



**WE ARE  
ALL  
ROUNDERS**



# Welfare Officer Guidance Pack



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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Welcome to the Welfare Officer Guidance Pack**

It is important that every team, league or club that involves junior members or adults at risk assigns a Welfare Officer (WO) within their management team or committee to ensure the safeguarding of these individuals. This pack has been created to outline everything you need to know in order to become and perform well in the role as a Welfare Officer for your local Rounders team, league or club. It should be used by those who are currently working as a WO or looking to become one.

### **WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?**

The aim of this pack is to provide you with advice and support within your role and you will find it full of handy tips. At the end of the pack there is a checklist that all new and current Welfare Officers' (WO) should use to update and keep track of their training stages. After completing this you should have everything you need in order to start carrying out the role effectively.

Before making the decision to become a WO it is important to realise that it is classed as a volunteer role and you would be expected to give up a percentage of your free time to dedicate yourself to fulfilling this role, so please ensure you are 100% committed.

To make the role easier and to reduce the amount of hours each volunteer would have to spend working within the role it would be recommended that there were two WO's working together. This would also allow for the team, league or club to be fully covered throughout the year, even when one WO was on holiday. Therefore you may wish to speak to your team's management about introducing a second WO if you haven't already done so.

### **WHY DO WE NEED A WELFARE OFFICER?**

The Welfare Officer plays a key role in ensuring all members within the team, league or club feel safe and respected as valued members. It would be their responsibility to act on any issues that arise involving child protection or adults at risk and would be available as the first contact point should anyone; child, player, parent, coach or young person have any concerns about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, or any poor practice or abuse that is having a detrimental effect to the team/league/club or any child/adult at risk. This role is hugely important as it allows all participants to feel safe and enjoy playing in a happy and fun environment.



## WHAT DO I NEED TO BE ABLE TO DO TO DO A GOOD JOB?

The WO does not need to be an individual who is an expert in child protection as training will be provided (where required) to ensure you are equipped to deal with any issues that may arise or know who to contact if you need further advice and support in the case of a serious incident. WO's are also not expected to work alone; their team's management team should provide help and support as you will see later in this pack, there are many avenues available to you to gain advice and help.

However there are certain personal qualities that would be beneficial to a WO role, check the list below and see how many you fulfil:

PERSONAL QUALITIES	TICK
Have a background in working with children	
Level headed and fair, able to remain unbiased	
Have a child focused approach	
Able to remain calm and controlled in difficult situations	
Approachable	
Good listener	
To have a friendly personality	
Patient	

## WHAT DOES A WELFARE OFFICER DO?



## **WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?**

So you've decided that you're up for the job? That's great!

As this is a very important position within your team/league/club you will need to take on some training and fill in the appropriate forms, including a Criminal Records Check (DBS) to allow you to work safely and effectively within your new role.

You may already have a Criminal Records Check (DBS), and if it is less than three years old then it would be fine for you to use again, however, if it is more than three years old you will need a new one, you can contact Rounders England and they will support you in being able to apply for one.

You must also attend a 'safeguarding and protecting children' workshop (or equivalent), to find your nearest workshop please see the UK Coaching website ([www.ukcoaching.org](http://www.ukcoaching.org)) or contact your local Active Partnership ([www.activepartnerships.org](http://www.activepartnerships.org)). Funding may be available through Rounders England for the training you require to fulfil this role, please ask for further information.

## **POLICIES, IN-PACK TRAINING AND INFORMATION**

This next section will use extracts from policy documents to explain the different procedures and policies in place at Rounders England, all these policy documents can be accessed in full via the Rounders England website under the safeguarding section and it is important that you take the time to read these in full over the next few weeks.

<http://www.roundersengland.co.uk/safeguarding/>

Please also read the rest of this pack thoroughly to find out what else you will need to know and to find out how to complete the rest of your training needs. The next section is intended to act as a guide and reference on all procedures and policies; they may be informative in many sections, however a strong understanding is important.



## WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE FULL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

There is a full safeguarding policy that covers all issues regarding the welfare of all members of Rounders England. It would be recommended that you take time to read this document and seek advice if you have any queries, it will outline how problems and complaints should be dealt with and can be used again as a point of reference for any issues that may arise in your league, club or team. The end of this document also contains all blank forms that you may need to use.

You could also take the time to look at these and tick them as you've read them:

POLICY	TICK
Health and Safety Policy	
Social media policy	
Equality policy	
Whistleblowing policy	
Rounders Safeguarding Policy & Procedures	

## USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES

You should also be aware that photography of young people is prohibited unless parental or carer consent is gained. There is a form available at the end of the full safeguarding policy and this should be completed before any child/young person is photographed. Please also note that it is advised that any publicised photo of a child/young person should not also contain their name to protect their identity, however if it is required to do so parents/carers must be informed and consent gained beforehand.

Please see the end of the full safeguarding policy document to find the form that is to be signed by parents or carers to gain permission to photograph a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY IN MORE DETAIL**

The use of Social Media within everyday society has increased dramatically over the last few years and it is a great tool that can be used to increase the ease in how we communicate with each other. However the use of the internet and social networking sites can also pose threats to the safety and wellbeing of those who use them, therefore it is vital that you read through in full the Social Networking & Social Media Policy and Guidance that Rounders England has in place.

Below you will find some of the main points that you will need to know about and hopefully you will find this page helpful for you to refer to when you need fast answers.

### **Social Media:**

- Can include online communities which could be used via social networking websites, blogs, chat rooms, mobiles, laptops, game consoles and computers.
- Can be used to advertise and “spread the word” for information throughout your club, team or local community.
- Always use positive comments and do not respond to any online provocation.
- Make sure any profile or group you set up has the required privacy settings.
- Be careful which friend requests you accept, if you do not know the individual do not add them.
- Young people under the age of 13 should not be using social networking sites.
- If you have a group page for your club team or league, make sure there are 3 separate administrators.
- Never use a personal profile, create a new profile to represent you in your new role, actively encourage all other club members to do this also.
- Take care and thought over what you post, make sure it is appropriate and gives a good representation of you and your club, team or league.
- Ensure that any images you post are appropriate and in accordance to the safeguarding policy, the same restrictions apply and consent should be gained first.



## **HOW TO GO ABOUT TRANSPORTING CHILDREN**

When adult members of the team/league/club transport children the Welfare Officer should control and monitor the arrangements made.

Please follow this next list to ensure that transportation is kept to the required standards:

- There should be a risk assessment completed before any transportation is undertaken, this should include ensuring that the vehicle is fully insured and that the driver has the correct licensing paperwork.
- Ensure seatbelts are working and are always used.
- It is recommended that children always occupy the back seat.
- Written consent must be gained from parents to ensure that they acknowledge the travel arrangements.
- Before travel an agreed collection and drop off point and time should be agreed with the parent/guardian of the child.
- The driver should ensure that someone else is aware of the travel plans and estimated travel times, including the WO where possible and it is recommended that records are kept of all travel arrangements.
- Try to ensure that there is more than one adult present during trips and that there is a sufficient adult to child ratio.

## **HOW TO STORE INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY**

You must always remember that any information you collect regarding a child or adult member must be kept confidential, unless you have permission from the individual or parent or guardian if they are under 18 years of age.

You should also ensure that when you collect any information sheets and any training records, that these are kept up to date and secure.

## **UNDERSTANDING CODES OF PRACTICE**

Firstly you should realise that anyone who takes part in your team/league/club in any way, be it volunteer, participant, umpire, coach, spectator or parent is expected to abide by certain club rules and act responsibly at all times, to create a good impression for both the team, league or club and Rounders as a sport.

It would be encouraged that all individuals involved in your team/league/club were made aware of the Rounders England codes of practice and sign them (where appropriate) if you feel this will be beneficial to your team/league/club. These codes of practice outline what is and isn't acceptable and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour and the action that would be taken if they aren't adhered to.

Please be aware that codes of practice for all participants can be found on the Rounders England website under the safeguarding section:

[www.roundersengland.co.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-resources](http://www.roundersengland.co.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-resources)

It is advisable to print a copy of each code and create a folder with all the policy documents that are outlined in this pack, then you always have them to hand as a reference or to hand out to new team or club members.

## **HOW TO HANDLE BULLYING AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR**

As the WO it is your responsibility to ensure that no person is a victim of bullying by either an adult or a child, and if there is any evidence of bullying it should be dealt with in an appropriate manner. Rounders England have an anti-bullying policy available via our website, please read through this and make sure that you and all individuals within your team/league/club know how to access this to ensure that everyone understands how to report bullying incidents.

When trying to manage challenging behaviour follow these tips:

- Create clear rules and sanctions that are used at all times in team/league/club situations.
- Make sure all members are aware of these rules and sanctions.
- Use time out sanctions and warnings to reduce bad behaviour.
- Always act immediately towards any challenging behaviour and act on every incident without exception.
- Only sanction the culprit.
- Repeated bad behaviour by an individual should be reported to parent/guardian.
- Impose sanctions that are relevant to the action.

To respond to bullying in an appropriate manner follow these simple guidelines:

- Take any sign of bullying or any allegations seriously
- Ensure the safety of the victim at all times
- Separate the victim and the bully and speak to each individually
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted but do not promise confidentiality
- Keep clear records of all actions and conversations
- Seek an apology from the bully
- Inform parents/ guardians and schools where necessary
- Impose sanctions that are relevant to the action

It can be very difficult to approach and manage bullying and challenging behaviour within a team, club or league, it would be the responsibility of the coach if it was shown during training sessions. Outside of training sessions it would become the responsibility of the Workforce Officer. A WO may also find that a coach will refer to them to back up their decisions when dealing with challenging behaviour, therefore it is important that you learn and understand the procedures for dealing with incidents of a challenging nature.

To help you and your team/league/club with this please be aware that there are workshops available, UK Coaching can enable coaches to be able to manage poor behaviour. There are also publications available that can be used to initially decrease misbehaviour during training sessions.

Tick here when you have read and understood the anti-bullying policy and think you can tackle challenging behaviour

## **IT'S ALL ABOUT THE YOUNG PEOPLE**

It is really important to recognise that your role involves you working to create a safe and happy environment for children/young people and adults at risk, therefore you should always work with their best interests at heart and endeavour to meet their individual needs as much as possible. This would also include making extra efforts to learn how to accommodate anyone with learning difficulties or disabilities and familiarising yourself and their coach with any special requirements that they may have, then ensuring that these are followed through.

It is also important to engage with the children/young people within your team, league or club and ensure that they are aware of the role you play, ensuring that they feel able to approach you. This would also include ensuring that your contact details are readily available for members to view and access, perhaps on a poster within the clubhouse, on your team, club or league's Facebook page or website or as a handout/business card given to all new members.

Keeping children and adults at risk safe in sport is not just about ensuring that those who work in sport are suitable to do so. A trusted coach or leader may be the person a child trusts to tell about something that is happening in their life outside of sport.

Here are some other ideas and thoughts that could help to make sure that the needs of your young people are met:

- Encourage young players to take part in courses for young people based around coaching and actively encourage them to learn how to umpire and take on leadership roles.
- Invite the young people to meet with you to discuss their ideas for development at the club and find out what they want/would like.
- Engage the players in activities that allow them to represent their team/league/club, such as holding their own fundraising event.
- Allow the team, league or club to vote a young person to represent them at board meetings to give them a voice and a better understanding of the rounders setup.

Make sure that there are always enough adults to supervise activities so that all young people are safe and receive enough attention, the recommended ratios are:

Age 3-8yrs: 1:8

If all children are over 8yrs: 1:15

## **DEVELOPING A NEW CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Although Rounders England have many policies and guidelines in place on child protection and safeguarding it would be beneficial for all teams, league or clubs to have their own specific policy that they could follow. It is recognised that not all teams, leagues or clubs are the same and that not all sections of the nationwide policy Rounders England provide apply to every team, league or club.

This document would take time to develop and may be a working document for a considerable length of time. It could be put together using extracts from the Rounders England policy and could be created by several members of your club management team. Within this document all codes of conduct could be kept and signed documents could be recorded as well as all the relevant forms needed to run a Rounders club or team efficiently.

Please note that this is not a required job for a WO, however if you wish to complete your own document please do not hesitate to seek help and advice if you need it from the relevant parties outlined at the end of this document.

## RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

As you are the first point of contact for anyone with any serious concerns about player welfare you should understand how to handle difficult situations and know how to respond to anyone, adult or child who may come to you with concerns.

### DO

- Remain calm and in control
- Listen to the adult or child and show that you believe what they are telling you
- Reassure the individual that they can trust you and that it is okay to share their concerns
- Keep questions to a minimum and allow the individual to lead the conversation only prompt when necessary and use only open ended questions that would not lead their answer, such as how or why?
- Keep opinions to yourself
- Ensure the individual is safe and feels safe within your care

### DO NOT

- Promise confidentiality
- Panic or allow the individual to see panic
- React or show shock in front of the individual
- Use your own personal experiences or that of others in the conversation
- Make any assumptions
- Discuss the information you have been told with anyone that it is not necessary to share with

It would also be important to make sure that a **record** of the incident and conversation was made, this should include:

- All possible information about the incident that you have gained, including any relevant times, dates and actions.
- All the information about the child or adult at risk concerned, including name, date of birth, gender and contact details.
- Contact details and full names of known parents or carers of the child (if applicable).
- Details of anyone else involved, including the person making the claim, if it is not the child, parent or adult at risk.
- A personal account of the situation from the child/adult at risk involved in their own words where possible.
- Information of anyone who has been consulted or knows of the situation

This form, if typed on a computer, should be printed then the file deleted. It should then be signed and dated by everyone present during its recording.

Finally this form should be handed to the appropriate authority and a social worker and the police should be informed. The child's parent should also be informed unless they are the one being accused of abuse, in this case it would be down to the authorities to inform the parent/ carer.

## **WHAT SUPPORT IS THERE FOR YOU?**

All the documents you need can be accessed in the safeguarding section of the Rounders England website at [www.roundersengland.co.uk](http://www.roundersengland.co.uk).

You can also speak to the Lead (Natalie Justice-Dearn) or Deputy Lead Officer (Siân Barnett) at Rounders England Head Office on 0114 248 0357

Or via mobile at:

Lead Officer, Natalie Justice-Dearn: 07411 477849

Below you will also find the details of organisations that are involved in child protection, welfare and adult safeguarding and have many resources and information that would help and guide you throughout this process.

### NSPCC

Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

(Their help and advice section include a great section with free advice leaflets for you to download and use and their child protection in sport unit also provides insightful information)

### ChildLine

Helpline: 0800 1111

Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### Kidscape

Website: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

### Anti-Bullying Alliance

Website: [www.antibullyingalliance.org](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org)

### ACT (Ann Craft Trust)

Website: [www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org)

(ACT supports the statutory, independent and voluntary sectors from across the UK to protect disabled children and adults at risk)

### Mind

Website: [www.mind.org.uk/](http://www.mind.org.uk/)



You also will be required to know the contact details of any local child welfare agencies and local authorities, you can record them here so that you have them all to hand and ready for use:

Local Police Station:

Social worker contact details:

County sports partnership:

### CHECKLIST AND SIGN OFF FORMS

Now you have all the information you need to run as the Welfare Officer, please complete the following forms with the correct evidence and attachments and return them to Rounders England by post to:

PO Box 4458  
Sheffield  
S20 9DP

This should also include:	TICK
An original Criminal Records Check (less than three years old) if you fall within 'Regulated Activity' (see chart)	
Evidence of having attended a 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children' workshop or equivalent	
Information sheet including your personal information and your references	

These can be found as a separate document and should be completed and checked before postage. Please also check this list below to show that you have read and understood the following documents and completed the necessary actions:

DOCUMENT	TICK
All codes of practice	
The Anti-bullying policy	
Rounders England's full welfare policies (Children & Adults)	
Made personal contact details available to all members	
Found all blank forms required to support you in the WO position	