

# St. Helens Rugby League Referees Society

## Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk: Policy and Procedure

Our safeguarding policy sets out our commitment to protecting individuals and outlines our response to safeguarding issues raised. We have developed a combined safeguarding policy which combines the three distinct sections:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk
- Domestic Abuse

Each section is designed to stand alone; however by combining the sections there is less duplication and confusion to our response.

## POLICY STATEMENT

St. Helens RLRS accepts the social, moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for children, young people, adults at risk and anyone at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse, to safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse when they are engaged in services organised or provided by St. Helens RLRS.

The purpose of this Policy and its associated procedures is to help protect children, young people, adults at risk and anyone at risk of, experiencing domestic abuse and to protect St. Helens RLRS, its members, elected officials and anyone else working on behalf of and / or representing St. Helens RLRS.

## **Policy Aims**

- Raising awareness of the duty of care and responsibilities relating to safeguarding throughout St. Helens RLRS.
- Actively encouraging good practice amongst all members, elected officials and anybody else working for and / or on behalf of St. Helens RLRS and promoting wider awareness wherever possible (for example, partner organisations and service user groups).
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all of our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Listening to, respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of everyone using or engaging with our services
- Minimising dangers and working closely with other agencies
- Recruiting, training, supervising and supporting all members, elected officials and volunteers appropriately and in accordance with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) guidance.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately
- Ensuring that anybody who undertakes activities on behalf of St. Helens RLRS has appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place

## **Policy Objectives**

- To provide appropriate training for all members, elected officials and volunteers to enable them to recognise the potential signs and indicators of abuse and to continually develop good practice
- To maintain a record of all training undertaken by members and to monitor outstanding training needs
- To support members, elected officials, volunteers and others working for and / or on behalf of St. Helens RLRS to respond sensitively and seriously to disclosures or information about abuse and be confident and able to take appropriate action swiftly, regardless of whom the allegation is about (for example, senior match official / fellow member/ coaching staff / parents)
- To maintain good working practices at all times
- To promote the general welfare and wellbeing of everyone who accesses or engages with our services
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to incidents or accidents
- To develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to complaints or alleged abuse

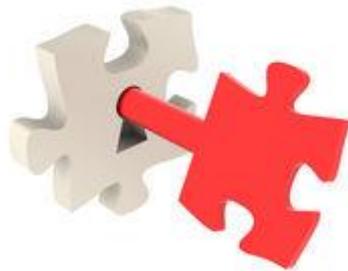
## **Safeguarding is EVERYONE'S Business**

This policy affects every St. Helens RLRS member, elected official, volunteer and anyone working on behalf of and / or representing St. Helens RLRS.

The aims of the policy are extremely important to the health and wellbeing of children, young people, adults at risk and anyone who is experiencing or is at risk of domestic abuse. As such, St. Helens RLRS expects all members to understand the need for the policy and to comply fully with it. If any member finds that for whatever reason they do not believe that they can comply with this policy and associated procedures, they must notify the safeguarding officer immediately.

## **Reporting Concerns**

Throughout each section of the policy you will see the 'jigsaw' logo. To report a concern, you can click "ctrl + " on this logo anywhere in the policy. This will enable you to forward your concerns using an online reporting form which will be sent automatically to the Safeguarding Officer.



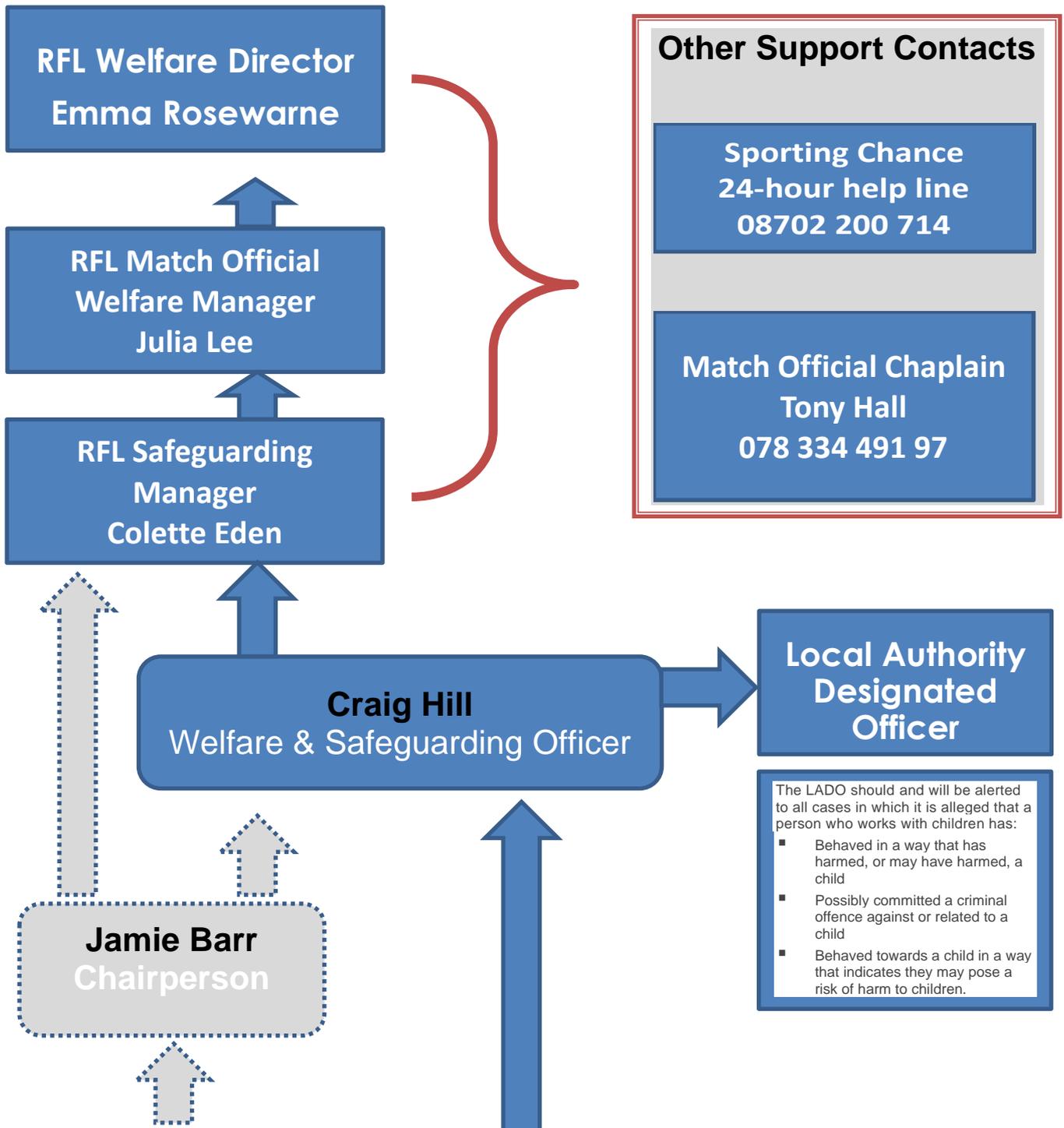
Alternatively, and for members without ICT access; please telephone the Safeguarding Officer on 077 144 121 86 to report a concern.

## **St. Helens RLRS – Society Safeguarding Structure**

Whilst safeguarding is everyone's business, St. Helens RLRS has a named officer who takes responsibility for:

- supporting members to report concerns
- developing and reviewing policies and procedures
- working in partnership with other organisations to develop best practice and shared learning
- providing training for all members, elected officials and volunteers
- providing training to all new members and elected officials as part of St. Helens RLRS induction process

St. Helens RLRS safeguarding structure is set out below:



**NB:** Please note; this policy will be revised in line with any amendments to the Working Together guidance.



## Safeguarding is Everyone's Business



"I don't directly work with children, so does this policy affect me?"

## Yes it does!

The policy applies to all situations within St. Helens RLRS operation, which could potentially involve children or young people, from children running around a training ground, at a game or where children or young people are present.

This Policy is intended as practical guidance for anyone acting under the umbrella of St. Helens RLRS who may come into contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families. This policy affects every member, elected official, volunteer and anyone working on behalf of and / or representing St. Helens RLRS. For the purposes of this policy and ease of reading, all of those named above will be referred to as 'members'.

Although your work may not directly impact on or relate to children or young people, you have a duty to recognise and respond to child protection situations and concerns appropriately and you must be aware of this policy and its procedures.

Members must also be aware that young people (under 18) will be officiating within shared facilities; either as members, fellow official or as part of another organisation or society. All members must remember that these individuals are children and as such, are protected by this policy and associated procedures.

**"Safeguarding children – the action we take to promote the welfare of children to protect them from harm – is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play"**

**"No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action".**

Working Together (2015)

## Abuse and Neglect

A person may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting. Children and young people may be abused by someone known to them or more rarely, by a stranger.

There are many ways in which children, young people and vulnerable adults can be harmed:



### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse can include, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or other-wise causing physical harm. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or failure to act to protect. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates symptoms or deliberately causes ill health to a child, young person or vulnerable adult.



### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, young person or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to them that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, young people or vulnerable adult. It may also involve causing children, young people or vulnerable adult to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child or young person or vulnerable adult. Emotional abuse can include the seeing or hearing of ill-treatment of others, for example through domestic abuse. Further instances of concern could include the over protection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child, young person or vulnerable adult from participating in normal social interaction.



### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of or consent to what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as prostitution, rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involvement in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging them to act in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and / or females, by adults and / or by other young people.



### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child, young person or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child, young person or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs. Neglect may:

- occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse
- involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- involve failing to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger
- involve failure to ensure adequate supervision or access to appropriate medical care or treatment

### **Recognising Abuse and Neglect**

Recognising child abuse is not easy. It is **not** the responsibility of members, elected officials and anybody else working for and / or on behalf of St. Helens RLRS to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at significant risk. **They do however** have a responsibility to act if they have concerns and to pass on information.

Many safeguarding concerns arise on a day-to-day basis, and often, they will not develop into abuse or neglect. The role of members, elected officials, volunteers and other working for and / or on behalf of St. Helens RLRS is to help to identify concerns and pass them onto the relevant agency.

It is the role of Children's Services, Adults Services and/or the Police to investigate allegations or concerns.



**REMEMBER:** It is not your job to judge or to investigate, but to inform and share your concerns

Every child, young person and vulnerable adult is unique and it is difficult to predict how their behaviour will change as a result of their experience of abuse. The table below outlines some physical signs and behavioural indicators that may be associated with a risk of abuse.

It is important to remember that many children, young people and vulnerable adults will exhibit some of these signs and indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as bereavement, the birth of a new baby in the family, relationship problems between parents / carers etc.

It is important that members have an understanding and awareness that some children, young people and vulnerable adults are potentially more susceptible and may have additional care needs. This could include children, young people and vulnerable adults from families affected by domestic violence, substance misuse and mental illness as well as those from ethnic minority backgrounds, migrant and travelling communities, those with a disability or learning difficulty, living away from home, in care or other temporary accommodation, as well as those who are in custody or have run away from home.

Regard should always be given to a child, young person, or vulnerable adult's religion or belief. It should be noted that children with disabilities, migrant children and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, child victims of trafficking, domestic abuse and bullying may have additional care needs and this should be remembered when considering the behavioural indicators.

All children, regardless of background, should be given the same level of support and protection.

### Indicators of Abuse

Type of abuse	Physical Indicator
Behavioural Indicator  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Frequent or unexplained bruising, marks or injury</li> <li>• Bruises which reflect hand marks or shapes of articles e.g. belts</li> <li>• Cigarette burns</li> <li>• Bite marks</li> <li>• Unexplained broken or fractured bones</li> <li>• Scalds</li> <li>• Fear of parent being contacted</li> <li>• Behavioural extremes – aggressive/angry outbursts or withdrawn</li> <li>• Fear of going home</li> <li>• Flinching when approached or touched</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Keeping arms/legs covered</li> <li>• Reluctance to change clothes</li> <li>• Panics in response to pain</li> <li>• Reports injury caused by parents</li> </ul>

<p>Emotional</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays in physical development or progress</li> <li>• Sudden speech disorders</li> <li>• Failure to thrive</li> <li>• Bedwetting and/or diarrhoea</li> <li>• Frequent psychosomatic complaints, headaches, nausea, abdominal pains</li> <li>• Mental or emotional development lags</li> <li>• Behaviour's inappropriate for age</li> <li>• Fear of failure, overly high standards, reluctance to play</li> <li>• Fears consequences of actions, often leading to lying</li> <li>• Extreme withdrawal or aggressiveness, mood swings</li> <li>• Overly compliant, too well-mannered</li> <li>• Excessive neatness and cleanliness</li> <li>• Extreme attention-seeking behaviour's</li> <li>• Poor peer relationships</li> <li>• Severe depression, may be suicidal</li> <li>• Runaway attempts</li> <li>• Violence is a subject for art or writing</li> <li>• Complains of social isolation</li> <li>• Forbidden contact with other children</li> </ul>
<p>Sexual</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pain/itching in the genital area</li> <li>• Bruising/bleeding near genital area</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted disease</li> <li>• Vaginal discharge/infection</li> <li>• Frequent unexplained abdominal pains</li> <li>• Discomfort when walking/sitting</li> <li>• Bed wetting</li> <li>• Excessive crying</li> <li>• Inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge for the child's age</li> <li>• Promiscuity</li> <li>• Sudden changes in behaviour</li> <li>• Running away from home</li> <li>• Emotional withdrawal through lack of trust in adults</li> <li>• Unexplained sources of money or 'gifts'</li> <li>• Inappropriate sexually explicit drawings or stories</li> <li>• Bedwetting or soiling</li> <li>• Overeating or anorexia</li> <li>• Sleep disturbances</li> <li>• Secrets which cannot be told</li> <li>• Substance/drug misuse</li> <li>• Reports of assault</li> </ul>

<p>Neglect</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant hunger</li> <li>• Poor hygiene</li> <li>• Weight loss/underweight</li> <li>• Inappropriate dress</li> <li>• Consistent lack of supervision/abandonment</li> <li>• Unattended physical problems or medical needs</li> <li>• Begging/stealing food</li> <li>• Truancy/late for school</li> <li>• Constantly tired/listless</li> <li>• Regularly alone/unsupervised</li> <li>• Poor relationship with care giver</li> </ul>
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**Important:** Please note that the table above does not provide an exhaustive or definitive statement of what to look out for: it must be viewed only as a guide to some common indicators of abuse. There may be other reasons that a child or young person is exhibiting some of the signs and indicators. If you have any concerns or question, please speak to our safeguarding officer as soon as possible.