



SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN HOCKEY

Position of Trust

At Richmond Hockey Club we have a Safeguarding and Welfare Officer, Rebecca Towlerton who can be contacted at richmondhc.welfareofficer@gmail.com. The Welfare Officer is responsible for dealing with concerns and working with England Hockey's Safeguarding team for those cases of a more serious nature. All concerns are treated in the strictest confidence, only involving those that are necessary to ensure that the issue can be dealt with appropriately. The Welfare Office confidentially reports issues to the RHC Committee. As a Coach, Team Manager or Captain with RHC you are in a position of trust invested in you by parents, the sport and the young person. It is therefore essential that you adhere to the following guidelines – they are here to protect you, as well as our young players.

How to report safeguarding concerns

Anyone who has a concern about the welfare or safety of a young person involved in Richmond Hockey Club must report it as soon as possible.

Concerns should be raised with the Club Safeguarding and Welfare Officer. Where appropriate, concerns will be referred to England Hockey in line with England Hockey Safeguarding and Reporting Procedures.

If an individual feels unable to report a concern within the club, or believes it has not been dealt with appropriately, concerns may be reported directly to England Hockey. In cases where a child is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, the concern should also be reported to the relevant statutory authorities.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

Any safeguarding concern relating to the welfare or safety of a young person must be reported immediately to the Club Safeguarding and Welfare Officer. Where appropriate, concerns will be referred to England Hockey in line with England Hockey Safeguarding and Reporting Procedures. Individuals may also raise safeguarding concerns directly with England Hockey if they feel unable to report the matter within the club.

DO:



- Always be publicly open when working with young people. Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with young people, or at least that you are in sight or hearing of others e.g. team talks in changing rooms
- Manual support is rarely required in the sport of hockey. If an adult feels that it is necessary the reasons should be clearly explained to the young person, and if possible the parents/carers, and their consent gained. Be aware that any physical contact with a young person may be misinterpreted
- Treat all young people with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- Good Practice when Working with Young People
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour that they do not like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned
- Be aware that some young people are additionally vulnerable, this could be due to a number of factors including disability, sexual orientation, their elite status, language, culture
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations / suspicions of abuse

DO NOT (EXCEPT IN AN EMERGENCY)

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others
- Take young people alone on car journeys, however short
- Take young people to your home where they will be alone with you
- If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should occur only with the full knowledge and consent of the young person's parents. Where someone has had to act outside England Hockey guidance in



an emergency, this should be reported to your Welfare Officer

YOU SHOULD NEVER:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Allow or engage in any inappropriate physical, verbal or e--contact with young people
- Allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even for fun
- Allow allegations of a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow young people to stay with you at your home unsupervised
- Allow any form of bullying or bad behaviour by young people
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of young people
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Discuss any reported issue with those unconnected to the case, and where you are reporting or discussing an issue ensure that you are not being overheard by others

COMMUNICATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

- When communicating with young people it is recommended that you:
 - contact players only when necessary



- if players need to be contacted urgently i.e. a change in training arrangement, set up a 'grapevine' system
- copy parents into written communication (i.e. letters or emails)
- speak with a player and their parents if there is a need to communicate information in relation to playing, training or competition
- clearly state the club's policy on communication, including social media with young people and their parents / carers
- You should avoid:
 - contacting a young person unnecessarily
 - contacting young people by phone, text or email should never be undertaken without parental consent
 - emailing young people directly as individuals (can be done as part of a disclosed list, once permission gained to do so)
 - using text as a medium of contact with a young person individually
 - making or receiving calls on a mobile phone during training or at competition: it is inappropriate to compromise the safety of a session
 - emailing one young person without copying in parents, other players or club members
 - allowing any young person to be part of your personal social networking sites

USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Richmond Hockey Club and England Hockey recognises the use of social networking sites to allow people to engage, connect and disseminate information virally to a network of individuals. Whilst these technologies provide exciting opportunities, if they are misused they can have negative consequences. It is therefore important for anyone who has a position of trust over young people within hockey to give careful consideration to their use of social networking sites. The following is guidelines of what **NOT TO DO** when



using social networking sites:

- Use a personal social network profile to engage with young people in hockey
- Accept friend or follower requests on your personal account if:
 - You are in a position of trust in respect of that young person
 - You hold a position of trust in the club
 - Your contact with the young person is through the club and consent from the parent/guardian has not been given
- Post information that you don't want everyone seeing
- Use social networking to abuse or criticise another club or association member
- Use inappropriate language or humour, or link to any unsuitable content
- Use photos of young people without gaining written consent from the player and parents/legal guardians

Young players are rarely seen without a mobile device of some kind, which when used in the wrong way can bring unwanted attention and media exposure. Young people often feel pressured into sending a sexting image or message believing it is what is expected of them. By creating and sending the image a young person is 'producing and distributing child abuse images' and risk being prosecuted (even if the image is taken and shared with their permission).

You have a duty to act in a way that will not bring you or the young person into question. If you receive inappropriate messages or images from our young people report it immediately to our Safeguarding and Welfare Officer, do not engage in reciprocal messaging as this may be misinterpreted.

Richmond Hockey Club adopts England Hockey's Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy and works in accordance with the following statement:

Introduction:



Richmond Hockey Club is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for all young people involved in hockey. It accepts its responsibility to help safeguard the welfare of all young people and protect them from poor practice, abuse and bullying.

Every individual and organisation within the Hockey Family has a role and responsibility to help ensure the safety and welfare of young people. The Hockey Family is defined below.

Richmond Hockey Club as a provider of opportunities for young people in hockey accepts that we are required to fulfil our duty of care, which means that we must do everything that can be reasonably expected of us to help safeguard and protect young people from any reasonably foreseeable harm.

Definitions:

Hockey Family: all individuals, clubs, associations and other organisations involved in any capacity in the game of hockey, and whether or not members of England Hockey. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes all players and anyone working within hockey (in a paid or voluntary capacity, and whether as an employee or on a self-employed or other work basis) including all coaches, umpires, referees and other officials.

Young People anyone under the age of 18.

Obligations under this policy:

Everyone within **Richmond Hockey Club** must act in accordance with:

- the general principles set out in this policy; and
- the principles set out in the particular policies below, together with the supporting good practice document:
 - o the recruitment of persons working with young people
 - o the use of DBS checks in recruitment and employment
 - o anti-bullying
 - o taking and use of photographic and recorded images of young people;



Affiliation to England Hockey will evidence agreement of these obligations by the Club and membership of will evidence agreement by the Hockey Family.

Richmond Hockey Club has in addition, adopted and implemented our own:

- Safeguarding and Protecting Young People (or Child Protection) policy which complies with the general principles set out in this policy; and

Everyone within **Richmond Hockey Club** must also:

- abide by England Hockey's Code of Ethics, which specifies conduct in relation to the safeguarding of young people within hockey, among other issues

follow England Hockey reporting procedures where there are concerns relating to the safety or welfare of young people, including the escalation of safeguarding concerns and complaints to England Hockey where required. For clarity, policies, procedures and good practice relating to the safeguarding of young people in hockey need to be applied both in relation to activities for young people specifically and where young people may be involved within the adult game. For example, where players or umpires under 18 years of age are incorporated into adult team hockey.

England Hockey's role:

Complaints and disciplinary action

Richmond Hockey Club recognises that safeguarding concerns may result in complaints or disciplinary action. All safeguarding-related complaints will be managed in accordance with England Hockey Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Complaints and Disciplinary Regulations.

England Hockey may take direct action, refer matters to statutory safeguarding agencies, or require the club to take action where appropriate. Richmond Hockey Club will cooperate fully

As the national governing body, England Hockey will publicise and promote within hockey its Safeguarding Young People Policy, Procedures and Good Practice Guidance. It will also support its affiliated clubs and associations in adopting and implementing their own policies by producing template policies and procedures and through access to appropriate training and education opportunities.



England Hockey is committed to ensuring that concerns relating to the safety and welfare of young people in hockey are taken seriously and acted upon swiftly and appropriately. To achieve this, England Hockey has developed procedures for reporting concerns.

England Hockey recognises the roles and responsibilities of the statutory agencies in safeguarding young people and the responsibilities and expertise of the relevant agencies in determining whether young people have, or may have, been abused or otherwise harmed. England Hockey is committed to complying with the procedures of the local safeguarding partners, including the local authority, police and health services ¹. Accordingly, England Hockey will work co-operatively with the relevant statutory agencies on matters relating to safeguarding young people and where England Hockey receives a report of a concern, it will refer the matter to the relevant statutory agency where appropriate.

England Hockey is also committed to directly challenging conduct within hockey that is, or may be, harmful to young people. It may, therefore, instigate proceedings under its own Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Complaints and Disciplinary Regulations where concerns or complaints are raised (by sources internal or external to hockey) relating to the safety and welfare of young people. England Hockey will take action against any person or organisation within its jurisdiction whose conduct is found to have harmed a young person in hockey or whose conduct (within or outside hockey) poses or may pose a risk of harm to young people in hockey. England Hockey may also refer matters back to a club for resolution at club level where appropriate.

Richmond Hockey Club will follow England Hockey's Reporting Procedures and will make all their members aware that they are subject to the above Regulations if there is a breach of the Policy.

GENERAL SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING YOUNG PEOPLE PRINCIPLES:

- The safety and welfare of young people is paramount.
- All young people, regardless of age, ability, sex, race, religion or belief, ethnic origin, social status or sexual orientation have the right to be protected from harm.
- The rights, dignity and worth of all young people should always be respected.



- **Richmond Hockey Club** wishes to promote a telling culture. Everyone within hockey must therefore report all concerns in accordance with England Hockey's reporting procedures.

- It is the responsibility of child protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone in hockey's responsibility to report concerns,

- ¹ Local safeguarding partners are the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how organisations in each local area work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These partners include the local authority, police and health services, who share responsibility for coordinating safeguarding arrangements, ensuring effectiveness and supporting education and training at a local level. The roles and responsibilities of the statutory agencies in safeguarding young people must be recognised and the procedures of the Local Safeguarding partners must be complied with.

- Any policy or procedure is only as effective as the ability and skill of those who operate it.

- **Richmond Hockey Club** is committed to encouraging, and everyone within hockey must recognise and regard as essential, the effective and safe recruitment of all individuals working with young people in hockey.

- All those working in hockey, in a paid or voluntary capacity, must abide by England Hockey's Code of Ethics.

Guidance and legislation:

The practices and procedures within this policy and documentation are based on the principles contained within UK and international legislation and Government guidance and have been designed to complement Local Safeguarding partners procedures and take the following into consideration:

- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Police Act 1997
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974



- Criminal Justices and Court Services Act 2000
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- "Caring for the young and vulnerable" Home Office guidance for preventing the abuse of trust 1999
- "What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused" DOH 2006
- "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2006, HM Government
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Dated April 2026 by Richmond Hockey Club Committee