

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER



JAN 2024

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2024. The January newsletter has intentionally been released slightly later than usual due to the first major reform of Working Together to safeguard Children 2023 and I wanted to update you on some of the changes you need to make as clubs. Details of which can be found in the newsletter.

I hope you are all looking forward to the coming season. Please ensure you register for your role as the Club Welfare Officer mailing list is taken from Gameday registrations. If you haven't already done so you can register **HERE**.

All communication including legislation updates, conference, forum dates and the Newsletter are sent to CWO's who are registered and appear on the mailing list.

RFL Safeguarding Policy

It's been brought to our attention that at times statutory agencies including the Police, Social Services and Local Authority Designated Officers are contacting clubs directly when they have concerns about volunteers, staff and players.

I need to remind you that it is RFL policy that all cases involving statutory services are referred directly to the RFL Safeguarding Manager immediately and without any delay.



Conference 2024

Rugby League's acceptance of 44 recommendations from the sport's Brain Health Committee to take effect from the 2024 season was a new focus for the 16th Annual Safeguarding Conference held at St Helens.

More than 120 delegates attended the Totally Wicked Stadium from all sectors of the sport, and even including representatives from other sports who are considering following the RFL's lead.

Dr Gemma Phillips, the RFL's Deputy Chief Medical Officer and a member of the Brain Health Committee, gave a keynote speech outlining the background to the law changes and other recommendations for 2024, covering protocols, risks, symptoms and last year's Academy laws trial.

Liam Moore, the RFL's Legal and Compliance Case Manager who is better known as one of the sport's Full-Time Match Officials, updated on the impact that has been made since officials in the community game began wearing head cameras in 2023.

Liz Ward, a facilitator and consultant specialising in matters relating to equity, diversity and inclusion in sport, delivered a two-part workshop on unacceptable language and behaviour.

A copy of the slides available from conference can be found **[HERE](#)**



Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

December 2023 saw the first major overhaul of the Working Together guidance in 5 years. It is influenced by the Children's Social Care Strategy 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' which outlines the Government's commitment to help children to grow up in a safe, stable and loving home. There is greater emphasis on how multi-agencies help and protect children.

Whilst there are a number of key changes for National Governing Bodies, there are in addition some changes for local sports clubs which I have detailed below;

Sports coaches and leaders are included within the legal definition of position of trust - Sports organisations must produce a safeguarding policy, guidance and procedure to respond to allegations of harm or abuse made against a person who works with children in either a paid or voluntary capacity. If your club does not have its own Safeguarding Policy, then you must now produce one under the legislation. Templates can be found on the Child Protection in Sport Unit **HERE**

The new guidance also states that your club Safeguarding Policy must include details of your Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) You can find your LSP by using the postcode finder **HERE**. I would also suggest putting the postcode finder link within your policies as I'm aware not all children at your club will live within that authority.

If you require any support with this please send me an email.

The full document can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>



Time to Listen

A reminder that we are now using UK Coaching to deliver Time to Listen Training and this is booked directly through the RFL website.

CWO Forums

Below are the Club Welfare Officer Forum dates for 2024. No reminder will be sent other than the meeting invites the week before. The meetings are not mandatory and informal so no minutes will be taken.

I'm sure those that attended forums in 2023 will agree they have been beneficial.

Tuesday 6th February 2024 - 18:00 – 19:00

Tuesday 4th June 2024 - 18:00 – 19:00

Tuesday 1st October 2024 – 18:00 – 19:00

