



### **2024 -2025 Season:**

The Club Safeguarding Officer is Will Butler. He can be contacted via mobile on 07903 935099 child safeguarding issues as well as responsibility for Safer Recruitment and DBS checks on the Club's volunteer workforce.

### **Our Club has adopted the RFU Safeguarding Policy.**

### **Our approach to Safeguarding at Harrogate Pythons RUFC**

Everyone involved in rugby, whether as a player, coach, referee, administrator, parent or spectator is expected to uphold the Core Values of our sport:

- Play to win – but not at all costs.
- Win with dignity, lose with grace.
- Observe the Laws and Regulations of The Game.
- Respect opponents, referees, and all participants.
- Reject cheating, discrimination, violence, and drugs.
- Value volunteers and paid officials alike.
- Enjoy the game.

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults in the sport.

We will:

- comply with all Rugby Football Union regulations and policies relating to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- apply best practice, whilst ensuring that the best interests of the child are paramount and common sense prevails. Where local circumstances require, specific detailed policies will be formulated and published on the club website and communicated to club members.
- regularly communicate its safeguarding policy, codes of conduct and best practice guidelines to players, coaches, parents, and spectators.
- prominently display its codes of conduct and safeguarding policy at its clubhouse and training facilities.
- apply safeguarding regulations, policies, and best practice to all activity under the Harrogate Pythons RUFC 'banner' no matter where the activity takes place.

Harrogate Pythons RUFC recognises that anyone under the age of 18 is regarded as a child, and that our Club applies its duty of care to 17-year-olds playing adult rugby.

### **Harrogate Pythons RUFC Safeguarding Policy**

The Key Principles of the Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy are that:

- The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult 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, is essential for the welfare of children and young people.
- Children have a right to expect support, and personal and social development delivered by an appropriately recruited, vetted, and managed team in relation to their participation in rugby union, whether they are playing, volunteering or officiating in the community or professional areas of the sport.

### **Harrogate Pythons RUFC adopts RFU Safer Recruitment best practices.**

To this end:

- All volunteers/coaching staff are required to complete a Self-declaration Volunteer Form which includes a self-disclosure about any criminal record. This can be downloaded from the club website under Information/Documents/Junior Section. Details of any relevant experience, including coaching and first aid qualifications, should be disclosed and references may be sought.
- All coaches are required to undergo basic Safeguarding training (the Safeguarding e-learning module and in-person 'Play it Safe' training, as circumstances allow).
- All members of Harrogate Pythons RUFC who have a regular supervisory contact with children or a management responsibility for those working with children must undertake an RFU Enhanced Disclose and Barring Service (DBS) check - the successor to a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. Any DBS held by the individual issued through another organisation is not applicable and an RFU DBS check must be undertaken within a reasonable timeframe of taking up the role. DBS checks must be repeated every three years and the safeguarding e-learning module must be repeated prior to DBS renewal.
- Harrogate Pythons 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. Harrogate RUFC recognises that this is the responsibility of everyone involved, in whatever capacity, at the Club.
- Harrogate Pythons RUFC will implement and comply with the RFU Code of Conduct and the Codes of Conduct for Coaches, Spectators and Officials as appropriate. The club will communicate and promote the RFU's advice on Dealing with Challenging Behaviour on the Touchline.
- Harrogate Pythons RUFC will ensure its spectators, parents, members, and officials are all aware of, and have accepted, the club Photographic Policy as set out on the club's website.
- The club will communicate its disciplinary procedures and ensure where a player under 18 is subject to disciplinary proceedings they are offered the support of the Club Safeguarding Officer or one of the Assistant Safeguarding Officers.



- If you witness or are aware of an incident where the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult has been put at risk you must in the first instance inform the Club Safeguarding Officer or a Committee Member. They will then inform the Constituent Body (CB) Safeguarding Manager and the RFU Safeguarding Executive, if required. If an incident involves the Club Safeguarding Officer you should inform the Chairman of The Club Julian Tatlow , (who can be contacted via the club website) and either the CB Safeguarding Manager [safeguarding@yorkshirerfu.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@yorkshirerfu.co.uk) or the RFU Safeguarding Executive whose contact details can be found via the following link:  
<https://www.englandrugby.com/run/safeguarding/contact-the-rfu-safeguarding-team>
- Harrogate RUFC will ensure that all its members, whether they are coaches, parents, players, or officials will comply with 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, children, vulnerable adult, or adults.
- Smoking in the presence of children.
- Humiliating children or vulnerable adults.
- Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult.
- Participating in, or allowing, contact or physical games with children or vulnerable adults.
- Having an intimate or sexual relationship with any child or vulnerable adult developed as a result of being in a 'position of trust.'
- Making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material.

### **Alcohol**

It is important that all rugby clubs' management committees take considered, positive action to Alcohol.

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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.



### **Safeguarding Children Policy – Regulation 21**

At training sessions and games for children, adults' drinking habits may affect both children's attitude to alcohol and their emotional wellbeing. 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.

### **Preventing abuse in positions of trust in sport**

As parents, coaches, officials, and volunteers working with young people, we must all help to promote responsible relationships within sport and prevent the manipulation and exploitation of young people.

Although young people aged 16 and 17 have reached the age of consent for sexual activity according to UK law, they could be vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation in certain situations. This includes sexual activity and manipulation by adults who hold a position of trust, responsibility, or authority in relation to them, and, as a result, have a considerable amount of power and influence on their lives.

As of 28th June 2022 the law states that those in a position of trust in sports organisations, such as a coach, cannot legally have a sexual relationship with young people they look after that are under 18 years of age.

A position of trust offence is committed when an adult in a position of trust engages in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if the child has reached the age of consent (16 years old in the UK).

This law change is embedded in the club's Code of Conduct for coaches and other volunteers who are in a position of trust with young people.

Within the new law, sport is defined as:

- a) any game in which physical skill is the predominant factor, and
- b) any form of physical recreation which is also engaged in for purposes of competition or display

It is not the case that both (a) and (b) must be met to meet the definition – either one is sufficient.

Those in authority positions in sport can have a positive influence on the welfare of a young person, by providing role models or someone to turn to if they have a concern. But it is important to have clear boundaries in place for the safety of both the young people and the staff/volunteers, to ensure exploitation cannot take place.



### **What is a position of trust?**

Someone in a position of trust is a person in a position of authority or responsibility over another person. Those in positions of trust have a considerable amount of power and influence on a young persons' life. For example, a young person may be dependent on their coach, mentor or other adult for their sporting development, success, or position in a club, representative or national team.

### **Changing facilities**

Harrogate Pythons RUFC expects team administrators and coaches to arrange the use of changing facilities to ensure that adults are not changing at the same time as children and vulnerable adults. Facilities should be utilised in such a way that different junior age groups change separately. Where female groups require the changing rooms, no other group must use the facilities at that time. Adults must only enter the changing rooms when absolutely necessary, due to poor behaviour, injury or illness. If supervision is required, this must involve more than one individual.

### **Training and professional development**

Harrogate Pythons RUFC will ensure that its coaches and team administrators receive the support and training considered appropriate to their position and role and will support coaches in following the RFU's coach development pathway.

### **First Aid provision**

Harrogate Pythons RUFC will support volunteers to provide first aid cover by providing appropriate training and first aid equipment. Where necessary, due to numbers attending, the club will provide professional first aid support. The club will maintain records of injuries and report as appropriate to the RFU. In the event of an injury to a player which requires attendance at Accident & Emergency or Minor Injuries, an Accident Report Form must be completed, and a copy submitted to the Club Safeguarding Officer for their records. These forms can be downloaded from the club website under

Information/Documents/Junior Section or alternatively the accident can be reported using the ProActive app via the Head Coach.

### **Age Grade dispensations**

Harrogate Pythons RUFC will ensure that all coaches are aware of the RFU rules on age grade dispensations and that all requests for dispensation are recorded in committee minutes and copies of signed requests are maintained. The club will advise opposition teams of any players who are playing out of age grade and will ensure that requirements on front row play and playing adult rugby are complied with. The club will ensure that parents are aware of the risks of playing out of age grade.

Any events held on Harrogate Pythons RUFC premises must comply with this Policy and, if appropriate, a Safeguarding Plan should be discussed and circulated to those affected.



### Touring

Any tours, overseas or domestic, undertaken by Harrogate Pythons RUFC must comply with the relevant RFU Regulations and Guidance relating to touring with children. RFU guidance and best practice on touring with children can be found via this link:

<https://rfu.widen.net/view/pdf/ivvsauavqp/Trips-Tours-and-Overnight-Stays.pdf?u=hjokav>

### Social media use

Harrogate Pythons RUFC will monitor its website and social media feeds to ensure that they contain nothing which could harm a child directly or indirectly. Team administrators and coaches are expected to protect the identity of children and protect them from humiliation and bullying when posting photographs and team news to the club website. Detailed information about children and vulnerable adults (name, address, interests etc) should never be disclosed in posts. Those publishing articles which include links to external websites must be aware of the risk of inappropriate content being viewed by children and vulnerable adults and take appropriate action.

With regard to communications, Harrogate Pythons RUFC recommends that:

- When communicating by phone, where possible, Club Officials and coaches should speak to the parent/guardian of a child.
- Club Officials and coaches should not communicate with individual children by text or online at any time, on any matter, unless there is an immediate risk to the welfare of that child which can be lessened by such contact.
- If the club needs to communicate club-related information to children by email (such as training or match details), it should use the recognised Club app or email groups comprising email addresses given by parents/guardians. It is inadvisable for a coach to communicate by email on a one-to-one basis with a child and if replying to an email from a child, the parent/guardian should be copied in to the response.
- Coaches and Club Officials should not communicate with children through social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Coaches should not be “friends” with the children they coach on social media
- Communication with children and vulnerable adults should be appropriate to their ages with the above considered at all times.
- Harrogate Pythons RUFC expects parents/guardians or a designated adult to remain throughout sessions at the club. This includes home training, home and away matches and tournaments. If parents/guardians should leave their child, they must be contactable in the event of an incident or accident involving their child. Parents/guardians remain responsible for their children's whereabouts and behaviour at all times. Team administrators will have records of all registered players, including emergency contact details and information about relevant medical conditions, at all rugby related activity.

The full RFU Safeguarding Children Policy which informs our own policy be viewed via this link:

<https://rfu.widen.net/view/pdf/hn0znxzepi/RFU-Safeguarding-Children-Policy.pdf?u=hjokav>