

# ***Market Rasen & Louth Rugby Union Football Club Ltd***

(Affiliated to RFU Notts, Lincs & Derby RFU)

**Clubhouse & Ground:** Willingham Road, Market Rasen, Lincolnshire, LN8 3RE. Tel: 01673 843162

***www.rasenrugby.com***

## **Club Safeguarding Policy**

1. Market Rasen and Louth Rugby Union Football Club (RUFC) acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children involved in Market Rasen and Louth RUFC from harm.
2. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC confirms that it adheres to the Rugby Football Union's Safeguarding Policy and the procedures, practices and guidelines and endorse and adopt the Policy Statement contained in that document and any successor policy.
3. A child is anyone under the age of 18 engaged in any rugby union activity. However, where a 17-year-old male player is playing in the adult game it is essential that every reasonable precaution is taken to ensure his safety and wellbeing are protected.
4. The Key Principles of the RFU Safeguarding Policy are that:
  - The welfare of the child is, and must always be, paramount to any other considerations.
  - All participants regardless of age, gender, ability or disability, race, faith, culture, size, shape, language or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse or harm.
  - All allegations or suspicions of abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.
  - Working in partnership with other organisations, statutory agencies, parents, carers, children and young people is essential for the welfare of children.
  - Children have a right to expect support, and personal and social development delivered by an appropriately recruited, vetted and managed in relation to their participation in rugby union, whether they are playing, volunteering or officiating in the community or professional areas of the sport.
5. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC recognises that all children have the right to participate in sport in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment whilst at the same time being protected from abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC recognises that this is the responsibility of everyone involved, in whatever capacity, at the club.
6. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC will implement and comply with the RFU Code of Conduct and the Codes of Conduct for Coaches, Spectators and Officials as appropriate.



7. The Club Safeguarding Officer is Sara Louth. Contact details: [sara.louth@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:sara.louth@tiscali.co.uk) or call 07904 340030. If you witness or are aware of an incident where the welfare of a child has been put at risk you must, in the first instance, inform the Club Safeguarding Officer. They will then inform the CB Safeguarding Manager and the RFU Safeguarding Team. If an incident involves the Club Safeguarding Officer you should inform the Club Honorary Secretary, Clare Fenwick, and either the CB Safeguarding Manager or the RFU Safeguarding Team.
8. All members of Market Rasen and Louth RUFC who work with children in Regulated Activity must undertake an RFU Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in accordance with RFU Regulation 21.
9. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC will ensure that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players or officials will comply with the Best Practice Guidance as issued by the RFU. In summary, the following are NOT acceptable and will be treated seriously by the club and may result in disciplinary action being taken by the club, the CB or the RFU:
  - Working alone with a child.
  - Consuming alcohol whilst responsible for children.
  - Providing alcohol to children or allowing its supply.
  - Smoking in the presence of children.
  - Humiliating children.
  - Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child.
  - Participating in, or allowing, contact or physical games with children.
  - Having an intimate or sexual relationship with any child developed as a result of being in a 'position of trust.'
  - Making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material.
10. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC manages the changing facilities and arranges for them to be supervised by two DBS checked adults of the appropriate gender for the players using the facilities. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC ensures that all its coaches, parents, officials and spectators are aware that adults must not change at the same time, using the same facilities as children.
11. Market Rasen and Louth RUFC will ensure that its coaches and team managers will receive the support and training considered appropriate to their position and role. The RFU "Managing Challenging Behaviour" Policy has been adopted and circulated amongst the club workforce both, voluntary and paid.
12. Any events held on Market Rasen and Louth RUFC premises must comply with this Policy and if appropriate a Safeguarding Plan should be discussed and circulated to those affected. Any tours, overseas or domestic, undertaken by Market Rasen and Louth RFC must comply with the relevant RFU Regulations and Guidance relating to tours.



### **13. Alcohol policy at Market Rasen & Louth RFC**

It is against the law:

- to sell alcohol to someone under 18;
- for an adult to buy, or attempt to buy, alcohol on behalf of someone under 18;
- for someone under 18 to buy, attempt to buy, or to be sold alcohol;
- for someone under 18 to drink alcohol in licensed premises, with one exception - 16 and 17 year olds accompanied by an adult can drink but not buy beer, wine and cider with a table meal; or
- for an adult to buy alcohol for a person under 18 for consumption on licensed premises, except as above.
- At training sessions and games for children, adults' drinking habits may affect both children's attitude to alcohol and their emotional well-being. As role models, adults should avoid excessive drinking in their presence.

The unexpected can always happen; there should always be adults who abstain from drinking alcohol to deal with any emergencies and to manage the safety and welfare of children in their care.

### **14. Changing rooms and showers at Market Rasen & Louth RFC**

Adults and children must never use the same changing or wash room facilities at a venue to shower or change at the same time. Where 17 year old children are playing in the adult game they should be offered separate changing and shower facilities.

Adults must only enter children's changing rooms by themselves when absolutely necessary due to poor behaviour, injury or illness, or in an emergency and when waiting for another adult could result in harm to a child.

If children need supervising in changing rooms, or coaches or managers need to carry out a range of tasks in that environment this must involve two individuals cleared to work in Regulated Activity of the same gender as the children. For mixed gender activities separate changing and wash room facilities should be available.

If the same changing and wash room facilities must be used by adults and children on the same day a clear timetable should be established. This can often happen during mid week training activities where Junior and senior players in their separate teams are using the same facilities. Coaches should plan the activities in a co-ordinated way to ensure that the same changing rooms are avoided and that the timing of the use of the showers is devised to avoid adults and players under 18 using the same facilities simultaneously. No pressure should be placed on children who feel uncomfortable changing or showering with others; if this is the case they should be allowed to shower and change at home.

Where a disability requires significant support from a parent or carer, the child concerned and their parents/carers should decide how they should be assisted to change or shower. Before any assistance is offered by another person, appropriate



consent should be given by a parent/carer and the child themselves if they are of sufficient maturity to consent.

## **15. Photographic Images**

Market Rasen & Louth RFC welcomes the taking of appropriate images of children engaged in rugby activities at the club.

There are however risks associated with the use of photographic images. Before photographs may be taken of children playing it is important to:

Check that parental consent has been granted. (This can often be checked with the coaches of the age group)

Coaches should keep a record of all children's parental consent and specifically know of any child in their age group for whom parental consent has not been given.

Where a game is being played with another club it is important to check that the other side also has parental consent of its players prior to taking of images.

RFU Guidance on photographic images and professional photography is based on common sense. Clubs are advised to ensure that everyone is fully aware of, and complies with, the guidance. The key principle is that clubs should ensure they obtain parental consent for photographs to be taken while a child is either at the club or at away fixtures. This extends to video images.

## **16. Sharing of Electronic Material/Media**

Market Rasen and Louth RFC are aware of the advice contained in the Cyber-Guidance, available in the RFU Safeguarding Toolkit. Websites can be a positive way to communicate with children. However, there are risks associated with internet usage. Rugby clubs are legally responsible for their website content and there should be nothing included which could harm a child, directly or indirectly. It is important to note that it is not acceptable to share sexually explicit or inappropriate material via any form of media with children; such behaviour may constitute a criminal offence. The online environment is ever-changing; therefore the guidance is reviewed as necessary.

It is very important to realise that other children in changing rooms may contravene the above policies themselves with the recording of inappropriate images. It is important that coaches, young players and parents are aware of this and all such practices should be prevented wherever possible. This also extends to written word and comments made on match reports as well as other comments made by players on social media sites. Parents coaches and players need to understand that such images can involve bullying or bringing those involved and the club into disrepute and all have a responsibility to ensure that inappropriate images comments and communications are not made or published.



## 17. Bullying

Market Rasen and Louth RFC will not tolerate bullying of any kind. A bully can be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach or manager with a 'win at all costs' attitude or another intimidating child. It should also be recognised that bullying can take place in the virtual world of social networking sites, emails or text messages (online bullying sometimes referred to as cyberbullying). Bullying is serious and must not be ignored and in common with all other forms of abuse the victim should be supported through what can be a traumatic experience.

Bullying will not just go away. Bullies can be very cunning and develop strategies to avoid it being seen by anyone but the victim. Bullying takes many forms, but ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied rather than the intention of the bully.

Market Rasen and Louth RFC recognises there are opportunities to bully at any rugby club or activity. It is the way that bullying concerns are dealt with which makes the difference between life being tolerable or becoming a misery for the victim.

## 18. Young Players playing up.

Subject to the restrictions of the RFU age grade regulations a decision to allow any player at Market Rasen and Louth RFC below the age of 18 to play up an age grade must only be considered and approved if:

- It is in the best interests of the individual player
- The player wishes to play up
- Consent is received from the players guardian
- An assessment and agreement of the players capabilities is made by his age grade coaching team and the coach of the team he is being considered to play up for.
- A player consent form is completed and signed off by the player, guardian, coach representatives of his age -grade and age grade proposed to play for plus the club safeguarding officer.

The completed form should then be forwarded to the constituent body.

## 19. Recruiting Volunteers

Market Rasen & Louth RFC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Children are entitled to participate in rugby union activities in a safe and welcoming environment. Safer recruitment procedures will enable clubs or Constituent Bodies (CBs) to reduce the risk of abuse to children. When recruiting employees or volunteers to the children's workforce all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure only suitable people are selected. Regulation 21 sets out in detail the requirements the RFU has for those working with children and DBS checks.



RFU regulations require that any individual who carries out (or who will carry out) Regulated Activity is subject to an enhanced DBS check (with Children's Barred List information) through their club (using the online e-application system). Further information about the DBS and the e-application system is available on the England Rugby website.

The people who work in a rugby club are the most important asset a club has. A good and robust recruitment process is essential to ensure the best people are chosen for the roles they undertake. These must be people who are suited to the club and who are unlikely to harm children, intentionally or accidentally. A club which has good recruitment, induction and supervision processes shows those working there the value which is put on children's safety and wellbeing.

A robust recruitment process should always include a job description, completion of the Application Form for Volunteers, interview, consideration as to an individual's suitability for the role and planning for training and monitoring, in addition to carrying out a DBS check and obtaining and checking references.

Official checks and vetting procedures are on their own, not enough to protect children. They are only part of a wider set of practices and an organisational culture which supports and promotes safe practice.

