



**ROUNDERS
ENGLAND**



**Rounders England's
Safeguarding Children Policy,
Guidance & Procedures**

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Foreword

Rounders England is a growing organisation working towards increasing the participation rates within the sport and is committed to creating greater opportunities for players, coaches and umpires across the country. Sport has a great influence on the way people live and can act as a tool to improve social inclusion and personal values of individuals, such as leadership and teamwork. To ensure that these qualities are enhanced and promoted throughout Rounders, it is important that all members of Rounders England and all participants place the welfare of themselves and others as a priority. This will ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for all.

This document is important to help recognise that young people participating in Rounders deserve to feel safe at all times and have a responsible adult they can contact if they have any concerns about their own safety, or that of others (within or outside Rounders). To ensure this, the policies within this document should be implemented throughout all organisations involved in Rounders. It should be read and understood by all to ensure that everyone knows and accepts their responsibility in relation to their duty of care to young people.

In the creation of this document it has been noted that it is not the responsibility of those individuals working in Rounders to determine if abuse has taken place, but it is their responsibility to act upon and report any concerns. This document should be used as a guide for how to act within any situations where concerns arise and includes contacts for relevant other organisations where information needs to be passed on.

Rounders England is committed to ensuring that everyone who participates in Rounders has a safe and positive experience.

Katherine Knight
Chair, Rounders England

Our statement

Rounders England acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and CPSU requirements.

Rounders England recognise that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. The policy aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

- ✓ have a positive and enjoyable experience of rounders in a safe and child centred environment
- ✓ are protected from abuse whilst participating in rounders or outside of the activity.

We acknowledge that some children, including disabled children or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

Our Policy

Definitions

The following definitions explain how specific terms are used within this document:

Position of trust: a position of trust refers to anyone who carries out work, paid or unpaid, on behalf of an agency and who has access to children and/or to privileged information about children as part of their work.

Volunteer: an individual who works or provides a service for free. This includes anyone who gets paid expenses without profit. Many positions within local clubs and teams rely on the work of volunteers.

Parent/Carer/Guardian: A parent or carer refers to the person who cares for the child and has responsibility for them in their day-to-day life.

Responsible adult: A responsible adult is any member of a club or team who works in a capacity (voluntary or other) to improve the team or club, for example it may be a parent who helps the coach during training sessions to supervise the children. Responsible adults are similar to parents and carers as they work with a club/team in order to ensure that all participants are safe.

Coach/Umpire/Activator/Leader: Anyone qualified to Rounders England standards.

Child/Young person: Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

Regulated Activity: is work which involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups including children, and which cannot be undertaken by a person who is on the Disclosure and Barring Service's Barred List.

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Safeguarding Partners: A safeguarding partner in relation to a local authority area in England is defined under the Children Act 2004 as: (a) the local authority, (b) a clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area, and (c) the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.

What we'll do

As part of our safeguarding policy we will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- value, listen to and respect children.
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.
- adopt safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of practice for staff and volunteers.
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people (see [Appendix 8](#) for further guidance).
- provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about our policies, procedures and behaviour codes and follow them confidently and competently.
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern.
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- record and store information securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the [Information Commissioner's Office](#)].
- prevent the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals by recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- appoint a nominated safeguarding lead for children and young people, a deputy and a board member for safeguarding.
- develop and implement an effective social media policy and related procedures.
- share information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their parents via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- make sure that children, young people and their parents know where to go for help if they have a concern.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved with Rounders England. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the Local Safeguarding Partners, UK Sport and/or Home Country Sports Councils
- As a result of any other significant change or event.
- This document will be published on the Rounders England website and publicised in appropriate communications.

This policy was last reviewed on May 2024 [Date]

Signed  [CEO/SMT]

Contact details

Our Lead Safeguarding Officer

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Our Deputy Safeguarding Officer

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For help and guidance on safeguarding concerns please visit our [website](#)

**In a safeguarding emergency,
Where a young person is at immediate risk of harm, call 999**

Safeguarding Standards

The Safeguarding Children Policy applies to Rounders England, its members and all other affiliated bodies in England.

***The Safeguarding standards and policies must always be upheld by
Rounders England and its affiliated member***

Everyone in rounders:

- Must not abuse, neglect, discriminate against, bully or otherwise harm a child or act in a way that may be interpreted as such.
- Must be a positive role model, act with integrity and uphold the Rounders England values and behaviours and help to create a safe, inclusive environment for all children.

All Rounders England members:

- Accept responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse;
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of young people;
- Respond to and take appropriate action of any complaints about poor practice or allegations of abuse.
- Abide by and sign up to this policy as a condition of membership and is incorporated in the constitution of the member body.

All member teams, clubs and affiliated organisations with children:

- Must provide procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants and protect them from abuse and adopt and implement the Rounders England Safeguarding Children Policy.
- Must require volunteers to adopt and abide by the Rounders England Safeguarding Children Policy.
- Must recruit, train and supervise their volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse.
- With junior sections (U18s) must have a trained Team/Club Welfare Officer who holds the required criminal record check.

Coaches, Activators, Leaders, Umpires, volunteers and workforce:

- Working or volunteering with children in Regulated Activity (as defined in the relevant legislation) must hold the required criminal record check.
- Must obtain an appropriate safeguarding and protecting children training certificate from a recognised provider when working or volunteering with children. Rounders England expect updates to take place every three years.
- When in a position of authority and trust in relation to children and participants aged 16 and 17 years must not engage in sexual relationships with them while an unequal power relationship exists.
- Must ensure physical contact with children must always be intended to meet the needs of the child and the sport, not the adult.
- Working with children must adhere to the standards set out in the Codes of Practice relevant to their role. Similarly, children, parents and all participants are expected to follow their respective [Codes](#).

Rounders England will provide training opportunities for people involved/working with young people appropriate to their role and level of responsibility, details of which will be communicated through appropriate channels (i.e. websites, social media, membership portal)

Equality Policy

Rounders England recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra barriers they face to getting help.

Rounders England aims to ensure that all people, irrespective of:

Age

Disability

Gender Reassignment (See also Rounders England Gender Policy)

Marriage & Civil Partnership (where appropriate)

Pregnancy & Maternity (where appropriate)

Race

Religion or Belief

Sex

Sexual Orientation

have an equal opportunity to take part in Rounders at all levels and roles. These are the **nine 'protected characteristics'** included in the Equality Act 2010.

Rounders England will not tolerate any form of discrimination. All incidents of abuse should be reported and will be investigated, Rounders England will take every opportunity to be proactive in promoting equality in the sport.

Rounders England has an equality policy that all members must follow to ensure that all individuals are treated fairly and equally, this is available on our website [here](#).

Bullying and Cyber bullying

Rounders England have an anti-bullying policy (this can be seen in [Appendix 6](#)) that outlines all the issues involved in recognising and acting against bullies and leaflets and tools that can be used to deal with managing behaviour.

It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse it may not always be an adult abusing a young person. It can occur that the abuser may be another young person, for example in the case of bullying. Rounders England created a leaflet that can be used to combat difficult behaviour during sessions with children. Our 'Children's Respect Leaflet' this is available on our [website here](#) (and in [Appendix 7](#)).

Principles and legislation

The guidance given in the procedures is based on the following principles and international legislation:

- The child's welfare is paramount;
- This policy recognises and builds on the legal and statutory definitions of a child;
- A young person is recognised as being under the age of 18 years (Children Act 1989 definition);
- An adult has the moral and statutory duty for the care of any child under the age of 18 under their supervision;
- All young people have the right to protection from abuse;
- All concerns about abuse or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- All young people have the right to participate in Rounders in an enjoyable and safe environment;
- Young people have the right to expect appropriate support in accordance with their personal and social development with regard to their involvement in the sport of Rounders;
- It is the responsibility of the Statutory authorities to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns;
- Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Human Rights Act 2000. When a child is at risk of significant harm, any information held by Rounders England will be used to keep a child safe;
- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and where relevant and proportionate in line with the 7 golden rules of information sharing – See [Appendix 11](#) for guidance;
- The Children Acts 1989 & 2004 ;
- The Protection of Children Act 1999 – all referenced to safeguarding checks; Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2006;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 & 2023;
- The Human Rights Act 2000;
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003;
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Working in partnership with young people, their parents and other agencies is essential for the protection of young people. Rounders England member Teams recognise the statutory responsibility of Children's Social Care Services to ensure the welfare of young people and will work with the Local Safeguarding Partners and the Children's Social Care Services to comply with their procedures.

Breaches of this policy

Rounders England will take Safeguarding Disciplinary Action where an organisation / person over whom they have jurisdiction over is found to have harmed the safety and/or welfare of a child in rounders, or whose conduct (whether in rounders or not) is deemed to pose an actual or potential risk of harm to the safety and/or welfare of a child in rounders.

All breaches of this policy will be taken extremely seriously and may result in dismissal, prohibition from

attending or participating in Rounders England governed activities and/or legal action. Breaches will be managed by the Rounders England Safeguarding Case Management Group and may use Sport Resolutions as an independent body if required.

Links to additional support

For victims, reporters, friends and family:

ChildLine	https://www.childline.org.uk/ 0800 1111	For young people to access help
NSPCC	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/ 0808 800 5000	For adults to access help or report a concern
CPSU	https://thecpsu.org.uk/	Provide information and advice about safeguarding in sport and physical activity
Young Minds	https://www.youngminds.org.uk/	Young people's wellbeing and mental health
MOSAC	https://mosac.org.uk/ 0800 980 1958	Providing a safe place for parents and carers
Lucy Faithful Foundation	help@stopitnow.org.uk 0808 1000 900	The only UK-wide child protection charity dedicated solely to reducing the risk of young people being sexually abused.
Kidscape	https://www.kidscape.org.uk/	Bullying in Sport – support/what to do
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	website	NHS funded services for young people in the mental health arena in the UK

Rounders England have a page on the website dedicated to useful websites & helplines:
<https://www.roundersengland.co.uk/safeguarding/useful-websites-helplines/>

Our Guidance

Safer Recruitment

Rounders England 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 rounders activities in a safe and welcoming environment. Safer recruitment procedures will enable teams, clubs or partners 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.

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 team or club and who are unlikely to harm children, intentionally or accidentally. A team or club which has good recruitment, induction and supervision processes shows those working or volunteering there the value which is put on children's safety and wellbeing.

A robust recruitment process should always include a job description, 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 (if within regulated activity) 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.

PAID AND VOLUNTEER STAFF NEED TO BE AWARE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN, HOW THEY SHOULD RESPOND TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS AND MAKE A REFERRAL TO LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OR THE POLICE IF NECESSARY.

- WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN 2023

Details of the Rounders England's recruitment process can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

Good Practice Guidelines

Rounders England will at all times promote good practice amongst all sections of the workforce and participants. Coaches, Participants, Workforce Educators, Umpires, Activators, Volunteers, Parents and Spectators may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs help or protection. Rounders England is working to improve the knowledge of Welfare Officers working throughout the country, by increasing and providing extra training. All cases of poor practice must be reported to Rounders England following the guidelines in this document.

Codes of practice

All individuals that have an involvement with Rounders at any level are expected to adhere to the appropriate Codes of Practice put in place by Rounders England, this includes Coaches, Workforce Educators, parents, young people, spectators, team or team members and Umpires, these can be found in full on the Rounders England website [here](#).

These codes outline the expectations placed on all individuals to act according to the highest standards of integrity and to ensure the reputation of Rounders is beyond reproach. Allegations of a safeguarding nature and concerns about poor practice relating to the breaking of these Codes must be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer. Where appropriate, allegations will then be reported to the police or Safeguarding Partners.

Any other issues which arise and fall outside of the Rounders England Safeguarding Policy and Procedures should be addressed by the internal rules of the member Team concerned. Those involved in Rounders must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person, participant and non-participant alike, treating everyone equally within the context of the sport. In particular, to be aware of the special needs of young people, their well-being, including difficulties or possible abuse experienced from within the sport or from other sources. The sport has a duty to ensure that every child and young person involved in Rounders is able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. The sport of Rounders is committed to maintaining the highest possible standards of behaviour and conduct at all Rounders training, competitions and events.

Position of Trust

'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children. Examples of positions of trust include:

- teachers
- care workers
- youth justice workers
- social workers
- doctors.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland changes to the law made in 2022 extend the definition to include:

- faith group leaders
- sports coaches*

**Rounders England recognises that when an adult is in a 'position of trust', sexual activity and relationships involving a child under 18 years old is illegal. Rounders England recognises that genuine relationships do occur between the different levels of volunteers and participants in a group but that no intimate relationship should begin whilst the member of staff or volunteer is in a 'position of trust' over them. The power and influence that the adult in the 'position of trust' has over someone attending a group or activity cannot be under-estimated. If there is an additional competitive aspect to the activity and the adult in the 'position of trust' is responsible for the young person's success or failure to some extent, then the dependency of the younger member upon the older will be increased. It is therefore vital for volunteers to recognise the responsibility that they must exercise in ensuring that they do not abuse their positions of trust.*

[The Sexual Offences Act 2003](#) makes it a criminal offence for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent (16 or over).

On being notified that an adult in a position of trust is involved or suspected to be involved in a sexual relationship with a child the Rounders England Safeguarding Team will report the matter to the police. An adult removed from Regulated Activity for engaging in a sexual relationship with a child will also be referred by the Safeguarding Team to the DBS who will consider whether to bar that person from working with children in other environments.

No-one in a position of trust should encourage a physical or emotionally dependent relationship to develop between them and a child in their care; this is often referred to as grooming. Adults must never send children inappropriate or sexually provocative messages or images by text, or other electronic media.

If anyone in a position of trust engages in a sexual relationship with a young person, it is a breach of Rounders England Code of Practice and as such will result in disciplinary action and will be reported to the police. Rounders Coaches and Volunteers are required to sign up to Rounders England Code of Ethics and Code of Practice, which are issued through every affiliated team. The codes encourage:

- The development of an open and positive environment in Rounders
- Poor practice to be identified

If you are an adult and you feel that a young person is acting inappropriately towards you and their behaviour is either putting you in a difficult position or concerning you, you should speak to someone else immediately, preferably the Welfare officer or another responsible adult from the team's committee. You should make a written record of any problems or incidents and you should avoid being alone at any time with the individual.

Photography guideline & social media policy

Rounders England understands the legitimate wishes of parents to take photographs of their children during events and is keen to promote positive images of young people participating in the sport. However, the safety and wishes of all players must be taken into account, ensuring the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is followed. A procedure of registering in order to be allowed to take images will be enforced in accordance with our Photography & Imagery Policy ([Appendix 3](#)). Our Photography and Filming Consent Forms can be found in [Template 5](#), [Template 6](#) and [Template 7](#).

Rounders England recognises that the use of social media as a tool to communicate is constantly increasing and has many benefits, such as promotion and information sharing, however we also recognise that there can be potential risks posed by social media when it is used inappropriately (types of abuse include bullying/cyber bullying, online grooming, child sexual abuse online) and therefore action should be taken to ensure the welfare of all users.

Online safety risks for young people can include, but are not limited to:

- posting personal information that can identify and locate a child offline
- potential for inappropriate relationships between adults in positions of trust and the young people they work with
- sexual grooming, luring, exploitation and abuse, or unwanted contact
- exposure to inappropriate content, including pornography, racist or hate material or violent behaviour
- glorifying activities such as drug taking or excessive drinking

The Rounders England Social Media Policy & Guidance outlines these threats along with any actions that can be taken to decrease the chances of improper use (extracts of the Policy in relation to Teams/Leagues can be found in [Appendix 5](#)).

Supervision ratios

When working with groups of children it is important that there are enough members of staff in place to supervise. All participants 17 years old and under are included in this and should be supervised; any person under this age should never be included in staffing ratios. It is understood that some under 18's have taken part and are encouraged to complete coaching and umpiring courses; however they should always be supervised by an adult when performing in an umpire, leader or coach role.

The national guidance states that the level of supervision should take account of:

- The age and ability of the young people;
- The activity being undertaken;
- Young people's need for privacy;
- The geography of the facility being used. E.g. how remote the facility is that is being used;
- Specific issues arising from any risk assessment;
- If any of the participants have physical or learning disabilities or special needs or requirements.

The **recommended** coach: player ratios are:

Age 3-8 years – 1:8

8yrs and above - 1:15

If there is an accident or an incident involving a young person or member of staff, you should ensure that there are enough people remaining to supervise the group safely.

Instructors and Coaches working with young people should not work in isolation. Good practice suggests that at least one other adult in addition to the Coach should be present at every session. The additional adult does not have to be a qualified Instructor/Coach.

Parents who are present but are not in an official volunteering capacity should not be counted in the supervision ratios.

Missing child procedures

If it is suspected that a child or young person has gone missing or has not turned up for a session when expected to, then the child's parent or carer should be contacted to find out if there is a reasonable explanation.

If there is still doubt as to the child's whereabouts it is important to consider the situation, if it seems there is an immediate concern, for e.g. a child has been seen entering an unknown vehicle then the Welfare Officer should be contacted and if not available the Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer/ Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer. If it established that there is concern for the Childs/Young person's immediate safety, then the local police should be contacted. A Missing Person's procedure can be found [here](#)

Any incidence involving missing children, regardless of the severity, should be recorded for future reference.

Changing rooms

Where practical, participants should be supervised at all times in the changing rooms by two members of staff. Adult staff should not change or shower at the same time using the same facility as participants. If you are involved in a mixed gender team, separate changing facilities should be made available. If a young person is uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them to do so. Encourage them to shower and change at home.

If your Team has participants with disabilities involve them and their Carers in deciding how they should be assisted and ensure they are able to consent to the assistance that is offered. Any staff, medical or otherwise, for example a male Instructor/Coach working with female participants, must not be present in the changing rooms whilst participants are getting showered or changed. No photographic equipment should be allowed in the changing room environment. This includes cameras, video cameras, camera mobile phones etc.

First Aid

Qualified First Aiders present at sessions

- Before children/ young people participate in any Rounders England activity their parents/carers are required to complete a medical consent form
- Anyone providing medical treatment or physiotherapy must be qualified and recruited in accordance with the Rounders England procedures
- It is recommended that no young person should be given treatment (by a qualified member) where the young person is on his/her own in a treatment room with the door closed;
- It is important to maintain medical confidentiality and patient dignity at all times;
- It is recommended that all treatment procedures are fully explained to the young person and verbal consent is given before they are carried out.

Transporting, drop-off and Collecting Young People Procedure

Rounders England acknowledges that it is important to ensure that the correct safety procedures and guidelines are followed when young people are transported by a member of staff. People in a position of trust should adhere to the 'Transport Collection & Drop off of young people procedure' policy and abide by all regulations and requirements that are set out, these can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

With regards to drop off and collection of young people, responsibility lies with the parents/carers of the young person unless previously arranged with a member of staff; these guidelines should be adhered to, to ensure the safety of the young person and reduce problems for the coach or member of staff in position of trust. These guidelines can also be found in [Appendix 4](#).

Partnership Working

All partners working with Rounders England will be required to sign up to a Service Level Agreement that includes safeguarding & safer recruitment expectations.

The Role of the National Lead Safeguarding Officer

The role of the National Lead Safeguarding Officer is crucial in ensuring that Rounders England Safeguarding Policy and implementation procedures work in practice. Rounders England has a national structure and has appointed a Lead Safeguarding Officer who is an employee of Rounders England and is supported by the Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer who is also an employee of Rounders England, their details can be found in the contact list in [Appendix 1](#).

The Lead Safeguarding Officer has a child centred approach and experience in working with children and young people.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Safeguarding Officer can be found in [Appendix 10a](#).

Safeguarding Steering Group

Empowered by Rounders England Board to develop, monitor and review the organisations approach and plans for safeguarding children and young people.

Ensure ownership of the safeguarding plan throughout the organisation. The membership will be informed of all relevant procedures and amendments via the web and newsletters. Board meetings and Sub committees will have Safeguarding as a standing agenda item for all meetings and will work towards meeting and maintaining safeguarding standards at all times.

The Role of the Welfare Officer

The Welfare Officer is a key role within Rounders. By designating people to this role, Rounders England can ensure that it has someone identified as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns within a team. Rounders England is working towards ensuring there is a Welfare Officer in every team that has junior members. Due to the nature of the position, prior to appointment, Welfare Officers are required to undertake a Criminal Records Disclosure as their role will meet the eligibility criteria for such checks. They will also be required to attend relevant safeguarding training every three years. Rounders England offer

financial support to ensure Welfare Officers are given the training opportunities if they do not currently receive these elsewhere to support them in this role.

Rounders England are fully committed and are working to ensure that all Welfare Officers are given the resources and help needed to work well within their role. This position is fundamental to ensuring that child welfare is central to the philosophy of the team, county, regional and national teams. In order that other members can provide adequate support where required, the Welfare Officer should be a member of the organisations management committee.

A team is encouraged to appoint more than one Welfare Officer to enable matters to be delegated and covered during times of absence and holidays. The Welfare Officer acts as the first point of contact for anyone (staff, volunteer, parents or young people) who has a concern about a child and about poor practice/possible abuse by adults working with children. The Welfare Officer therefore needs to be seen to be approachable and as having a child focused approach.

The Welfare Officer does not have to be a child protection "expert". That is the role of the statutory agencies (police and Children's Social Care Services). Ideally, they should have a background in working with children i.e. teachers, health visitors, social workers, or police child protection team officers.

The Welfare Officer needs to be supported by their organisations management through a formal role within the team committee. The team committee should adopt a child protection policy and procedures in accordance with child protection regulations. The team should also produce a plan about how this will be put into practice and how they will review how it is working.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the Welfare Officer can be found in [Appendix 10b](#).

Our Procedures

Responding to and reporting a concern

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility

People within Rounders are ideally placed to recognise or receive concerns relating to the welfare of young people. Everyone has a responsibility to respond to these concerns whether they relate to a child's home or family situation; a community situation or involves incidents within the team or sport. Children rely on adults being alert to indicators that a child might be being abused

Reporting a concern INSIDE Rounders

If a young person informs you directly that they are being abused within the Rounders environment or through your own observations or through a third party (parent/another coach), you become aware of possible abuse or poor practice within the sport you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY** and follow [Flowchart 3](#).

Reporting a concern OUTSIDE Rounders

If a young person informs you directly that they are being abused outside the sport environment (i.e. at home, school or some other setting outside the sport) OR through your own observations or through a third party you become aware of possible abuse outside the sport environment you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY** and follow [Flowchart 2](#).

How to Respond to a concern or Disclosure from a Young Person

Actions to Take

If you have a concern about a child or young person or a young person informs you directly that they, or another young person, is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them the person receiving information should:

- Stay calm so as not to frighten or deter the young person - ensure they are safe and feel safe;
- Listen to them, be careful not to ask any questions that might be considered leading
- Keep any questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. 'Rounders England's Guidance for dealing with a disclosure from a child' can be found in [Template 4a](#) to support you with this;
- Show and tell them that you are taking what they say seriously;
- Reassure the young person that they are not to blame and that they were right to tell;
- Be honest and explain that you will have to tell someone else to help with the situation
- Reassure the young person but DO NOT make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in light of subsequent developments;
- Record in writing exactly what has been said using the young person's words either at the time, or as soon as possible after the event. You should use the Rounders England Incident Report Form ([Template 4b](#)). Remember to date and time it and sign it;
- Tell the Club/Team Welfare Officer as soon as possible;
- Inform the parent/carer of the report unless they are suspected of being the abuser (in which case do not inform them of the concern)
- Seek advice immediately from Rounders England [Lead Safeguarding Officers](#)

If both are unavailable the local Children's Social Care Services or Police should be contacted immediately, they will advise on the action to be taken, including advice on contacting the parents. Expert advice can also be provided by the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 500 for adults or ChildLine on 0800 1111 for children.

Actions to Avoid

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate;
- Allow their shock or distaste to show;
- Ask questions other than to clarify that you have enough information to act;
- Speculate or make assumptions;
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser;
- Approach the alleged abuser;
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.

N.B. It may not be that all young people are able to express themselves verbally.

Communication difficulties may mean that it is hard for them to complain or to be understood. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the signs of abuse from the symptoms of some disabilities or conditions, in relation to the nature of the individual's impairment. However, where there are concerns about the safety of a young person, record exactly what has been observed in detail and follow the procedures (inside and outside rounders) to report these concerns.

Recording a concern

All concerns about a child should be recorded in writing

Information passed to the NGB, Children's Social Care Services or Police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure / concern. Records should be factual and signed and dated, with the name of the signatory clearly printed in writing). Ideally this information should be compiled utilising Rounders England Incident Report Form (a copy of this can be found under [Template 4b](#)).

Any visible signs of bruising or other injuries should be recorded on the Incident Report form in addition to the young person's account of what happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.

The person completing the incident report form needs to be very clear about what they record on the form and make a distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay. You may wish to view our 'Rounders England's Guidance for dealing with a disclosure from a child' document in appendix under [Template 4a](#) to support your information gathering.

Confidentiality

Rounders England will at all times respect confidentiality within the current legal framework. The principle that the 'welfare of the child is paramount' will underpin all decisions about sharing information.

However, every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

Case Management Group

Role and Purpose

The remit of this group is:

- To make decisions on the initial approach to all reported cases related to the welfare and protection of children. Principally these relate to the "route" a case will take internally, externally and/or via external referral to statutory agencies.
- To make initial decisions as to what level each case will be dealt with i.e. poor practice which may be referred back to the club complaints/disciplinary procedures with advice, or suspected abuse of a child which requires dealing with at national level through disciplinary procedures.
- To advise others within the organisation about actions they may need to take, such as initiating disciplinary proceedings.
- To monitor and review progress on all cases to identify any trends emerging which may require a review/revision of existing policies/procedures.

Principles

This group would uphold the following principles:

- **The welfare of the child is paramount.** This principle is enshrined in the Children Act 1989. In any decision taken by the group, the welfare of the child is the paramount concern and takes precedence over those of any adult where there is a perceived conflict of interest.
- **Independence.** It is essential that the group is empowered by the organisation to make decisions on the "route" that cases will take without influence or prejudice by others in the organisation.
- **Confidentiality.** All child welfare/protection matters must be regarded as highly confidential and not for disclosure outside the group unless so agreed, on a strictly need to know basis in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and Human Rights Act.
- **Expertise.** If internal, the group should be led by Rounders England's Lead Safeguarding Officer. The group should include people who have relevant knowledge and expertise to enable the group to fulfil its purpose such as HR/Personnel Manager to disciplinary panel, etc. It is recommended that at least one member of the group is external to Rounders England's management group and has current professional child protection knowledge and experience, such as a child protection social work manager or policy child protection team officer. Currently Rounders England will use an external agency for all Case Management in accordance with the support that Sport England are providing.
- **Equality and Anti-discriminatory Practice.** All decisions made by the group need to be fair, open and transparent. An open mind needs to be kept in all cases until they have been investigated and concluded. The group should be guided by Rounders England's equality policy and the principle that all children have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their race, ethnic origin, gender, disability, religious belief system or sexual orientation.

Action

Please refer to [Appendix 9](#) to find out what happens after abuse is reported

Investigations

Rounders England reserves the right to appoint an independent investigator to undertake an investigation in relation to any allegation requiring investigation under Rounders England's Safeguarding Children Policy, Procedures & Guidance.

Arbitrations

Rounders England reserves the right to refer any dispute arising out of or in connection with Rounders England's Safeguarding Children Policy, Procedures & Guidance to Sport Resolutions for final and binding arbitration in accordance with the Procedural Rules of the Rounders England Case Management Group which Rules are deemed to be incorporated by reference to this clause.

Appeals

The appeals procedure is available to anyone under investigation as part of natural justice. Rounders England Disciplinary Appeals Panel will exclude anyone sitting on the initial panel, excluding the Secretary. The panel should comprise of a chair and two other members, with the Secretary in attendance. Every organisation and participant wishing to appeal against the decisions made by Rounders England Disciplinary Panel must do so in writing, to be received by Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer within seven days of the decision being made.

The Lead Safeguarding Officer will refer the appeal to Sport Resolutions to appoint a tribunal of three arbitrators in accordance with the Procedural Rules of the Rounders England Disciplinary Panel which Rules are deemed to be incorporated by reference to this clause. The decision of [e.g., Appeal Tribunal] shall be final and binding on all concerned.

Whistleblowing

If you have a concern with regard to the behaviour of an adult towards a young person, it is important that you share your concerns with Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer. If you have a concern regarding Rounders England Lead Safeguarding Officer, you should share your concerns with the CEO, Deputy Lead Safeguarding Officer or Board Safeguarding Champion at Rounders England. All information received and discussed will be treated in the strictest confidence and only shared with those individuals within Rounders England who will be able to manage and resolve the situation. Further information on the Rounders England Whistleblowing Policy can be found [here](#).

If an allegation is made against you

Any concerns involving the inappropriate behaviour of an adult towards a young person will be taken seriously and investigated within the terms and conditions of the Complaints and disciplinary procedure. If you are the person who is the centre of an allegation, the situation will be explained to you and you may be asked to temporarily cease working with young people in Rounders during the investigation. You will be informed as soon as possible based on advice from the Statutory Agencies. This may result in suspension from activity within Rounders whilst a full investigation is being carried out. This is to protect all parties involved. Rounders England will assess, on a case-by-case basis, any support needed for the person who has had the allegations made against them. They may choose to appoint an independent officer to provide support to the accused.

Reinstatement

Informed by the findings of Children's Social Care Services and/or Police investigations, Rounders England's Case Management Group will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police. In such cases Rounders England's Case Management Group must satisfy themselves that the person does not present a risk to children. The welfare of young people should always remain paramount.

Support to Deal with the Aftermath

Consideration should be given to what support may be appropriate to young people, parents and members of staff. Use of Helplines, support groups and open meeting will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The [British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy](#) Directory may be a useful resource. Rounders England will support the teams by providing appropriate training for the Welfare Officers.

Allegations of Non-recent Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a young person or by a member of staff who is still currently working with young people). Where such an allegation is made, the organisation should follow the procedures in Flowchart 3. This is because other young people, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person.

Complaints

Staff at Rounders England are trained to ensure that any complaint with possible safeguarding implications is passed to the Lead Safeguarding Officer.

The Rounders England Complaints Policy can be found on the website [here](#)

Monitoring and Evaluation

To be conducted at the close of each case by Rounders England Case Management Group to see if any changes need to be made to policies/procedures or lessons that can be learnt.

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