounds and abilities to develop and thrive.

## **5. Responsibilities**

Newcastle Rugby Ltd including Newcastle Falcons Academy and Newcastle Rugby Foundation will

- I. Have a senior board/trustee level lead with the required knowledge, skills and expertise to take leadership and governance responsibility for the organisations Safeguarding arrangements.
- II. Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy(s) (DSO's) for both organisations. The DSL is responsible for the implementation, understanding and adherence of this Policy within Newcastle Rugby's staff and volunteers. The ethos of this Policy and associated procedures are at the heart of all activities, events and coaching, hosted and provided by Newcastle Rugby Ltd and Newcastle Rugby Foundation.
- III. All Safeguarding matters will be reported to the Board of Directors and Governors at least twice per year.
- IV. The DSL is responsible for ensuring the safer recruitment requirements are followed, this includes obtaining two references from previous employers prior to employment. The DSL will obtain appropriate DBS certificates for new staff, ensuring they are renewed at least every three years. The DSL will also ensure that all staff and volunteers receive appropriate Safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- V. All employees and volunteers know the name of the DSL and DSO's within their area of business.
- VI. Create a culture and environment of safety, equality and protection within the services we provide.
- VII. Adopt a culture of listening to children and vulnerable adults, taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services.
- VIII. The Club will have clear whistleblowing procedures, which reflect the principles in Sir Robert Francis "Freedom to Speak Up" review and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct. We will create a culture and environment that enables staff to challenge and raise concerns about Safeguarding or inappropriate behaviour with the confidence that they will be addressed.
- IX. Have clear escalation policies for staff to follow when their safeguarding concerns are not appropriately addressed within their organisation.
- X. Staff and volunteers are provided with time to receive mandatory and supplementary training in line with the GB requirements, this includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and the procedures to be followed if they have any concerns about a child or vulnerable adults safety or welfare.
- XI. We ensure that our staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Staff understand their responsibilities in recognising the signs of abuse, they understand how to respond, record and refer to those Safeguarding concerns in line with the referral mechanisms.
- XII. Ensure that any allegations against members of staff or volunteers will be referred immediately or as soon as practicable to both the DSL/DSO and where appropriate, to the GB.



- XIII. Keep records of children and vulnerable adults' welfare and protection concerns in line with GDPR requirements.
- XIV. Work with all partner agencies including Children's Social Care, sharing information where appropriate in line with HM Governments - Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- XV. Staff will be given sufficient time and support to fulfill their child welfare and Safeguarding responsibilities effectively. They will be provided with appropriate supervision, advice, support and training.
- XVI. All staff will have regular performance reviews ensuring that they have the knowledge, skills and expertise that improve over time.
- XVII. Ensure that all other Newcastle Rugby Ltd and Foundation policies which have a safeguarding element are all consistent and cross-referenced with this Policy.
- XVIII. Ensure adherence to the RFU and RFL Safeguarding Policy, procedures and code of conduct.
- XIX. Ensure all staff and volunteers receive and sign an undertaking that they understand and adhere to this policy and associated procedures.

## **6. Policy Definitions**

**ABUSE** – When a child is intentionally harmed by an adult or another child. It can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. The four categories of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. The abuse can happen in person or online.

**CHILD** – Defined in law as a person aged under 18 years of age

**CLUB** – Refers to Newcastle Rugby Ltd, Newcastle Rugby Academy or Newcastle Rugby Foundation. It's workforce, volunteers and all activities undertaken by either organisation or at these premises. In certain circumstances it may also refer to third parties with an entrusted responsibility for delivering club-supported activity.

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)** – They are responsible for the implementation of this policy within Newcastle Rugby staff, volunteers and activities. The DSL is responsible for safer recruitment and ensuring the training of staff and volunteers within the organisation.

**DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DSO)** – Members of staff who are designated by the DSL, several DSO's work within different areas of business and are there to support the DSL and staff with any Safeguarding concerns.

**DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)** – The DBS is responsible for processing requests for criminal records checks, taking decisions on whether it is appropriate to place a person on or remove a person from the DBS Children or Adults barred list for England, Wales and Northern Ireland

**GOVERNING BODY (GB)** – Rugby Football Union (RFU), Rugby Football League (RFL), Premiership Rugby.

**HARM** – The ill-treatment of an individual or impairment of their welfare due to acts of abuse or inappropriate behaviour including witnessing third party abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

**LOCAL AUTHORITY** – Refers collectively or individually when named to the District, Borough, City and County Councils that are responsible for the governance in which the club/charity operates. Specifically, but not exclusively, these include Newcastle City Council, Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council, North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council, Northumberland County Council, Sunderland City Council, South Tyneside Council and Cumbria County Council. It is recognized that players come from all areas in the UK and the club will work with those Councils where appropriate.

**LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)** – The LADO is responsible for providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations



and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers. Managing and overseeing individual cases from all partner agencies.

**NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN (NSPCC) - A**  
charity that actively campaigns for and works within child protection in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Island. **PLAYING REGULATIONS** – playing regulations as determined by the Governing Bodies. This includes regulation 15 (age grade rugby) and regulation 21 (Safeguarding within the Rugby Union). **POSITION OF TRUST** – This relationship can be described as one in which a staff member or volunteer is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their position.

**REGULATED ACTIVITY** – The statutory definition applies to this policy. In summary this means teaching, training, instruction, care or supervision of children carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often) or more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight between the hours of 2am and 6am. Regarding vulnerable adults in receipt of health or social care services, it refers to providing personal care, managing money or conveying. **N.B** Training, teaching, instructing, providing assistance, advice or guidance to vulnerable adults does not class as regulated activity. **SAFEGUARDING** – Preventative and reactive measures taken by the Club to ensure; the risk of harm or mistreatment of vulnerable groups is minimised; the health or wellbeing of vulnerable groups is not impaired whilst engaging in Club related activities; an environment exists that supports the best possible outcomes or life chances for vulnerable groups.

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP** – Previously referred to as Children's Safeguarding Board. This refers to the partnerships within each Local Authority area and are responsible for providing guidance, training and governance on all Safeguarding matters within their area of governance.

**STAFF** – Refers to person(s) employed by Newcastle Rugby Ltd, Newcastle Rugby Academy or Newcastle Rugby Foundation, including those who volunteer within club activities.

**VOLUNTEERS** – Persons who freely offer their skills and expertise or take part in a task, event or enterprise with the Club, Academy or Foundation at their own expense in terms of time and resources. **VULNERABLE GROUP** – The collective term used when talking about or referring to children, young people and vulnerable adults as a whole.

**VULNERABLE ADULT OR ADULT AT RISK** – Any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support (Care Act 2014)

Adult in need of protection, is a person aged 18 or older whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their a) personal characteristics **and/or** b) life circumstances **and** c) who is unable to protect their own wellbeing, property, assets, rights or other interests **and** d) where the action or inaction of another person(s) is causing, or is likely to cause them to be harmed. **VULNERABILITY** – An adult or child whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

Personal characteristics which may include, but are not limited to age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or functioning or the mind or brain **and/or** Circumstances which may include, but not limited to, isolation, socio economic factors, substance misuse, environmental living conditions and domestic abuse.

**a)**



**WELFARE** – The health, happiness and comfort of individuals and the humanitarian aspects of their life including personal needs, social interactions and physical or psychological development.

**WORKFORCE** – Refers to the combined entity created when staff, volunteers and/or third-party contractors are deployed to work with the club.

**YOUNG PERSON** – Aged between 14 and 19

## **7. KEY CONTACTS**

### **Newcastle Rugby Ltd**

**Shelley Hudson,**  
**Designated safeguarding lead, Newcastle Rugby Ltd and Falcons Academy**  
[Shelley.hudson@newcastle-falcons.co.uk](mailto:Shelley.hudson@newcastle-falcons.co.uk)  
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**Dave Gould**  
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**Finance Director**  
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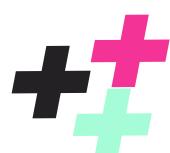
**Events**  
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**Retail**  
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**Head of Retail**  
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### **NEWCASTLE FALCONS ACADEMY**

**Shelley Hudson (DSL)**  
**Safeguarding Manager**  
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**James Ponton**  
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## **NEWCASTLE RUGBY FOUNDATION**

**Shelley Hudson (DSL)**

**Safeguarding Manager**

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**CEO**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead, Newcastle Rugby Foundation**

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**Gavin Beasley**

**Operations and Delivery Manager**

**Deputy Safeguarding Lead**

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**Darren Greco**

**Funding and Development Manager**

**Deputy Safeguarding Lead**

Darren.greco@newcastle-falcons.co.uk

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## **RFU**

<https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding/contact-the-rfu-safeguarding-team>

**NORTHUMBERLAND CB**

**Mark Reade**

**Northumberland Safeguarding Manager**

markreade@northumberlandrfu.co.uk safeguarding@northumberlandrfu.co.uk

**DURHAM CB**

**Paul Geehan**

**Durham Safeguarding Manager**

paul.geehan@gmail.com 07854978358

**CUMBRIACB**

Avril Quinn

[Cumbriarugbysafeguarding@outlook.com](mailto:Cumbriarugbysafeguarding@outlook.com) 07879303239

## **RFL**

<https://www.rugby-league.com/governance/safeguarding/the-rfl-safeguarding-team>

## **NERL**

gateshead.storm2002@gmail.com

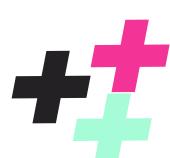
## **LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO)**

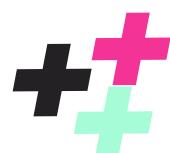
**Newcastle upon Tyne**

**Melanie Scott**

**E-mail:** Melanie.scott@newcastle.gov.uk

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**South Tyneside****Angela Nolan.****E-mail:** angela.nolan@southtyneside.gov.uk**Tel:** 01914244701//07920817896**North Tyneside****Hayley Muir****E-Mail:** LADO@northtyneside.gov.uk**Tel:** 03452000 109**Northumberland****Louise Prudhoe.****Email:** LADO@northumberland.gov.uk**Tel:** 07500 606174**Gateshead****Michelle Farry****Email:** LADO@gateshead.gov.uk**Tel:** 01914338031 // 07597 527210**Sunderland****Danielle Rose:****email:** Danielle.Rose@togetherforchildren.org.uk**Tel:** 01915613901//07584 272413**Cumbria Council****Email:** lado@cumbria.gov.uk**Tel:** 03003 033892**8. IMPORTANT INFORMATION AND RESOURCES****More information about type of abuse can be found here:**<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-ischild-abuse/><https://www.englandrugby.com//dxdam/8a/8a4d35ee-0a0a-458d-8bcc-20dba6ff3065/safeguardingpolicybooklet.pdf><https://www.newcastlesafeguarding.org.uk/><https://www.rugby-league.com/governance/safeguarding><https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding><https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratiosworking-with-children><https://www.englandrugby.com/dxdam/a4/a4f02b3f-8726-4c12-bcd3-6610345b7f68/safeguardingpolicybooklet.pdf>**Additional safeguarding advice –****RFU Safeguarding Toolkit:**<https://www.englandrugby.com//dxdam/47/47825ee0-5ca7-449f-baad401e2ef78ae7/safeguardingtoolkit.pdf>

## **9. POLICY REVIEW**

The responsibility of reviewing and maintaining this policy is the responsibility of Newcastle Rugby Foundation & Newcastle Rugby's Designated Safeguarding Lead and will take place annually.

**Last review date: June 2025**

**Date of next review: June 2026**

