



LEIGH MINERS RANGERS ARLFC

Rugby League Academy



Child Welfare Policy

Safeguarding & Protecting Children



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Issue 8



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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (Junior Section) has adopted the Rugby League Child Protection Policy and is implementing it throughout the club. This section is a summary of the LMR Child Protection Policy and is intended as a source of guidance to anyone connected with the LMR club.

A copy of the full formal document 'Rugby League Child Protection Policy & Implementation Procedures' is held by the Club Child Protection Officer and is available upon request. Alternatively a pdf file can be downloaded from the RFL website www.rfl.uk.com by linking to the relevant BARLA link.

Objective:

To devise and implement a safe working practice for coaches and volunteers working with children and young people.

Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (Rugby League Academy), in conjunction with the Rugby League Policy Board, want to make sure that all players, (Young Persons), are protected and kept safe whilst they are in the care of officials representing this Club.

We will do this by:

- A** Adopting and adhering to the Rugby League Policy Board Child Protection Policy and Procedures. The Club will also be bound by the decisions and recommendations of the Rugby League Policy Board Child Protection Disciplinary Committees.
- B** Making sure that all officials are carefully selected, vetted and where necessary trained.
- C** Ensuring that details of any player's medical condition are notified to the relevant officials.
- D** Giving parents and players information about the Club's aims and ambitions and what they can expect from the Club.
- E** Advising parents of what the Club can expect from them.
- F** Ensuring parents and players know how to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy about.

For the purposes of the Rugby League Child Protection Policy, children are under 18 years of age (S.Cummings – Technical Executive, October 2002).

Method:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Suspected Abuse Report Procedures
 - Abuse within the sporting environments connected to Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC
 - Abuse outside the sports environment
- 3 Recruitment and Induction
 - Code of Conduct
 - Guidelines for Good Practice
 - Identifying abuse (emotional, neglect, physical and sexual)
- 4 Child Protection Training
 - Child protection training opportunities

1. Introduction

Child abuse may occur within many situations and different environments including, the home, at school and within sport. It is a subject that can arouse strong emotions and feelings in those who have to face such a situation and it could even involve your family as children may be abused regardless of their age, racial origin, gender, culture, religious belief, disability or sexual identity. It is the responsibility of every adult involved in these environments to understand the implications of child abuse and to be able to recognise a child who has been or is at risk of being harmed in this way in order to safeguard their welfare.

Leigh Miners Rangers are aware that the Rugby League Child Protection Policy states that video is acceptable as a coaching aid. However, there is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film or video footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All Club officials must remain vigilant at all times and their awareness should form part of their match day and training session regular routines.

‘Sport can contribute positively to the development of children. It is a vehicle for physical, mental, personal, social, and emotional development. Such development is enhanced if the individual is guided by an informed, thinking, caring and enlightened coach operating within an accepted ethical framework as a self-monitored professional’ (NCF Code of Ethics and Conduct for Sports Coaches).

In order to ensure that child protection is carried out effectively, it is important to make sure that everybody involved in sport has a full understanding of ethics and principles of good practice and can identify abuse within their environment. This training has invaluable implications, as some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them.

This document has been designed to recognise the responsibility of everybody involved in rugby league at Leigh Miners Rangers to safeguard and promote the interest and well being of the children that we are responsible for. It includes the recognition of good practice in sport, the identification of abuse and report procedures to take when concerns arise.

Within every organisation, there is a need to establish a recognised influential person who will be responsible for establishing guidelines concerning the protection of children. This person would also recognise that every organisation has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure that when it is given responsibility for children, it provides them with the highest possible standards of care. Within Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (Junior Section), the Child Protection Officer (CPO) fulfils this role.

Responsibilities of the CPO include overseeing the management of investigations, recruitment, induction, and training in the field of child protection. To ensure that the policy and procedures are effectively run the CPO must be well respected in the Club environment and be committed to and understand the policy, procedures and child protection in general.

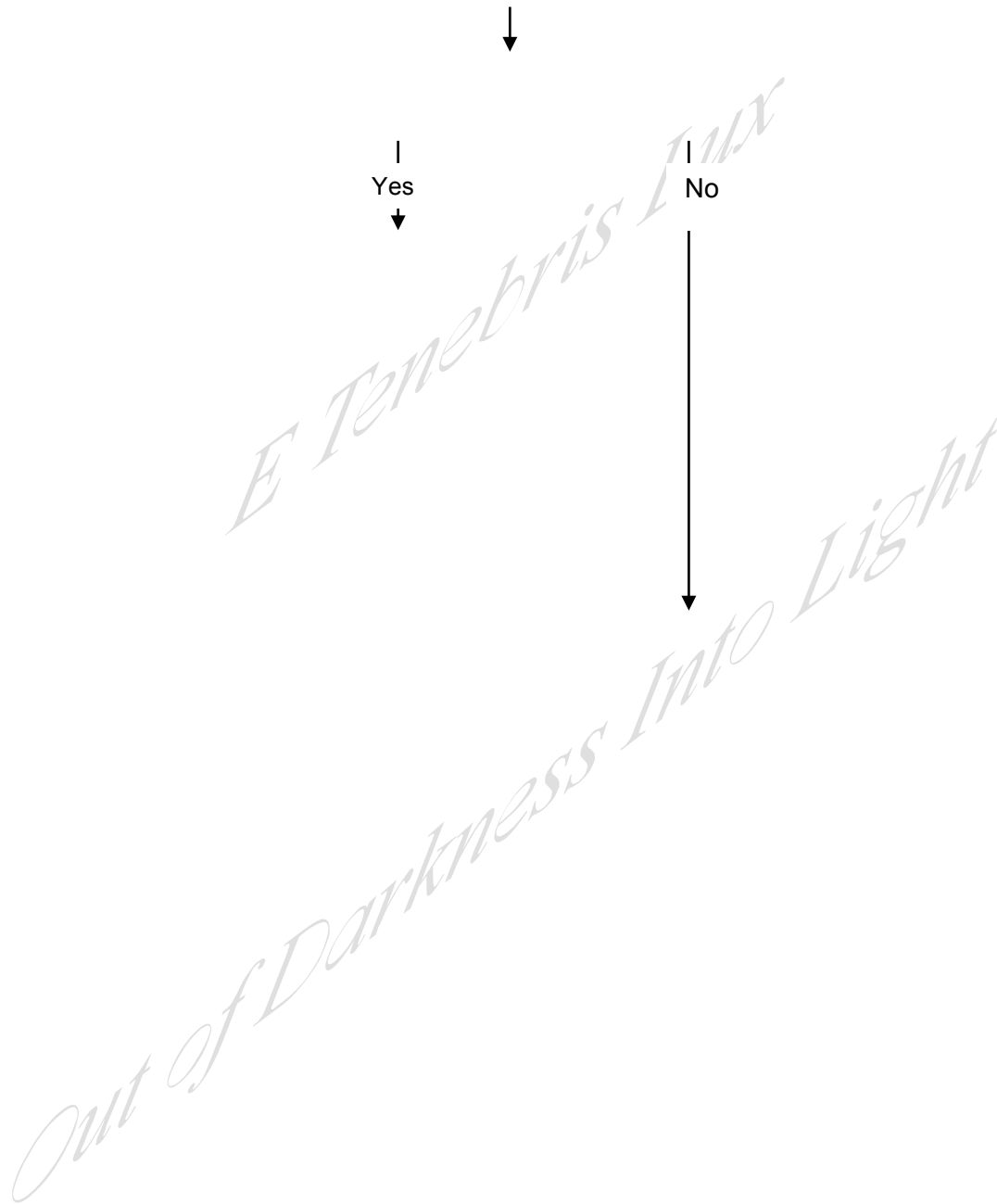
The CPO and his/her supporting CP Committee must all have attended a suitable training course.

2. Suspected abuse report procedures

Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child abuse can and does occur within institutions and within other settings other than the home. It is crucial that those involved in sport are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate actions pursued. This would include anyone working with children in a paid or voluntary capacity. It is important that all involved are aware of the Child Protection Policy and have access to a copy.

Details of reporting mechanism are detailed in 2.1 & 2.2

2.1 Abuse outside the sporting environment



Are you concerned about a person outside the Rugby League setting? (e.g. a parent/carer/relative)

Is the young person in need of immediate medical attention?

- Take the young person to hospital or telephone for an ambulance
- Inform the doctor of your concerns in relation to Child Protection issues (the doctor will take appropriate action)

Can you contact the Club Child Protection Officer immediately?

Yes

Inform the Club Child Protection Officer

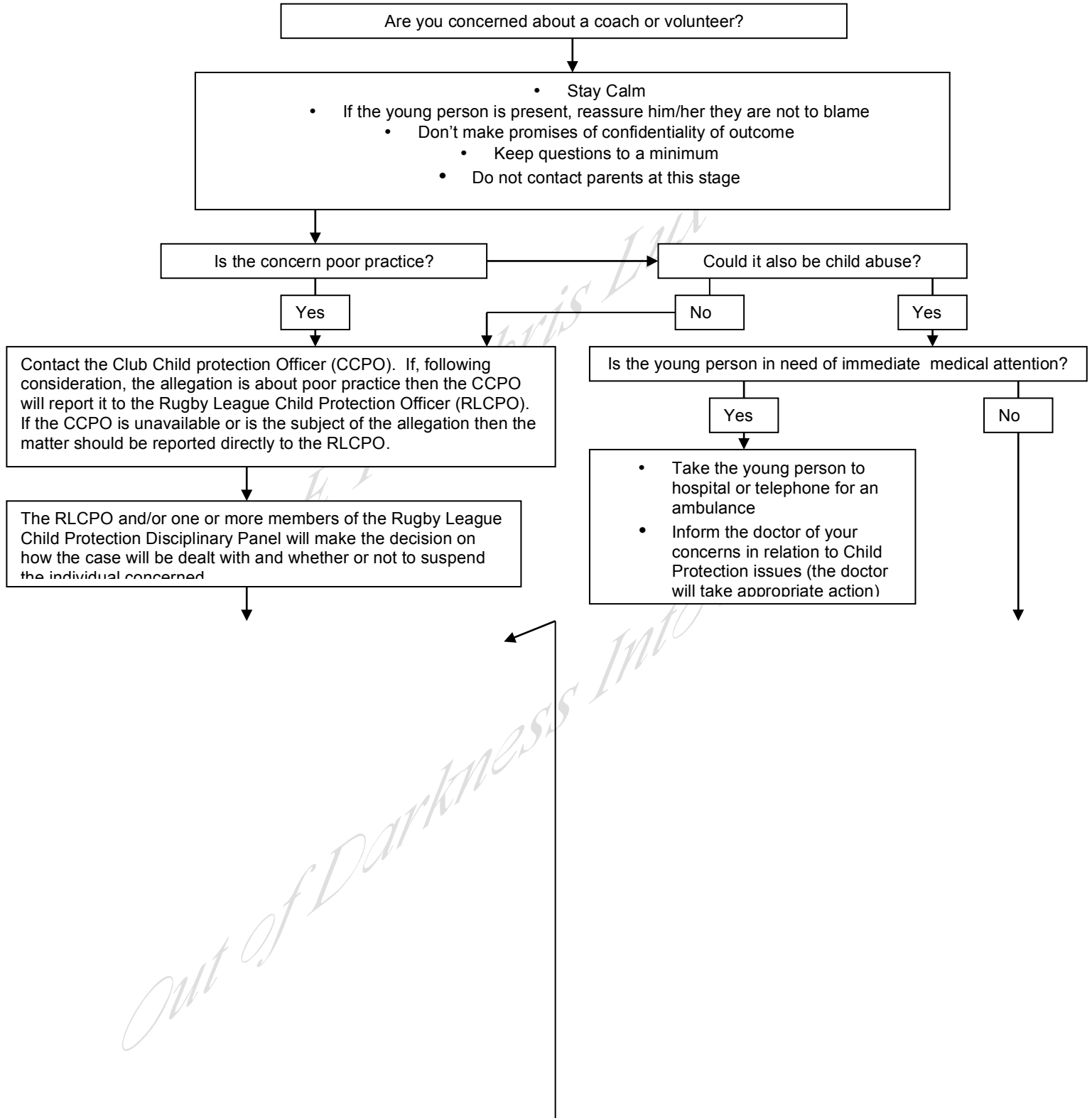
No

Inform the Club Child Protection Officer asap, meanwhile:

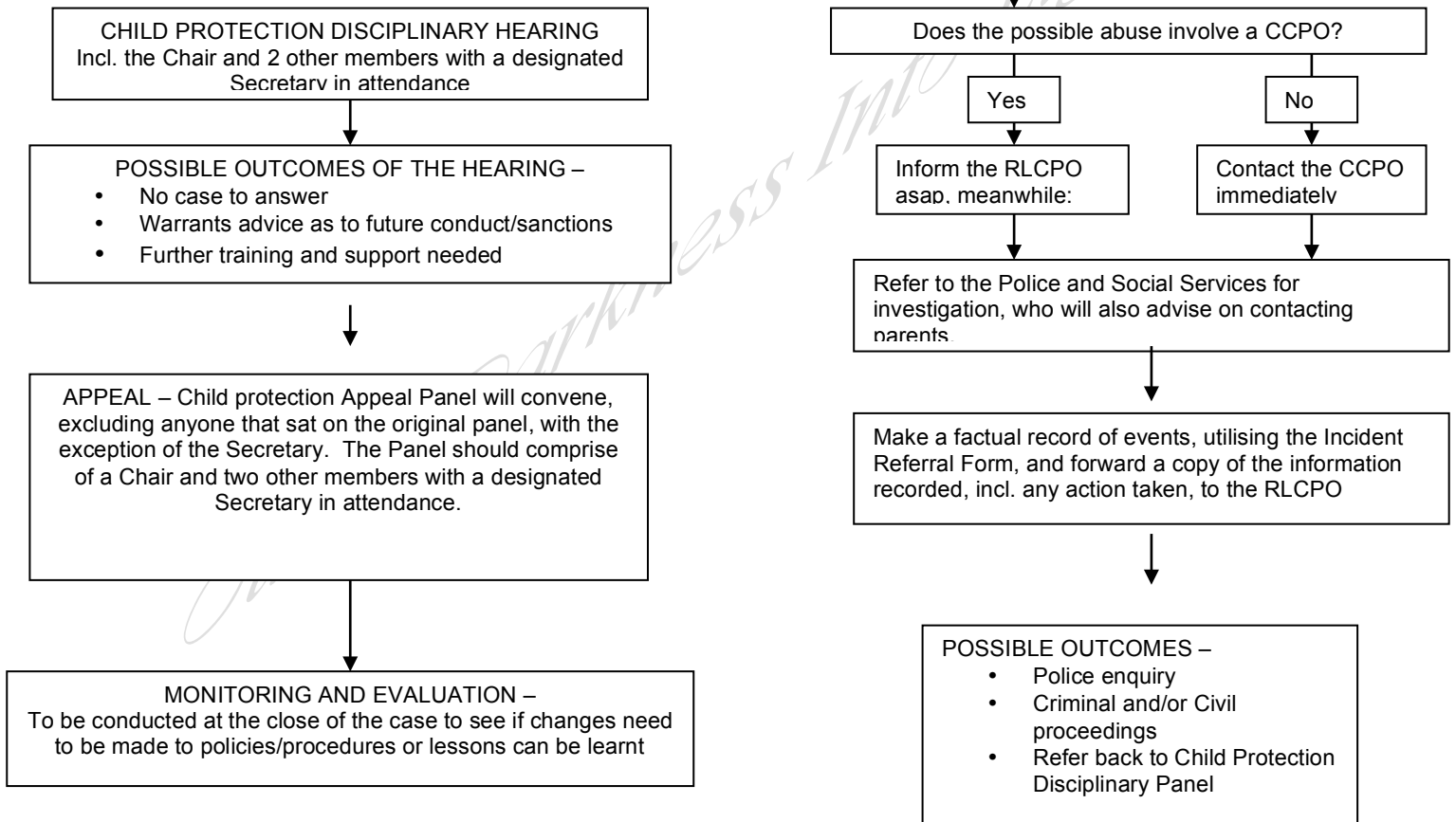
- Seek advice immediately from local Social Services, the Police, NSPCC on 0800 800 500 or Childline on 0800 1111
- Take action as advised by these agencies including advice on contacting parents/carers
- Make a factual record of events using the Incident Referral Form and forward a copy of the information recorded, including any action taken as directed, to the Rugby League Child Protection Officer who will take appropriate action
- Note whether the allegation refers to a person involved in Rugby League in any capacity

IF YOU CANNOT CONTACT THE CLUB CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER OR THE RUGBY LEAGUE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU DELAY IN PASSING YOUR CONCERNS TO SOCIAL SERVICES AND/OR THE POLICE.

2.2 Abuse within the sporting environments connected to Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC.



E Tenebris Lux
Darkness Into Light





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3. Recruitment and induction

To ensure that all child protection standards are kept to the highest nature, it is important that all persons that will be involved in a position of responsibility regarding children are recruited and inducted into the Club both in the same and best possible way.

Induction and starter packs

An introduction pack that contains all procedures relevant to the Club, a code of conduct towards people that the coach / volunteer is likely to come into contact with and an acknowledgement of receipt form creates a higher degree of understanding. First, the coach / volunteer should understand their own rights within the Club, issues of good practice and how the Club expects them to conduct themselves. This in turn can reinforce the integrity of procedures in place at the Club should any cases of misconduct arise.

Application Form, Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and Self Declaration Forms (SDF)

All volunteers within Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (Junior Section) will be required to complete an Application Form and either a CRB Disclosure or an SDF. The Rugby League Child Protection Policy states that it is mandatory for people working in the following positions to have a CRB Disclosure check:

- a. Coaches (all levels)
- b. Child Protection Officer(s)
- c. First Aiders

Or anyone else whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children.

Code of Conduct

This code of conduct is a series of guidelines for coaches / volunteers to work in conjunction with and to ensure the correct development of those they influence.

The code of conduct and guidelines for good practice will be made available to all those involved within the Club, including all coaches, volunteers, players and parents to



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ensure complete understanding of the expectations upon those involved within the Club.



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The guidelines within this code include the expected conduct towards the coaches, volunteers and parents in order to encourage interaction within the Club and ensure that the best principles for good conduct are conveyed to the young players and promote their continued participation in both training and competition. This code recognises both the responsible leadership ethic towards coach and player relationships and takes the particular sport specifics into consideration, including rules and a need for the coach to be aware of the demands that the sport may place upon a young developing player.

Guidelines for Good Practice

These guidelines for good practice are implemented to ensure that both coaches and volunteers are protected from accusations of child abuse and to assure parents that the highest standards of coaching are being followed within the Club.

These guidelines include:

Coaches / volunteers should be publicly open when working with children and avoid situations where they and an individual child are completely unobserved.

Situations will occur in sport when, in order to teach or coach certain techniques it is necessary to make contact with the player. If this is the case, tell the player beforehand and ask them if they have any objections.

If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that adults work in pairs and that the gender is appropriate.

Where mixed teams compete away from home at least one male and one female should always accompany them.

Volunteers and coaches must respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all and treat everyone with equality.

Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the players above the development and performance. Anyone pertaining to be a professional Club scout (even if known to be one) must not be provided with personal details of any junior player. The coach or official should take the scouts details and pass them to the player's parent/guardian.

Ensure that skills are taught in a safe, secure manner paying due regard to the physical development of young players.

Ensure equipment and facilities are safe and appropriate to the age and ability of the players.



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Coaches should hold current awards or a recognised leadership award.

Coaches must ensure that the activities, which they direct or advocate, are appropriate to the age, maturity, and ability of the players.

Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of their sport and never condone law violations or use of prohibited substances.

Coaches must consistently display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance.

Coaches should never overtly criticise players or use language or actions, which may cause the player to lose confidence or self-esteem.

Coaches should not spend amounts of time alone with children away from others.

Coaches should not take children alone on car journeys, however short the journey.

Coaches should not take children to their home:

If it should arise that such situations are unavoidable they should only take place with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the Club / governing body or a person with parental responsibility for the player.

Coaches should follow the guidelines from the Rugby League Coach Education Programme and the National Coaching Foundation booklet 'Working with Children'.

If a coach accidentally hurts or causes distress to a player, or the player appears to respond in a sexual manner to their actions, or misinterprets something they have done, they should report the incident to the Director of Coaching and/or Club Child Protection Officer as soon as possible. Parents / carers and Child Protection Committee should also be informed of the occurrence.

Identifying Abuse

The main four types of abuse are:

- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse



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Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is perhaps the most difficult of all forms of abuse to measure. Often children who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled, or because they receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers coaches and others involved in performance sport should also consider the potential emotional abuse from excessive pressure during training regimes or in relation to competition.

Physical indicators of emotional abuse include:

A failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances (e.g., in hospital or away from home).

Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Behavioural signs include:

Neurotic behaviour (e.g., hair twisting, rocking).

Being unable to play, unwilling to take part.

Excessive fear of making mistakes.

Self harm or mutilation

Fear of parents being contacted.

Neglect

Neglect is sometimes very difficult to recognise. It can go unnoticed for a long time; yet have lasting and very damaging effects on children. Children who do not receive adequate food or physical care will often develop and mature more slowly, while those who are left alone, unsupervised or unstimulated will often find it difficult to make friends or socialise adequately. It is important to look for both physical and emotional indicators.

Physical forms of neglect include:

Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children.

An unkempt state (frequently dirty or smelly).

Loss of weight or being constantly

Inappropriate dress.



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underweight.

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Behavioural forms of neglect include:

Being tired all the time.

Frequently being late for school or not going to school at all.

Failing to attend hospital or medical appointments.

Having few friends.

Being left alone or unsupervised on a regular basis.

Physical Abuse

Most children will collect cuts and bruises in their daily life, and certainly through their involvement in sport. However, you should be aware of children's injuries or bruising, which can only be caused non-accidentally. These will often be part of a recurring pattern, sometimes appearing regularly.

An important indicator of physical abuse where bruises or injuries are:

Unexplained.

Untreated.

Inadequately treated (or where there are delays to treatment).

On parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely.

Note that bruising may be more or less noticeable of children with differing skin tones or from different racial groups.

You need to be alert to the following physical indicators:

Unexplained bruising, marks, or injuries on any part of the body.

Bruises that reflect hand marks or fingertips.

Cigarette burns.

Bite marks,

Broken bones (particularly if the child is under two years old).

Scalds.

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Physical abuse may not be apparent from bruises, fractures, or physical signs. Behavioural indicators, particularly when there are changes in behaviour, can also indicate that abuse is happening.

This might be evident in the following behaviour:

Fear of parents being contacted.	Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
Running away.	Fear of going home (e.g., after training).
Flinching when approached or touched.	Reluctance to get changed for sport.
Covering arms and legs even when hot.	Depression.
Withdrawn behaviour.	

Sexual Abuse

People who may use children to meet their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys. This might be sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, or fondling. Showing them pornographic magazines, photographs or videos is also a form of sexual abuse.

Children may tell you either directly or indirectly that they are being sexually abused. This will have taken enormous courage on their part because it is likely the abuser will have threatened them if they tell, or will have been aware and are very frightened of the consequences.

In all cases, children will tell you because they want the abuse to STOP, therefore it is very important that you listen to them and take them seriously.

There may be physical indicators such as:

Pain or itching in the genital area.	Bruising or bleeding near the genital area.
A sexually transmitted disease.	Vaginal discharge or infection.
Stomach pains	Discomfort when walking or sitting down.
Pregnancy.	



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The sort of behavioural indicators you might notice are:

Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.	Apparent fear of someone.
Running away from home.	Having nightmares.
Sexual knowledge, which is beyond their age or development level.	Sexual drawings or language.
Bed-wetting.	Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts.	Saying they have secrets, they cannot tell anyone about.
Substance abuse or drug abuse.	Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
Taking over a parental role at home and seeming beyond their age.	Not allowed to have friends.
Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.	Telling about abuse.

4. Child Protection Training Opportunities

All newly recruited or existing coaches / volunteers should be considered for enrolment on a child protection awareness course as it is an excellent way in helping people to recognise forms of abuse and how they should deal with situations which may arise.

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PLAYER GENERAL WELFARE

Objective:

To reduce the risk of harm, to encourage the feeling of well-being amongst sports participants, and to clearly describe the type of care that all those associated with LMR are to abide by.

Method:

General Care

All coaches must be qualified and accredited to the level stipulated by the Rugby Football League. Proof of the coach's qualifications must be presented to LMR and their qualification renewal date entered into the Club's database.

The coach must be aware of player's medical problems where practicable – is everyone fit and well. If there is doubt whether a player should be playing due to a medical condition then a note must be produced by the player's GP passing the player fit to play Rugby League. In addition, the coach should establish whether the player has any special health requirements (all information should remain confidential). If coaching the very young a conversation with a parent or carer, as well as the child, is more appropriate.

Before beginning coaching, to make the practise safer and to put the players (particularly new ones) more at ease have the coaches:

- Explained clearly the 'house rules' or codes of conduct (see Code of Conduct - Players)?
- Eliminated any factors, which are hazardous or known to cause injury?
- Checked on participants' previous experience and knowledge?
- Made participants aware of any safety and emergency procedures (where appropriate)?
Coaches should always ensure a safe working environment, including the condition of the ground, ensuring the venue is appropriate for the purpose and that equipment is safe and used accordingly. Coaches should make their players aware of their personal responsibilities in terms of safety and the risk of injury, particularly those resulting from horseplay and lack of discipline. Coaches must ensure no-one trains or plays in spectacles, dentures, or wears jewellery (including any form of body piercing). Coaches must both ban chewing gum for playing or training and encourage the use of protective clothing, correctly fitted gumshields, shoulder pads and headgear – particularly when playing or carrying out contact drills. Choice of clothing for training is a personal matter but guard against nylon clothing (particularly when the player is generating heat) this is cheaper but not always suitable. In the case of dress, rules on safety take priority and



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should the coach find themselves in conflict with acceptable cultural, gender, ability, or religious practices, be sensible and seek advice from the Management Committee to ensure any discrimination or disadvantage is overcome.

Players should ensure their studs are in good condition to help prevent injury sustained as a result. Match day referees will prevent any players taking part whose studs are unsafe.

Sport presents an ideal opportunity for the coach to remind his players of the importance of personal hygiene, remember:

- Clothes must be clean and should be washed after every use.
- The body must be clean and particularly the feet. Athletes Foot is rife and although a minor problem can lead to more serious infections. The coach must always check the water temperature of the showers and if there are no facilities available, they should remind their players to bath/shower or strip wash at home. When working with children who have not yet reached puberty, use steady, low intensity exercise programmes with adequate rest periods rather than rigorous training programmes. Players should not be overplayed or overtrained and should not be playing more than one or two games per week (include their school activities in this calculation). When selecting players for games and contact training drills, coaches need to consider mental and physical maturity, fitness/conditioning levels, and skill levels. All activities must be in accordance with the Rugby League Coach Education Guidelines. It is LMR Club policy that all players must play and train at their "True age group" as determined by their age on or before 31st August, and they must only play or train with the age group that they are registered for. The LMR Club policy on this will override any current RFL/BARLA guideline on this issue. It is compulsory in all RFL/BARLA Youth and Junior games that identity cards must be produced for all players AND coaches and that the coach's registration should be applicable to the age group for which they are responsible (i.e. mini/mod, club, etc.). Should a team not produce their identity cards then it is mandatory for the game to be awarded to the non-offending team – **No Card No Play**.

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Warm up

To guard against injury:

- Heat the body, particularly the deep parts like the muscles and around the joints.
- Stretch the muscles, tendons, and ligaments.
- Prepare players for what is to follow, stimulating them both mentally and physically. **When** Before all forms of sport activity. No matter how brief or gentle the activity as injury can occur. **Guidelines** Basic guidelines for warm up:
 - Use a whole body warm up that raises the muscle temperature and stretches all the muscles and connective tissue.
 - Warm up should be activity related, so practice is achieved simultaneously.
 - Use a suitable combination of intensity and duration without undue fatigue.
 - Make warm up interesting yet safe.
 - Avoid a time lag between warm up and competition or training.
 - Make the warm up interesting by varying the exercise, and make it safe. What exercise to include?
 - *General body exercise/gentle full body activities*: jogging (maybe incorporated into drills), low intensity pair's work covering the full range of movement.
 - *Stretching exercises*: progressively lengthening the muscles, build from a slow and easy application of force to a controlled yet movement that is more dynamic. Do not use 'bouncy' stretches or a partner to help increase or sustain the stretch.
 - *Simulation exercise*: basic skills exercise can be done under controlled but simulated practise or competitive conditions designed to prepare the participant physically and mentally for the activities to follow. Allow for individual differences in warm up routines, as different bodies will require different emphasis in terms of stretching and strength exercises. Finally building up a routine or better still (in the older player) encouraging the individual to design their own routine suited to their individual needs.



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Cool down

It is equally important to cool down following exertion as to stop suddenly can often cause problems. When the activity period is over, the body must adapt and recover in many ways as it returns to normal – this is not instantaneous.

The muscles, which were pumping blood back to the heart, are no longer active so there is a build up of pressure in the muscles and fluid in the tissues, which may result in stiffness or soreness and possibly, muscle cramps. This may be prevented by mild systematic activity of the muscles affected until the body returns to a near resting state.

Showers or baths complete the recovery from exercise, although the same treatment should not be used for players with soft tissue injuries, strains or sprains that should involve the application of ice to reduce the swelling.

Diet and nutrition

Pre-match and pre-training diets should avoid fats and concentrated glucose drinks which are slow to leave the stomach and so are not recommended 2-3 hours before taking part in vigorous activity (e.g., cornflakes, pasta or mashed potatoes would be more beneficial). Certain high caffeine concentrate drinks often have the effect of increasing dehydration in players.

It is important that when training in the evening to have eaten something since lunchtime (particularly children), normally a light snack (e.g., sandwich, bread roll, and toasted sandwich) will suffice.

Diet is a study in itself and before dispensing specific instructions the coach should consult an expert or encourage the player (or parent/carer) to do the same.



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EQUITY POLICY

Objective:

To reduce the risk of discrimination, to players, guests and supporters and to clearly describe the type of considerations given to equality that all those associated with Leigh Miners Rangers are to abide by.

Method:

The sport of Rugby League and LMR are opposed to discrimination of any form and will promote measures to prevent discrimination, in whatever form, from being expressed.

Sports Equity is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. All those involved in LMR Rugby League must respect the rights and choices of all human beings, treating everyone equally and sensitively regardless of their gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion, or political affiliation.

LMR is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy participating in the sport of Rugby League in an environment free from the threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.

All club members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.

The LMR Codes of Conduct shall be adhered to at all times, to ensure the sport of Rugby League can be enjoyed by all.