



2026/2027

Safeguarding Procedure



Best Practice Guidance

Newcastle Red Bulls and Newcastle Rugby Foundation are committed to a place where everyone is safe, heard, valued and able to thrive. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff and volunteers are in positions of trust and must maintain the highest standards on and off the pitch. Key guidance covers: permissions and emergency contacts; medical and injury care; appropriate relationships and language; changing rooms and supervision ratios (4–8yrs 1:6, 9–18yrs 1:10); safe transport and photography; and equality, diversity and inclusion. Full detail is in the RFU Safeguarding Toolkit.

Safer Recruitment & Staff Training

All staff working with children or vulnerable adults must hold an appropriate RFU-processed DBS check, renewed at least every three years, plus two satisfactory references before employment. Staff working closely with children in Rugby Union or League must also complete: relevant licences/NGB qualifications, safeguarding and child protection training, Play it Safe training, appointed person first aid, and equality, diversity and inclusion training. Staff also receive training on writing, reviewing and implementing risk assessments as part of ongoing CPD.

Reporting, Whistleblowing & Data Protection

Reporting and Recording

Newcastle Red Bulls uses Tootoot to report and record safeguarding and injury concerns, submitted within 48 hours (immediately by phone if serious). The DSL/DSO reviews each report, decides on further action, and reports to the Board at least twice a year.

Whistleblowing

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing without fear of reprisal. Concerns can be raised with the DSL/DSO or via Protect (independent charity): 02031172520, whistle@pcaw.co.uk. Public concerns: SpeakUp@newcastleredbulls.com.

Data Protection

The Data Protection Act and GDPR are not barriers to sharing information, but a framework to prevent misuse. Staff should be open about why information is shared, seek consent where possible, share only what is necessary and secure, and keep a record of any decision to share.

Your Safeguarding Responsibilities

All staff must acknowledge the club's responsibility to protect every child it engages with. This can be summarised in four steps: Recognise, Respond, Record and Refer. Abuse falls into four main forms: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect, plus related concerns such as bullying, CSE, criminal exploitation, online abuse and radicalisation.

Recognise – identify signs of abuse or harm; consider vulnerability, severity and impact.

Respond – move to a place of safety, contact the DSL/DSO immediately, stay calm, listen and reassure without interrogating.

Record – write down what you were told verbatim and submit via Tootoot within 48 hours, including names, dates, locations and actions taken.

Refer – the DSL/DSO takes the lead, ensures continued safety, liaises with agencies and, where needed, contacts the Governing Body, Children's Social Care or Police.

Signs of abuse to watch for include changes in behaviour, unexplained injuries, fear of going home, and inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour. If you have any concern, however small, speak to your DSL/DSO.

How the RFU Will Respond to Concerns

When a concern is reported, the RFU Safeguarding Team reviews the referral and decides on the appropriate action, which may include advice, investigation, or referral to statutory agencies. Cases involving potential risk to children are escalated to the Referral Management Group (RMG), who assess risk and determine next steps. Where necessary, individuals may be suspended from all rugby activity under RFU Regulation 21 while an investigation takes place – a precautionary measure, not a presumption of guilt. NRF supports all parties throughout the process and keeps the DSL informed.

Match-Day Safeguarding Guidelines

Match-day safeguarding representatives – Shelley Hudson and Dave Gould (Stadium Safety Officer), with Tim Robson and Tracy Walker as alternates, and Angela Alderson (Head of Operations) – are on hand at all fixtures. Toilets and changing areas are monitored, with signage reminding adults not to enter children's facilities unaccompanied. Any unsupervised or missing child should be reported immediately to a safeguarding representative or steward. Unaccompanied children under 16 will not be admitted through turnstiles without prior arrangement with a parent/carers or club official.



