

中國香港橄欖球總會 | HONG KONG CHINA RUGBY
HONG KONG FOOTBALL CLUB

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Adopted in alignment with the HKCR Safeguarding Framework

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of all those involved with rugby in Hong Kong to provide a safe environment for children, young and vulnerable people to enjoy the game.

Hong Kong Football Club strongly believes that the welfare of all children, young and vulnerable people is paramount; that all people have an equal right to protection from harm; and that all forms of discrimination, prejudice, oppressive behaviour and language are unacceptable. These beliefs form the core principles of this Safeguarding Policy ("Policy").

For the purposes of this Policy, a "child" or "children" refers to someone under the age of 16 years, and a "young person" or "young people" refers to someone aged 16 years or older but less than 18 years of age. "Vulnerable people" refers to anyone who is mentally, physically or emotionally disadvantaged and may be unable to protect themselves.

Hong Kong Football Club aims to safeguard children, young and vulnerable people playing rugby in Hong Kong by:

1. Establishing and enforcing a vetting procedure for all coaches, managers, referees, administrators and volunteers who intend to work closely with children, young and vulnerable people through rugby.
2. Setting safeguarding guidelines and educating members on how to uphold these, through publications and training.
3. Appointing safeguarding officer(s) who will govern this Policy and identify and report breaches through established reporting lines.
4. Enforcing this Policy and acting swiftly where breaches of it are reported.

All those whose activities are governed by this Policy should familiarise themselves and comply with its requirements. Failure to comply with this Policy may result in barring or suspension from rugby in Hong Kong. More serious and criminal activity may in addition be reported to the police. All others involved in rugby in Hong Kong (including but not limited to parents, spectators, athletes and the media) are strongly encouraged to adhere to and uphold this Policy, in order to provide a safe environment.

1 RECRUITMENT

When **Hong Kong Football Club** recruits or engages employees, independent contractors, and volunteers, we will follow the recruitment guidelines set out below.

1.1 Recruitment Process

1. When recruiting for a relevant role, the club will take reasonable steps to be satisfied that any individual offered such a role is suitable to work closely with children, young and vulnerable people.
2. In order to satisfy this requirement, any individual who is likely to be employed or engaged in a relevant role will be:
 - a. provided with and required to confirm that they have read, and understand this Policy; and
 - b. requested to complete and sign the HKCR Safeguarding Declaration form, confirming their suitability to work with children, young and vulnerable people (the “Declaration”) prior to their employment or engagement as an employee, independent contractor or volunteer.
3. If an incomplete Declaration form is provided, **Hong Kong Football Club** may require that the applicant attend an interview with the Club’s Safeguarding Officer (CSO) to explain why they were unable to complete the Declaration. The CSO shall have the final say on whether the applicant is suitable for a Regulated Role.
4. Where **Hong Kong Football Club** is employing an individual in a relevant role, it will additionally require them to complete a Sexual Conviction Record Check with the Hong Kong Police prior to the commencement, and as a condition of, their employment. Applicants may also be required to provide personal references.

1.2 Club Safeguarding Officer (“CSO”)

The CSO is a relevant role at all rugby clubs that work with children, young and vulnerable people. The CSO is responsible for administering this Policy and handling the Personal Data provided by those in relevant roles within the club. The information provided by those in relevant roles is Personal Data and will be handled in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

The CSO is the first point of contact at the club for anyone who wishes to report abuse against a person. The contact details of the club’s CSOs can be found at the end of this document.

1.3 HKCR Safeguarding Manager (the “SM”)

The HKCR SM is employed by the HKCR and responsible for administering the HKCR Safeguarding Policy and its related procedures. The contact details of the HKCR SM can be found at the end of this document.

2 SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES

The following is a guide on the acceptable conduct to adopt in common situations that may arise when working with children, young and vulnerable people in rugby. These guidelines represent a minimum standard that **Hong Kong Football Club** believes is acceptable.

2.1 General Policy

The aim of **Hong Kong Football Club** is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for children, young and vulnerable people to enjoy playing rugby. The welfare and happiness of all people is paramount and all children, young and vulnerable people have an equal right to protection from harm.

2.2 Changing Rooms and Showers

Due to the limited availability of facilities at some Hong Kong rugby venues, children, young and vulnerable people, and adults use the same changing facilities. **Hong Kong Football Club** will attempt to ensure supervision in these situations and be vigilant that abuses are not taking place. For mixed gender activities, separate changing facilities will be made available.

2.3 Inappropriate Relationships

An adult must not enter into a sexual relationship with a child. Sexual intercourse, sexual activity, or inappropriate touching by an adult with a child under the age of 16 years is a criminal offence in Hong Kong.

An adult in a position of trust must not enter into a sexual relationship with a young or vulnerable person in their care. A sexual relationship between an adult in a position of trust and a young or vulnerable person over 16 years of age is a breach of trust and an abuse of the adult's position. Whilst it may not be a criminal offence, it will be treated very seriously and may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or barring from all rugby related activities.

No one in a position of trust should encourage a physical or emotionally dependent relationship to develop between them and a child, a young or vulnerable person in their care; this is often referred to as "grooming".

2.4 Photography, Internet and Social Media

Rugby is a public sport. All media that is recorded by the public while children, young or vulnerable people are playing rugby in public is in the public domain, and not the responsibility of **Hong Kong Football Club**.

However, those who are bound by this Policy, including those taking photographs or media for HKCR or Club use, must abide by the following media guidelines when taking, sharing or using photographs or media in relation to rugby in Hong Kong:

Photography:

1. The use of camera phones, videos, recording devices and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets is strictly prohibited at all times.
2. All photos and media of children, young or vulnerable people should be respectful, appropriate, relevant to the nature of rugby, and not in any way disparaging or humiliating.
3. Children, young or vulnerable people must be appropriately dressed when being photographed. It is never acceptable to capture any images in changing rooms, showers or

at any time when children, young or vulnerable people are dressing. Images should be neither sexual, of an exploitative nature nor open to misinterpretation or misuse.

4. As a guide, it is inappropriate to take photographs of children, young or vulnerable people who are not your own, without express parental consent.
5. Should a child, young or vulnerable person or the parents of a child, young or vulnerable person wish to not have their photo taken or published, their wishes should be upheld where it is within the club's ability to do so.

Social Media and the Internet:

6. Adults must never send children, young or vulnerable people inappropriate or sexually provocative messages or images.
7. Parents are encouraged to review their privacy settings on social media prior to posting pictures of children, young or vulnerable people, including their own.
8. Personal information in a photograph which can lead to a child, young or vulnerable person being identified should never be published or uploaded in any way.
9. The use of social media and the internet in relation to rugby in Hong Kong should always be respectful and appropriate and should not in any way disparage or humiliate children, young or vulnerable people.

2.5 Tours

To the extent permissible by local laws, this Policy continues to apply when a team is on tour outside of Hong Kong.

2.6 Transparency

Reasonable efforts will be made to educate members on what behavior is acceptable and what is not. As a bare minimum, this Policy will be available to all members via the club website and other social media channels. The contact details of the club CSO will be readily available to all members and those who report suspicions and concerns should be confident that these will be treated seriously and confidentially.

2.7 Transportation

Hong Kong Football Club will develop a transport policy that is publicized to parents via their club website giving advice on transport arrangements for their children, young and vulnerable.

It will be made clear that in most instances it is the responsibility of parents/guardians, not the club, to transport their child, young person or vulnerable adult to and from the venue or nominated meeting point. If parents/guardians make arrangements between themselves this is a private arrangement and at their own discretion.

2.8 Training Sessions and Games

Rugby is a contact sport and physical contact between participants including coaches is likely and unavoidable. Reasonable care must be taken to ensure the physical safety of participants. Coaches should not fear the repercussions of acceptable and appropriate levels of physical contact with their players who are children, young or vulnerable people in the course of rugby training. However, training sessions should be planned to avoid contact between coaches and players who are children, young or vulnerable people unless necessary for their safety or the

proper demonstration of a skill or drill. For example, when teaching contact skills including tackling.

Where possible, coaching teams should consist of a minimum of two coaches. Coaches should avoid situations where they are the only adult supervising/coaching a session where children, young or vulnerable people are involved.

3 IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING

3.1 Definitions of Abuse

There are four main types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect. An individual may abuse or neglect a child or young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse by failing to prevent another person harming that child, young or vulnerable person.

- **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, young or vulnerable person.

Examples of physical abuse in sport include extreme physical punishments; forcing a child, young or vulnerable person into training and competition that exceeds the capacity of his or her immature and growing body or limitations of a disability; assaulting a person; or where the child, young or vulnerable person is given drugs to enhance performance or in the case of a child, delay puberty.

- **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing a child, young or vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, which may involve inappropriate touching, penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children, young or vulnerable people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual photographic or online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children, young or vulnerable people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child, young or vulnerable person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their development. It may involve conveying to children, young or vulnerable people 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. These may include interactions that are beyond their developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them from participating in normal social interaction.

Emotional abuse may involve a child, young or vulnerable person seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another as well as serious bullying, causing children, young or vulnerable people to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children, young or vulnerable people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, young or vulnerable person, though it may also occur alone.

Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children, young or vulnerable people to constant criticism, name-calling, and sarcasm or bullying. It could also include their regular exclusion from an activity, non-selection for a team, failing to rotate squad positions or more subtle actions such as staring at or ignoring a child, young or vulnerable person. Putting players under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may involve a parent failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child or young person from physical and emotional harm or danger, or to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or young person's basic

emotional needs.

Examples of neglect in sport could include not ensuring children or young people are safe; exposing them to undue cold or heat or unsuitable weather conditions, or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury.

- **Bullying**

Bullying is often considered to be a fifth type of abuse but when it does occur it usually has elements of one or more of the four categories identified. The bully can be a parent who pushes too hard, a coach or manager with a “win at all costs” attitude or another intimidating child or young person. It should also be recognised that bullying can take place in the virtual world of social networking sites, emails or text messages.

Bullying should not be ignored, and the victim should be supported through what can be a traumatic experience. Bullying will not just go away. Bullies can be very cunning and develop strategies to avoid it being seen by anyone but the victim.

Bullying takes many forms but ultimately it is the perception of the victim that determines whether or not they are being bullied rather than the intention of the bully.

- **Poor Practice**

Incidents of poor practice arise when the needs of children or young people are not afforded the necessary priority, compromising their wellbeing. Poor practice can easily turn into abuse if it is not dealt with as soon as concerns are raised or reported.

Examples of poor practice may be shouting, excessive training, creation of intra-Club “elite squads”, ridicule of players’ errors, and ignoring health and safety guidelines.

3.2 Possible Signs of Harm and Abuse

The following guidelines are possible signs of harm and abuse to a child or young person. These may include a child or young person:

- Changing their usual routine;
- Beginning to be disruptive during training sessions;
- Becoming withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence;
- Having possessions going missing;
- Becoming aggressive or unreasonable;
- Starting to stammer or stopping communicating;
- Having unexplained cuts or bruises;
- Starting to bully other children;
- Being frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed;
- Displaying sexual behaviour or using sexual language inappropriate for their age;
- Seeming afraid of parents or carers;
- Stopping eating;
- Being frightened to say what is wrong;
- Not wanting to attend training or Club activities, or even leaving the Club.

Some children or young people may be particularly vulnerable to abuse. These may include those with learning and/or physical disabilities. Particular care should be taken when dealing with such children or young people and where possible, specialist assistance from those with experience in dealing with such individuals should be sought.

All these forms of abuse are unacceptable and may result in barring or suspension from rugby in Hong Kong. More serious and criminal activity may in addition be reported to the police.

3.3 Reporting Abuse

The above indicators should always be taken seriously, and any concerns should be reported to the CSO. If you have a concern or are approached by anyone about a suspicion or allegation of abuse, you should immediately report it. If you believe that a child or young person is in immediate danger you should call the police. In their absence the General Committee of **Hong Kong Football Club** or the HKCR SM should be informed at the earliest possible opportunity.

4 CONTACT DETAILS & DEFINITIONS

4.1 Hong Kong Football Club Safeguarding Officers

Alvin Sin — Head of Player Welfare & Safeguarding

Chris Kenyon-Edwards — Safeguarding Officer

Michelle Wong — Safeguarding Officer

Address: Hong Kong Football Club, 3 Sports Road, Happy Valley, Hong Kong

Email: safeguarding@hkfcrugby.com

Website: www.hkfcrugby.com

4.2 HKCR Safeguarding Manager

Name: Lucy Clarke (Chief of Medical Services)

Email: lucy.clarke@hkrugby.com

Mobile: +852-9137 7410

4.3 Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy:

1. **An employee** means a person employed by any Rugby Body under a contract of employment, whether part-time or full-time, and who is based in Hong Kong.
2. **An independent contractor** means a person who is engaged by any Rugby Body under a contract to provide services to any Rugby Body in Hong Kong and is not an employee of that Rugby Body.
3. **A volunteer** means a person who willingly provides services to any Rugby Body without remuneration, including any coaches, managers and Board/Committee members who are neither employees nor independent contractors.