

# BARNSTAPLE RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

## Safeguarding Adults at Risk in Rugby Union Policy and Procedures



### Policy statement

BRFC is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for everyone to play and enjoy rugby union. We accept our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all adults involved in the game, particularly those deemed to be at risk.

BRFC Safeguarding Adults at Risk in Rugby Union Policy and Procedures (this Policy) applies to all individuals involved in rugby union, whether employees or volunteers. Adults are people over the age of eighteen years of age.

The guidance given in the Policy is based on the following principles:

- All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or transgender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to play rugby union in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- The BRFC will seek to ensure that the sport is inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment, and also commit to continuous development, monitoring and review.
- The rights, dignity and worth of all adults will always be respected.
- BRFC recognises that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, for example those who have a dependency on others or have different communication needs.
- BRFC recognises that disabled adults may or may not identify themselves or be identified as an adult 'at risk'.
- Everyone involved in rugby union has a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all adults and should act appropriately and report concerns whether these concerns arise within rugby union (e.g. inappropriate behaviour of a coach) or outside (e.g. in the wider community).
- All allegations will be taken seriously and responded to quickly, in line with this Policy.
- BRFC have an appropriate named person to ensure that best practice is promoted and that implementation of this Policy is supported at each level of the sport.

## **Guidance and legislation**

The practices and procedures within this Policy are based on the principles contained within UK and international legislation and current Government Guidance. It has been developed to complement the Safeguarding Adults Boards policy & procedures, and take the following into consideration:

- Data Protection Acts 1994 and 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Care Act 2014
- No Secrets Guidance 2000
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014

## **Definitions**

To assist working through and understanding this Policy a number of key definitions need to be explained:

An adult at risk has previously been referred to as a vulnerable adult; this is now considered to be inappropriate terminology. The adults referred to in this document are adults at risk using the definition from the Safeguarding Adults in Sport Steering Group (2013): 'When we are speaking about adults at risk we are referring to those who have health or social care needs (irrespective of whether or not those needs are being met by social services) and who are unable to safeguard themselves as a result. While we recognise that some people will be vulnerable due to their learning disability or mental health needs, there are also those adults who are at risk due to a specific circumstance they may find themselves in, for example: domestic abuse; forced marriage; and sexual or commercial exploitation (this is not an exhaustive list).'

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. See "Types of abuse" for further explanations.

At risk is a term meaning that someone may be more vulnerable to abuse than someone else. For example, an adult with a learning disability may well be more at risk of financial abuse as they may struggle with managing their finances, this could leave them at risk from an unscrupulous person.

Capacity refers to the ability to make a decision at a particular time, for example when under considerable stress. The starting assumption must always be that a person has the capacity to make a decision, unless it can be established that they lack capacity.

## **Types of abuse**

**Neglect** - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and hearing.

**Sexual Abuse** - this includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

**Physical Abuse** - includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions. **Emotional Abuse / Psychological** - this includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

**Financial Abuse** - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Institutional Abuse** - this is abuse which centres around routines and schedules which have been designed for the benefit of the institution and not the individual.

**Discrimination** - discrimination is abuse which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the Protected Characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. Research tells us that bullying of vulnerable groups can be an issue in sport.

**Exploitation** - either opportunistically or premeditated, unfairly manipulating someone for profit or personal gain.

## **Signs and indicators of abuse**

Abuse can take place in any context and by all manner of perpetrator. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused, these include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries - or lack of medical attention when an injury is present
- Person has belongings or money going missing
- Person is not attending / no longer enjoying their rugby sessions
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person
- They may self-harm
- They may have a fear of a particular group or individual

