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CLUB WELFARE POLICY

Version: September 2016

POLICY, PROCEDURES
&
CODES OF CONDUCT

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BALLYMENA RFC

CLUB WELFARE POLICY, PROCEDURES AND CODES OF CONDUCT

Ballymena Rugby Football Club Youth, Mini and Bears Sections exist to provide rugby facilities for children, young adults and persons with special needs from the local area, in a fun, safe and organised environment and are run on a voluntary basis.

1. Policy Statement

The Youth, Mini and Bears Sections of Ballymena Rugby Football Club are fully committed to the mental, physical and emotional development of its Age-Grade Players, to the best of their individual abilities, by creating an acceptable, ethical coaching framework, and to safeguard the well-being of its Participants and Volunteers, by protecting them from neglect, and physical, sexual or emotional harm. Fair-play, mutual understanding and cross-community aspects play an important role in the ethos of the Club.

1.1 This will be achieved by:

- 1.1.1 Creating an environment in which the Participants receive the best possible training, appropriate to their age, maturity and ability.
- 1.1.2 Raising the awareness of Child Protection and Club Welfare issues with coaches, volunteers, parents and young persons.
- 1.1.3 Making sure that all coaches/volunteers are vetted, trained and adequately supervised, and are individually made aware of the Club's ethos and Child Protection Policy, and supplied with a copy of the IRFU Declaration of Intent and access to **IRFU Safeguarding** document.
- 1.1.4 Making children and parents aware that complaints can be made if they are unhappy, and the names of the responsible people to whom complaints can be made.
- 1.1.5 Providing information about the aims of the Youth, Mini and Bears Sections of Ballymena RFC and what is expected from the Volunteers, Parents and Participants.
- 1.1.6 Establishing and maintaining acceptable standards of all ethical behaviour.
- 1.1.7 Developing the basic skills of the games of Rugby Football.
- 1.1.8 Promoting the enjoyment of the game of Rugby Football.
- 1.1.9 Remembering that young people play primarily for fun and enjoyment. Skill-learning and enjoyment, as well as the well-being and safety of the young people, must take priority over winning.

1.2 Issues of Competence

1.2.1 Coaches shall confine themselves to practice in those fields of Coaching in which they have been trained, and which are recognised by the IRFU as being valid. Valid areas of expertise are those directly concerned with Rugby coaching. Training includes the accumulation of knowledge and skills through both formal coaching courses and by experience at a level of competence acceptable for coaching practice.

1.2.2 Coaches should regularly seek ways of increasing their professional development and self-awareness.

1.2.3 Coaches should welcome evaluation of their work by colleagues, and be able to account to Players, the Ballymena RFC, IRFU and colleagues for their actions.

1.2.4 Coaches have a responsibility to themselves and their players to maintain their own effectiveness, resilience and abilities, and to know when their personal resources are so depleted as to make it necessary for them to seek help and/or withdraw from coaching whether temporarily or permanently.

1.3 Ballymena RFC so far as reasonably practicable will ensure:

1.3.1 Implementation of policy and procedures as agreed by the Board of Directors, IRFU and all relevant appropriate authorities.

1.3.2 Abide by sport specific guidelines (e.g. **IRFU Safeguarding**) and set standards of good practice.

1.3.3 Facilitation of open discussion on member protection and welfare issues.

1.3.4 Proper supervision of children within the Club premises, with an appropriate ratio of coaches to children. This may vary depending on nature and location of activities along with ability and age of the young person.

1.3.5 A safe environment for all members.

1.3.6 Use proper, recommended equipment and use of equipment only when supervised by a coach.

1.3.7 Ensure playing / coaching surfaces, free from debris and animal faeces.

1.3.8 A clearly defined area of play / in bounds, fenced and safe from vehicular traffic.

1.3.9 Public Liability Insurance in place, covering all members of the Club.

1.3.10 Only young persons within same / similar age bands will be selected for team playing / coaching.

1.3.11 On appropriate occasions a First-Aider and first-aid kit will be on hand in event of an accident, with accident / incident forms to be completed for every categorised serious accident. Irrespective of seriousness, all accidents must be reported to parents at collection.

1.3.12 In the event of transport being required, this will only be provided either by approved suppliers or as organised by Head Coaches or Club Officials in accordance with Club policy.

1.3.13 Ongoing training and information for Leaders.

1.3.14 Support to members who report accusations of abuse and all information treated confidentially.

1.3.15 Appropriate action taken if members breach standards of reasonable behaviour.

1.3.16 The establishment and maintenance of a coaching register. Age grade groups will use an annually renewed registration form to gather the necessary information and guardian approvals. An example of the type of form that is to be used is at Appendix 6. The "Bears" registration form will be adapted to gather appropriate medical information.

1.3.17 The designated officer has knowledge of statutory child protection procedures and their responsibility in reporting concerns from Co-operating to Safeguard Children DHSSPS.

1.3.18 That parents are kept informed and that parents have access to the club's Welfare Policy.

1.4 Ballymena RFC has the right to:

1.4.1 Expect all leaders to comply with its Club Welfare Policy, Procedures and Codes of Conduct and all appropriate legislation and guidance (e.g. **IRFU Safeguarding**).

1.4.2 Expect all age grade players to maintain standards of reasonable behaviour.

1.4.3 Take appropriate action to investigate and deal with members if there is a proven breach of its Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Codes of Conduct.

1.4.4 Expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to.

1.4.5 Expect all members to report any faulty equipment to a club official.

1.4.6 Expect all members will not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually.

1.4.7 Acquire criminal record checks on all coaches/volunteers and maintain records on individuals in line with advice from the data protection agency (i.e. only hold records on individuals that they have a justifiable reason for holding).

2 Safeguarding

2.1 The **Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995)** is based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children.

2.3 It is a fundamental policy of the IRFU and Ballymena RFC to respect the dignity and rights of each individual Age Grade player and to provide a safe environment for those Age Grade Players. Age Grade Players are defined by the IRFU as those who are members of a team which is regulated by reference to their dates of birth, and covers players from Under 6's to Under 19's. As the majority of these are classed as children (ie under the age of 18), these players are the focus of our Club Welfare Policy, which is intended to provide a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of young people, to be applied by the Mini and Youth Sections of the Club. This document is designed to complement and is not a substitute for the Principles contained in the "**IRFU Safeguarding**" document or the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport of the Irish Sports Council. The Club Welfare Policy creates a framework within which Age Grade Coaches, should always work.

2.4 Young people have the right to be safe. All coaches / volunteers should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

2.5 This policy applies to all those involved in Ballymena RFC – Coaches, Volunteers, Officials, Parents and Young People.

2.6 The purpose of the Club's Welfare policy is to establish and maintain standards for Coaches / Volunteers / Officials and to inform and protect members of the public using our services.

2.7 Ethical standards comprise such values as integrity, responsibility, competence and confidentiality.

2.8 Individuals who are members of Ballymena RFC are deemed to have assented to the Club Welfare Policy and as such, recognise and adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in it.

2.9 All reported violations of the Club Welfare Policy, IRFU Bye-laws and any other matters that may result in bringing the sport or club in to disrepute will be investigated by the Board of Directors or other appointed representatives. Following investigation, the Board of Directors will then consider the Club Welfare Policy provisions when assessing the guilt of individuals against whom complaints have been made and the appropriate sanctions to apply.

3 Codes of Conduct

3.1 It is essential for everyone involved to be made aware of the behavioural standards required at Ballymena RFC and what is and is not acceptable. All Player, Coaches and Volunteers are to be made aware of the acceptable general code of conduct below:

- 3.1.1 No foul or abusive language.
- 3.1.2 No bullying.
- 3.1.3 Respect for the other participants.
- 3.1.4 Be on time.

3.2 Ballymena RFC shall use the club web site to make available copies of its policy, codes of conduct. Everyone will be asked to make themselves familiar with the contents of each. The Community Rugby Handbook will also be used to communicate particular information taken from this policy document. Ballymena RFC Coaches, Player and Parent Charters are at Appendices 7, 12 and 13 to this document, they summarise in point form the standards which are deemed acceptable / unacceptable by Ballymena RFC. The club may take appropriate action against anyone who is proven to be in breach of these codes of conduct.

3.3 All age grade coaches / volunteers / helpers shall sign on an annual basis the IRFU Declaration of Intent (a copy of which is at Appendix 8). In addition, all age grade players in the U18 to U14 groups shall sign a player declaration also on an annual basis (a copy of which is at Appendix 15).

4 Equality Statement

4.1 Ballymena RFC aims to promote the sport of Rugby Union for all people, and will be mindful of the need to carry out our functions in a manner which promotes equality of opportunity between:

- 4.1.1 Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation.
- 4.1.2 Between men and women generally.
- 4.1.3 Between persons with a disability and persons without.
- 4.1.4 Between persons with dependents and persons without.

4.2 All members should have regard to the Equal Opportunities Guidelines contained in this document. Anyone engaging in discriminatory behaviour, be they player, coach, volunteer, parent or spectator, will be dealt with seriously by the Club.

4.3 Ballymena RFC recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help for example:

- Dependency due to disability may make some children feel powerless.
- On occasions, children may have limited ability to communicate their feelings.
- A negative self-image can make children vulnerable to manipulation by others.

4.4 To address this vulnerability, coaches will seek guidance on working with children with special needs from external agencies, parents / carers / guardians and the children themselves.

4.5 Equal Opportunities Guidelines

4.5.1 Ballymena RFC is committed to a policy of equal treatment of all members and requires all members of whatever level to abide and adhere to this general principle and the requirements of the Codes of Practice issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission and Commission for Racial Equality.

4.5.2 All members are expected to abide by the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976, Sex Discrimination Act 1986 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

4.5.3 Specifically, the following acts of Discrimination are prohibited: Treating any individual on grounds of gender, colour, marital status, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability less favourably than others.

4.5.4 Expecting an individual solely on the grounds stated above to comply with requirement(s) for any reason whatsoever related to their membership, which are different from the requirements of others.

4.5.5 Imposing on individual requirements which are in effect more onerous on that individual than they are on others. For example, this would include applying a condition which makes it more difficult for members of a particular race or sex to comply than others not of that race or sex.

4.5.6 Victimisation of an individual

4.5.7 Harassment of an individual, by virtue of discrimination

4.5.8 Any other act or omission of an act, which has as its effect the disadvantaging of a member against another, or others, purely on the above grounds. Thus, in the entire Club recruitment, selection, promotion and training processes, as well as disciplinary matters, it is essential that merit, experience, skills and temperament are considered as objectively as possible.

4.5.9 Ballymena RFC commits itself to the immediate investigation of any claims of discrimination on the above grounds and where such is found to be the case, a requirement that the practice cease forthwith, restitution of damage or loss (if necessary) and to the investigation of any member accused of discrimination.

4.5.10 Since discrimination in its many forms is against the Club's policy, any members offending will be dealt with under the Club disciplinary procedure. Any member found guilty of discrimination may be asked to leave the club.

4.5.11 The Club commits itself to the equal treatment of all those with special needs. So far as reasonably practicable the club will endeavour to create access to all aspects of its sport and facilities.

5 Communication

5.1 Ballymena RFC encourages communications between participants and coaches in relation to coaching sessions, and it is important to listen to the young person's views on the merits or otherwise of matters which concern their development.

5.2 All Participants, Volunteers and Parents will be notified of the availability of Ballymena RFC Child Protection Policy, which will be published on-line in the club web-site and updated as required.

5.3 All participants and parents are made aware of the availability of the Coaches or Officers to approach in relation to all the activities at Ballymena RFC. Telephone numbers and e-mail addresses are made readily available, and if need be, a meeting can be arranged.

6 Responsible Club Officers

6.1 **Director of Community Rugby**

Has overall responsibility for all levels of Community Rugby. He is a member of the Club Board of Directors and Board of Governors.

6.2 **Director of Mini Rugby** (trial post to be ratified May 2017)

Has responsibility to report and inform on all matters relating to Mini Rugby to Club Board of Directors and Board of Governors.

6.3 **Youth Convenor**

Has responsibility for Youth rugby, is a member of the Board of Governors and reports to the Director of Community Rugby. He / she is responsible for the organisation and coaching of rugby football at U-19, U-17, U-15 and U-13 levels. He / she is a member of the Club Board of Governors.

6.4 **Mini Rugby Convenor**

Has responsibility for the overall co-ordination and organisation of coaching rugby football at Rascals, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 and U-12 levels. He / she is a member of the Club Board of Governors.

6.5 **Age Grade Head Coaches (including Youth)**

Has responsibility for the weekly training and co-ordination of their appointed group and reports to their appropriate Convenor.

6.6 **Bears Head Coach**

Has responsibility for the organisation and coaching of special needs tag rugby for people with ages 6 to adult. He / She is a member of the Ulster Branch Disability Advisory Group (DAG).

6.7 **Club Welfare Officer (CWO).** Has responsibility to:

- 6.7.1 Act as a resource to all members with regards to young person's issues.
- 6.7.2 Ensure that children have a say in the running of the Club.
- 6.7.3 Report to the Director of Community Rugby as appropriate.
- 6.7.4 Promote the values, attitudes and structures which make sport enjoyable to all participants.
- 6.7.5 Communicate with Ulster Branch and Club Officers information relating to young people in sport.
- 6.7.6 Attend Club training sessions to act as a resource to children and volunteers.
- 6.7.7 Encourage involvement of parents / guardians in Club activities.
- 6.7.8 Report regularly to relevant Club Committees as requested.
- 6.7.9 Influence policy and practice within the Club to prioritise young person's needs.
- 6.7.10 Accept and act upon reports from other Volunteers.
- 6.7.11 Report cases of child protection concerns to the Northern Health and Social Services Board, and to the relevant Statutory Authorities.

7 Awareness of Child Abuse

7.1 Background knowledge in relation to child abuse, the general principles of child protection and the ability to recognise and respond to abuse are important issues. Of primary concern for the Club is "**Safeguarding**" our young members within the operation of the club. However, being cognisant of the indicators of abuse in respect of young members caused by others outside the Club is of an equal importance for the safety and well-being of that child.

7.2 **Four types of abuse are recognised:**

7.2.1 **Physical Abuse.** Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour.

7.2.2 **Emotional Abuse.** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose children to emotional abuse.

7.2.3 Sexual Abuse. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

7.2.4 Neglect. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate foods, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).

7.3 Indicators of Abuse. The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not exhaustive:

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas • Repeated injuries • Black eyes • Injuries to the mouth • Torn or bloodstained clothing • Burns or scalds • Bites • Fractures • Marks from implements • Inconsistent stories/excuses relating to injuries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained changes in behaviour - becoming withdrawn or aggressive • Difficulty in making friends • Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults • Sudden drop in performance • Changes in attendance pattern • Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language • Reluctance to remove clothing

8 Bullying

8.1 Bullying is a common problem which affects many people of all ages, at sometime in their lives. It is an extremely upsetting experience for everyone involved, at play, at school or in the workplace. As with any problem, it can be solved only if brought into the open and talked about. Otherwise the scars can remain for years.

8.2 Coaches should challenge bullying in any form ie physical or emotional. Bullying will not be tolerated by Ballymena RFC and is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone; be they young person, coach, volunteer or parent.

8.3 All instances of alleged bullying will be investigated and appropriate actions will be taken by the Club officers.

8.4 Anyone being bullied should not keep it to him / herself. Any incidence of bullying can be reported to a Coach or a parent who should then inform the CWO so that the correct protocol can then be followed.

8.5 The web site: <http://www.bullying.com/> was created by a schoolboy who was himself bullied and now offers help and support to young persons and parents, including guidance on ways of dealing with bullying. It also contains an e-mail helpline which will answer any relevant questions.

8.6 **Recognition.** Bullying can include:

8.6.1 **Physical** – assault like pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or unwanted physical contact, damage to personal belongings etc

8.6.2 **Emotional** – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading malicious rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals and excluding them from social groups, sectarian/racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sexual comments and /or suggestions.

8.7 Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of reported bullying will be addressed by the Club.

8.8 **Everyone in the club should be aware:**

8.8.1 Children from ethnic minorities, disabled children, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

8.8.2 Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying – the child, the parent, the coach, the Club official.

8.8.3 Ballymena RFC is committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt collective action to deal with it. If required, Ballymena RFC will establish a forum, including children, parents & coaches, to address, monitor and stop bullying.

8.8.4 Children should be encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying in the club's age-grade squads.

8.8.5 Policy and practice should be reviewed regularly in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies (e.g. schools).

8.8.6 Coaches will have access to appropriately trained staff for support when dealing with bullying.

8.9 **Support to the Young Person:**

8.9.1 All young persons should know who will listen to and support them.

8.9.2 Any advice and assistance should be given by an experienced coach.

8.9.3 All young persons should have access to Helpline numbers.

8.9.4 All young persons should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why.

8.9.5 Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them. Barriers to talking need to be broken down to enable children to approach adults.

8.9.6 Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether they are the person being bullied or the person who is bullying.

8.9.7 Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.

8.9.8 Anyone being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.

8.9.9 Those who bully will also be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.

8.9.10 Sanctions involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, should be avoided.

8.10 **Support to the Parents:**

8.10.1 Parents should be advised on Ballymena RFC policy and practice about bullying.

8.10.2 Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the young person's parent(s).

8.10.3 Parental advice on action will be sought and agreements made as to what action should be taken.

8.10.4 Information and advice on coping with bullying will be given.

8.10.5 Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

8.11 **Practical Steps:**

8.11.1 While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to PSNI, dealing with bullying behaviour is the responsibility of all Coaches and Club Members. However, when a problem is spotted, the relevant coaches should arrange to meet the CWO to discuss the steps to be taken to address the problem. If required, the CWO will then inform the external contact or an official support source or internally to the Board whichever is the appropriate measure to take.

8.12 **How can it be prevented?**

8.12.1 Ensure that all members follow the Club / IRFU codes of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member.

8.12.2 Deal with any incidents as they arise, what may seem minor once off, could be or become part of a pattern. It is important to deal with the problem early before it becomes a big problem or spreads throughout the group.

8.12.3 Use a whole group policy or “No-Blame Approach”, i.e., not ‘bullying the bully’ but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a ‘shared concern’ of the group. (See Appendix 11 for more about the “No Blame Approach”)

8.12.4 Reinforce that there is ‘a permission to tell’ culture rather than a ‘might is right’.

8.12.5 Encourage players to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children.

8.12.6 Offer the victim immediate support and put the ‘no blame approach’ into operation.

8.12.7 Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can’t ignore it, it hurts too much.

8.12.8 Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game.

8.12.9 Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault.

8.13 **Guidance for Anti-Bullying for the Individual**

8.13.1 Respect every young persons need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.

8.13.2 Respect for every individual’s feelings and views.

8.13.3 Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special.

8.13.4 Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.

9 General Guidelines for All Volunteers

9.1 To accommodate a proper code of conduct, the following practices are laid down as guidelines for Volunteers who should:

9.1.1 Adhere to Child Protection guidelines as set out by the DHSS, and adopt policies favoured by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland.

9.1.2 Adhere to the IRFU Declaration of Intent and IRFU Safeguarding Policy.

9.1.3 Share information about child protection and encourage other Volunteers to develop their training and awareness in this field.

9.2 **Volunteers should never:**

9.2.1 Engage in a sexually provocative manner, or indulge in horseplay which may be construed in the wrong manner.

9.2.2 Allow children to use foul language unchallenged.

9.2.3 Smoke in the presence of children.

9.2.4 Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child, even in fun.

9.2.5 Allow complaints or allegations made by a young person to pass without being recorded and passed on.

9.3 **Time Alone.** Volunteers are advised to avoid spending excessive time alone, or unobserved, with children, and never go into the toilet alone with children. When supervising changing rooms, adult Volunteers should work in pairs. Coaches should not take a training session alone. If an occasion arises when some privacy is required, other adults should be informed, and at least one should be within earshot of the conversation. The door of the room should always be left open.

9.4 **Criticism.** Volunteers must respect the rights and dignity of all children and treat them with equality. Severe criticism, harsh words or sarcasm should be avoided.

9.5 **Meetings.** Meetings with an individual child should take place as publicly as possible. Volunteers should never make arrangements to meet a child alone in his/her home. Volunteers should not meet with children outside organized activities, unless it is with the full knowledge and consent of the parents and the Club.

9.6 **Physical Contact.** Volunteers should avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. On occasion, when an injury or accident occurs or a child is distressed, physical contact may be unavoidable. The involved adult should fully explain to the child what he / she is doing, but then only touch him / her with the consent of the injured party, and in full view of as many persons as possible. However, if the injury / accident seems worse than trivial, the Volunteer / Coach should immediately call for an ambulance, and notify the Parent(s) of the injured child. Accidents should be fully reported in an Accident Report Form (see Appendix 1) held in the Clubroom and copies of which should be held by all age group Head Coaches.

9.7 Acts of Celebration. Coaches and committee persons should be careful of extending hugs and other acts of celebration where bodily contact is involved. This is important not only for the protection of the Coaches, but also for the young person.

9.8 Inappropriate Touch. If a child touches a Volunteer in an inappropriate place, the Volunteer should record the incident and report it to another adult. While an incident could be purely innocent or horseplay, efforts should be made to inform the offending child that this type of behaviour is not acceptable, but in a manner which does not intimidate the involved party.

9.9 Car Journeys. Car journeys involving children, however short, should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents, and someone in charge at the Club. It is not good practice to be alone with a child in a car, and if possible, the pick-up point or drop-off point should be with at least two children. (see Appendix 3 for detailed Guidelines).

9.10 Outings / Trips Away from Club & Overnight stays. Club outings / travel: These should always be well organized:

9.10.1 Parents should be informed by letter or e-mail, of times of departure and return.

9.10.2 An appropriate number of adults should be involved for adequate adult/children ratio (one adult per eight children) to ensure the proper supervision of the children in their charge.

9.10.3 Buses will only be hired from a reputable firm. See Appendix 4 for guidelines on Away Trips.

9.10.4 Parents should be clearly informed of travel arrangements, times of departure and return, details of the residential accommodation being used, pocket money, etc. See Appendix 5 for detailed Guidelines.

9.10.5 In such accommodation a Volunteer should never ask a child to his/her room, or share a room with a child.

9.10.6 Volunteers should check young person's rooms in pairs.

9.10.7 The young person should be made aware of the availability of telephones to contact home.

9.10.8 Parents should be supplied with contact telephone numbers in case of any emergency.

9.10.9 Parents should sign a Consent Form (See Appendix 6) prior to departure and be asked for any relevant medical information.

10 Dealing with Allegations and Complaints

10.1 Under all circumstances:

10.1.1 Contact the CWO immediately in the event of any potential complaint or suspected abuse case, in order to seek guidance in relation to the complaint.

10.1.2 After this discussion, the CWO may contact the Social Services and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.

10.1.3 If the CWO is not available and abuse is evident, contact Social Services. Telephone Number (028) 2565 3333.

10.1.4 Ultimate responsibility for the investigation of cases of child abuse, suspected or otherwise, lies with the Northern Health and Social Services Board and the Statutory Authorities.

10.1.5 It would not be appropriate for individuals, or the Club, to carry out internal investigations into cases where child abuse is suspected or has been alleged.

10.2 **Allegations and Complaints - Other than Child Abuse.** The club has appointed a Club Welfare Officer (CWO), who will be responsible for dealing with such concerns at the club. This individual will be well known to volunteers, parents and participants, and will make themselves readily available to handle any inquiries, concerning the personnel, or any activities at Ballymena RFC. It is the responsibility of all Volunteers to be constantly on the look-out for any signs / indicators of welfare issues.

10.3 **If a young person gives an indication** that he / she may want to talk to a Volunteer about a problem, especially a complaint or an allegation, then that Volunteer should:

10.3.1 Arrange a time and place, as soon as possible, where the child can talk freely but confidentially. (under conditions outlined later).

10.3.2 Deal with any allegation in a sensitive and competent manner through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem.

10.3.3 Stay calm and do not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying and take it seriously.

10.3.4 Permit the child to speak without interruption, listen to everything he/she has to say, accepting what is said.

10.3.5 Do not interrogate the child, but be clear what he/she has actually said.

10.3.6 Thank the child for the information supplied and reassure him/her that he/she was right to tell, and that he/she will be helped.

10.3.7 Alleviate feeling of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement on the person against whom the allegation is made.

10.3.8 False promises should not be made such as saying no-one else will be told.

10.3.9 Explain to the child that if the complaint is of a serious nature, that it may be necessary to inform others.

10.3.10 Indicate what should happen next, such as informing parents, the CWO, reporting to statutory authority etc.

10.3.11 Any and all consultations with others should be entirely confidential and should not involve investigative procedures.

10.3.12 Write a detailed accurate account of any discussion, or action taken, including telephone calls, as soon as possible after the discussion has taken place (see Appendix 2).

10.3.13 Do not trivialise or exaggerate what the child has told you.

10.4 If another helper / coach / parent gives an indication that he / she may want to talk about a problem, especially a complaint or an allegation:

10.4.1 Arrange a time and place, as soon as possible, where the helper / coach / parent can talk freely but confidentially. It would be best practice to invite the CWO to attend.

10.4.2 False promises should not be made such as saying no-one else will be told.

10.4.3 Explain to the helper / coach /parent that if the complaint is of a serious nature, that it may be necessary to inform others.

10.4.4 The CWO will have a duty to report to the statutory authority etc in the event of Child protection / Abuse matters.

10.4.5 Any and all consultations with others should be entirely confidential and should not involve investigative procedures (i.e it is not for the listener to take upon themselves to go and interview others or gather "evidence").

10.4.6 Write a detailed accurate account of any discussion, or action taken, including telephone calls, as soon as possible after the discussion has taken place (Appendix 2).

10.4.7 Telephone calls should be kept to the bare minimum and do not enter into discussion not directly related to the event / case. Where possible refer the caller to procedure and seek to meet in person as soon as possible with the CWO present if required.

10.4.8 Deal with any allegation in a sensitive and competent manner through listening and reporting to the correct channels e.g. CWO.

10.4.9 Depending on the nature of the problem or allegation the helper / coach / CWO may ask that the matter is formally submitted by means of a written “formal complaint”. The term “I wish to make a formal complaint” should be used in the opening remarks of the letter. The letter should be addressed to either the CWO or a member of the club Board of Directors. On receipt of a formal complaint the CWO will meet with the Director of Community Rugby to bring the matter to their notice. The Board of Directors shall, upon receipt of such a report from the Director of Community Rugby, form a Sub-Committee (chaired by the Vice Chairman) to consider the matter, who shall follow the same procedures as adopted by the Club for alleged breaches of the Club’s Code of Discipline under the Club’s constitution.

10.4.10 Following proper investigation by the Sub-Committee, including any appropriate hearing of all relevant parties, the Sub-Committee shall make recommendations to the Board of Directors, which can then take whatever action (if any) it believes is warranted or appropriate.

10.4.11 Following the decision of the Board of Directors, the CWO may advise the Ulster Branch Child Welfare Officer of the concern and the action taken.

10.4.12 Complaints / allegations not involving abuse eg. Verbal harassment, bullying or cheating, may be handled internally without outside involvement. All cases should be rigorously documented and submitted for the attention of the CWO or Board of Directors. It is important to maintain strict **confidentiality** throughout. Personal and sensitive matters, or any alleged incident, should not be discussed with anyone except those appointed by the Board of Directors and in accordance with club procedure.

11 Allegations and Complaints Regarding Incidents / Concerns of Child Abuse

11.1 All complaints or incidents of Child Abuse are to be taken seriously, and should rigorously follow club procedure. Complaints or suspicions of abuse, are matters that the Club shall report to the Club Welfare Officer, who will take steps to safeguard the player(s) and who shall refer the matter to the relevant Statutory Authorities and to the IRFU National Child Welfare Officer if appropriate.

11.2 It may be appropriate for a person to discuss concerns they have with another person in the club (e.g. CWO or the Youth Convenor), or should the concern relate to this person, then a senior official of the Club should be notified of the concerns.

11.3 The type of discussions referred to in the above would most likely happen in cases where no specific allegation of child abuse has been made, but the concern is based on emotional behaviour and / or physical indications of a particular child.

11.4 When matters of abuse are alleged and following the reporting of the matter to the CWO, it may also be necessary for a Senior Club official to be informed of the allegations made. The suspension of club duties of the person against whom the allegations have been made, may be carried out by the Board of Directors, until the conclusion of an investigation by the Statutory Authorities.

- 11.5 A Volunteer should never keep suspicions of abuse by a colleague to him / herself. If there is an attempt to cover up, that volunteer could also be implicated by his/her silence. He / she should inform the appropriate person at the club of his / her suspicions.
- 11.6 It is important to remember that reporting suspected child abuse in good faith is not the same as making an accusation of abuse i.e. reporting does not mean accusing.
- 11.7 Responsibility for the investigation of child abuse cases suspected or otherwise, lies with the Statutory Authorities (social services and the police). Responsibility for monitoring and co-coordinating the management of such cases also rests with the Statutory Authorities.
- 11.8 It is not appropriate for individuals, Clubs or Branches to carry out internal investigations into cases where child abuse is suspected.
- 11.9 Any person who knows or suspects that a child is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed has a duty to convey his/her concern to the Statutory Authorities.
- 11.10 An Official against whom an allegation of abuse has been made should be informed that this is not an accusation and that the procedures being undertaken are in accordance with statutory guidelines.
- 11.11 He or she should be assured that all information will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner within the Club or Branch.
- 11.12 The person against whom allegations are made, should be made aware of the general nature of any allegation. In the case of child sexual abuse allegations, no communication will take place with the person against whom allegations are being made.
- 11.13 In the case of an allegation of child sexual abuse, it will be necessary to withhold the name of the child and the precise details of the allegation, in the interest of confidentiality and child protection.
- 11.14 **Actions by Club.** In the case of a suspension, the official / volunteer / coach being suspended should be formally notified by senior personnel within the Club. All incidents reported or observed should be recorded on a Club Incident Form (see Appendix 2). All concerns and allegations made should be carefully recorded. Confidentiality should be maintained at all stages. All communication between involved parties will be on a strictly "need to know basis" and all paperwork guarded for against lose circulation.
- 11.15 A copy of the completed form should be given to the CWO within 24 hours.
- 11.16 The CWO will be responsible for storing any report in a safe and secure environment
- 11.17 The CWO will also be responsible for forwarding information on to the Branch designated officer for monitoring purposes and, on occasions, advice.

11.18 Important Points.

11.18.1 Should anyone witness or receive information that leads them to believe that a serious breach of this Code has occurred, in addition to observing the Reporting Procedures defined above, they are required to bring the matter to the attention of the relevant management body of the Club. No further action need be taken on their part, and no information is to be provided to others, save as provided below.

11.18.2 If anyone has evidence of an illegal activity that directly relates to the game, they are obliged to inform the Police Service of Northern Ireland as appropriate. In addition a club official is to be informed who should notify the Ulster Branch.

11.18.3 No one should discuss the matter with persons not already involved except with the express permission of the investigating authorities (e.g. the CWO).

11.18.4 Everyone is required to give every possible assistance to the Police Service of Northern Ireland or to the appropriate Committee of the Irish Rugby Football Union (Ulster Branch) in the investigation of the matter, and to assist with any necessary steps being taken by them in relation to the matter.

11.18.5 Should a member of the Club make or repeat false allegations against a fellow member, then the former should be held liable.

11.19 Action by CWO in the event of notification If a complaint of concern or an allegation of abuse by a Volunteer, reaches the CWO:-

11.19.1 He/she will record and investigate the complaint.

11.19.2 If it is bad practice, he/she will deal with it as a misconduct issue, take appropriate action, and inform the parent / child of the action taken (as per direction in paragraphs 10 & 11 above).

11.19.3 If it is abuse, he/she will report the complaint to the appropriate Statutory Services, the Club Board of Directors and the Ulster Branch (IRFU).

11.19.4 If it is of concern or an allegation about abuse by external persons, then the CWO will record what the child says, or what has been seen, and report the concern to the appropriate Statutory Services.

11.20 Full contact details for the CWO are available in the Ballymena RFC Clubhouse or available through any club official.

12. Statutory Services

Area Child Protection Committee,

Northern Health & Social Services Board,
County Hall, 182
Galgorm Road,
Ballymena
Tel: (028) 2565 3333

Out of Hours number: (028) 9446 8833

Website: <http://www.nhssb.n-i.nhs.uk>

NSPCC

2A-F Rona Gardens,
Ballykeel 2, Ballymena.
BT43 6DA
Tel: (028) 2564 7999

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

PSNI. Care Unit

028 2565 3355

Director of Childrens' Services

Homefirst Trust Headquarters,
5 Greenmount Avenue,
Ballymena
Tel: (028) 2563 3719 or (028) 2563 3700

Paul Stephenson

Child Protection in Sport Unit

NSPCC
Lanyon Buildings
Jennymount Business Park
North Derby St
Belfast
Tel: 028 9035 1135

PSNI Child Abuse enquiry Unit

028 9065 0222

Ulster Branch Club Welfare

Paul Whitten
Rugby Operations Co-ordinator
134 Mount merrion Av
Belfast
028 9049 3111 ext 247
0791 773 2658

13. Vulnerable Adults

13.1 Vulnerable Adults are defined as those people 18 years and over, whose physical and / or mental capacity to protect themselves is limited by sensory disability, mental illness or learning difficulties, and their degree of dependency makes it difficult to obtain assistance from others who may be capable and interested to protect them.

13.2 Like children, vulnerable adults can be subjected to abuse or harm or exploitation, so the above guidelines and procedures should be similarly applied in dealing with these people.

14. Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs Policy

14.1 **Smoking**

14.1.1 It is illegal to sell cigarettes to anyone under the legal age.

14.1.2 Anyone who does not comply with the Smoke Free Law will be committing a criminal offence. Smoking is prohibited within all Ballymena RFC buildings and breach of this important safety rule may result in removal from the club. Smokers are also required not to smoke immediately outside any open entrance to the clubhouse, due to passive smoking implications.

14.1.3 Every individual has the right to a “smoke free” clubhouse. Only those who are the appropriate legal age should be allowed to smoke on club property. Anyone found smoking who is not the legal age should be requested to extinguish the cigarette and if appropriate their guardian / carer informed of the incident. Smoking should be avoided by the Age-Grade Player. Smoking is a serious health risk. It should play no part in a player’s lifestyle.

14.2 **Alcohol**

14.2.1 Alcohol should only be consumed on club property by those who are the appropriate legal age. Anyone under the legal age found to be drinking on club property should be requested to stop and if appropriate their guardian / carer informed of the incident. It is a legal requirement not to sell alcohol to anyone under the appropriate age.

14.2.2 Alcohol and alcohol advertising is part of everyday life. Young people are not only influenced by trends and peer pressures but are also exposed to constant alcohol advertising. These advertisements seek to make the consumption of alcohol acceptable and trendy and therefore making the awareness of the pitfalls of alcohol consumption more difficult. Sports Leaders should ensure Age-Grade Players are aware of the dangers of alcohol abuse.

14.2.3 **Reasons why alcohol is to be discouraged:**

- I. Alcohol promotes fluid loss i.e. it has a diuretic effect on the body. Maintaining a state of hydration is important in order to function at one's best.
- II. Alcohol consumption reduces the body's ability to replenish glycogen following training and playing and so has a negative impact on fuel recovery.
- III. Alcohol has a vasodilatory effect on the body i.e. it keeps the blood vessels open. A bruised and injured body needs to be managed immediately. Proper management especially in the first 48 hours of incurring the injury is critical to the speedy return of the Age-Grade Player to training and playing.
- IV. Alcohol intake is likely to facilitate increased bleeding and swelling and so it is to be avoided especially when the Age-Grade Player is recovering following a game or when he is injured.
- V. Alcohol consumption can affect reaction, balance and co-ordination.
- VI. Alcohol consumption generally occurs at night time. All players require sleep. It is during sleep that the body repairs damaged tissue. It is important not to deprive the body of this important sleep requirement.

14.3 **Drugs**

14.3.1 Ballymena RFC is concerned to provide a safe and healthy sporting environment. It recognises that this can be put at risk by those who misuse drugs to such an extent that it may affect their health, performance, conduct and relationships. The effects of drugs in sport can also create serious health and safety risks not only to the player but also fellow team mates and opposition. Substance abuse will not be tolerated and its discovery may lead to legal and club disciplinary action being taken. The following rules should be adhered to by all age grade players, coaches and helpers.

14.3.2 Do not come to Ballymena RFC under the influence of non-prescribed drugs. Instances of this being discovered may be reported to a member of the Club Board of Directors, PSNI, Parents/Carer and appropriate social services.

14.3.3 Do not bring non-prescribed drugs onto club premises. Instances of this being discovered may be reported to the Club Board of Directors, PSNI, Parents/Carer and appropriate social services.

14.3.4 Check with your doctor or pharmacist about the side-effects of prescribed medications and inform your team coach if required.

14.3.5 Offer support and advice to players who you suspect of suffering from alcohol or drug abuse: Do not "protect" them by keeping silent.

14.3.6 Ask for assistance if you feel that matters are beyond your own control. Your request will be dealt with in strictest confidence subject to the provisions of the law.

15 Recruitment of Volunteers / Coaches

15.1 While the vast majority of people who wish to work with children are well motivated, there is a need for care in the selection / recruitment procedure, to screen out those who are not suitable, in the creation and maintenance of good practice for the protection of all involved.

15.2 In recruiting volunteers / coaches, the following procedure will be carried out by the Club. All new volunteers must complete the Club Application Form at Appendix 9. This will then be supplemented by the following processes:

15.2.1 Confirmation by appropriate ID checks of their identity and other details e.g. sight of a driving licence (both card and paper parts) or photographic id with confirmation of address.

15.2.2 Contact with the 2 referees listed on the Application form is to be conducted by the appropriate club official in the event that the applicant is unknown entirely to the group or club. If there any doubts created through this process then the CWO, Mini-Rugby Convenor, Youth Convenor or the Director of Community Rugby must be consulted to help decide if the potential recruit is suitable.

15.2.3 Potential recruits should be made aware of the Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy (available to view on-line in the club web site).

15.2.4 All volunteers / coaches in regular contact with young persons must also read and submit to the club an IRFU Declaration of Intent form on an annual basis (see Appendix 8). Age grade convenors are to ensure 100% compliance with this on an annual basis, a record is to be kept of all those who have signed and all forms are to be returned to the CWO on completion.

15.2.5 The role for which the individual has applied, and associated responsibilities, should be clearly explained, and also that failure to comply with the rules and regulations of the Club could result in exclusion from the Club.

15.2.6 All accepted recruits will be ratified by the Club's Community Rugby Directorate.

15.2.7 As soon as it is known that the volunteer / coach is going to be in regular contact with the young person, all Ballymena RFC coaches / volunteers must submit to a criminal record check by completing the Ulster Branch Access NI procedure as outlined in Appendix 10. This is to be renewed every 3 years by everyone who is subject to the criminal record check process.

15.2.8 Appointment of Volunteers / Coaches may be on the basis of their current or previous experience in either playing or coaching Rugby and their appointment is at the discretion of the Club.

16 Training for Volunteers / Coaches

16.1 Training

16.1.1 Ulster Branch approved Coaching or Rugby Development courses for volunteers / coaches are scheduled each year / season and all coaches / volunteers are expected to enhance their qualifications in relation to their roles within the Club, and qualify to at least Mini-rugby or Foundation level.

16.1.2 Education and training in the basics of Child Protection will apply to all coaches volunteers / management committee members working with the children. Ballymena RFC is committed to reviewing their current Club Welfare Policy and updating it where necessary.

16.1.3 Child protection training should include basic awareness of child protection issues and of the Club's Club Welfare Policy and Procedures including the IRFU Safeguarding document.

16.1.4 Convenors are responsible for ensuring that all new coaches have attended child protection awareness workshop within six months of taking up their post. This opportunity should also be made available to other volunteers to enable a culture of a child-focused club to prevail. The CWO and other club officials will be available to assist in achieving this requirement.

16.1.5 Convenors are responsible for ensuring all coaches and volunteers should receive induction, and training appropriate to their role. Training should be updated and reviewed regularly for new coaches / volunteers and in line with changing legislation. The CWO and other club officials will be available to assist in achieving this requirement.

16.1.6 Training courses currently provided by Ulster Branch are all listed on the Ulster Branch web site.

16.1.7 Child Awareness and First Aid Courses are usually provided by the local Borough Council and all coaches / volunteers are expected to attend.

16.2 **Support & Supervision.** Ballymena RFC recognises that it is good practice to set up a system of support & supervision of coaches / volunteers. This will enable coaches / volunteers to become more effective by identifying training needs and dealing quickly with difficulties. Volunteers will be offered regular opportunities to review their experiences at Ballymena RFC and to identify any training or further support they require.

17. Guidelines for Safety

17.1 Risk Assessments. Head Coaches / Coaches can analyse hazards both actual and potential to their team environments by carrying out an age grade appropriate risk assessment which covers all aspects of Health, Safety and Environment. This assessment should be reviewed annually by Head Coaches taking in to account any upward movement in the age grade teams bearing in mind hazards, areas of risk and attitude to risk all change with age. Areas to be considered within the assessment and actions agreed to mitigate the risk should include:

- 17.1.1 Access to grounds and the playing area.
- 17.1.2 Medical conditions in the group e.g. eyesight, heart conditions or allergies.
- 17.1.3 Safety procedures for players.
- 17.1.4 Appropriate training for the age, maturity or ability of the group involved.
- 17.1.5 Session structure including warm-up and cool-down periods during coaching sessions.
- 17.1.6 Equipment use and checks.
- 17.1.7 Actions on emergency situations.
- 17.1.8 Access to a telephone and who might phone for what reason.
- 17.1.9 Availability / location of first aid kits and skills.
- 17.1.10 Supervision issues on and off pitch e.g. toilet breaks
- 17.1.11 Travel, who are the drivers? Licence and insurance checks.

17.2 In the event of an accident. The Coach should:

- 17.2.1 Stop the activity immediately.
- 17.2.2 Quickly assess the extent of the injury.
- 17.2.3 Give immediate appropriate treatment, remaining mindful of limitations listed earlier.
- 17.2.4 If the injury is worse than trivial, contact the Paramedics and Ambulance in attendance, or phone the emergency services on 999.
- 17.2.5 Make contact with the child's parents.

17.2.6 Record in detail all facts surrounding the accident, including the names of witnesses

17.2.7 The IRFU Serious Injury and Concussion Report Form must be completed by the head coach of the appropriate age grade team (see Appendix 1).

17.2.8 The form once complete should then be submitted to either the Director of Community Rugby, the CWO or direct to the Club Secretary who is responsible for maintaining all records of injury / concussion within the club.

17.2.9 The Hon Secretary will then post or email to the relevant provincial office within 1 week of injury occurrence.

17.2.10 The purpose of the form is to ensure that all serious injuries and suspected / confirmed concussions are reported to the IRFU and provincial branches and that a record is kept of these injuries for insurance purposes. Injury reporting is a requirement of the IRFU insurers.

17.2.11 The form can be downloaded at <http://www.ulsterrugby.com/rugby-in-ulster/resources/player-welfare.php#.ViANm8vwwIU>

17.2.12 Serious Injury Definition – Any injury occurring during rugby training or game, which requires that the injured player is transported to and / or treated in hospital.
Concussion – see www.irishrugby.ie/concussion for further information on concussion.

18. Guidelines on Photography and Videoing of Children

18.1 There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on sports websites and other publications. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information – this is X who lives at y, is a member of the z rugby club and who likes a certain music group. This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to “groom” that child for abuse. Secondly, the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of this adapted material finding its way onto child pornography sites.

18.2 Ballymena RFC has recognised the need to develop a policy in relation to the use of images of young people on our website and in other publications. We have considered the type of images that are suitable and that appropriately represent our sport, without putting children at increased risk. When assessing the potential risks in the use of images of players, the most important factor is the potential of inappropriate use of images of children. By increasing the awareness of the potential risks and taking appropriate steps, the potential for misuse of images can be reduced.

18.3 Ballymena RFC where appropriate will avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport.

18.4 As part of the registration process parental permission is to be sought to use an image of the young person. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is representing the sport.

18.5 Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.

18.6 In the event of discovering or receiving a report of an inappropriate image Head Coaches should follow the child protection procedures, ensuring both the CWO and if required the Social Services and / or Police are informed.

18.7 Ballymena RFC will as far as possible only release images that appropriately represent the sport for the web and other media. Whenever posting images or text thought should be given to the possibility those images may be lifted and used in other publications, eg, the Club Newsletter or Web site.

18.8 Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at Sporting Events.
Ballymena RFC will:

18.8.1 Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.

18.8.2 Inform children and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.

18.8.3 Not allow unsupervised access to children or one to one photo sessions at events.

18.8.4 Not approve / allow photo sessions outside the events or at a child's home.

18.8.5 Ensure that if parents or other spectators are intending to photograph or video at an event they should also be made aware of your expectations.

18.8.6 Inform children and parents that if they have concerns they could report these to the organiser.

18.8.7 Encourage anyone with concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography to report these to the event organiser or official and recorded in the same manner as any other child protection concern.

19 Confidentiality Statement

19.1 Ballymena RFC will never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a "need to know" basis, with the welfare of the child paramount.

19.2 Coaches inevitably gather a great deal of personal information about Players in the course of a working relationship. Coach and Players must reach agreement as to what is regarded as confidential information i.e. not divulged to a third party without the express approval of the Player.

19.3 Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of information, to persons who can be judged to have a “right to know”, relating to Players when relevant to the following:

19.3.1 Evaluation of the Player for competitive selection purposes

19.3.2 Pursuit of disciplinary action involving Players

19.3.3 Pursuit of disciplinary action by the IRFU or statutory bodies involving fellow coaches, in alleged breaches of the Code of Ethics.

19.4 Guidelines on Confidentiality. Confidentiality, who needs to know what?

Considerations of confidentiality will not be allowed to override the rights of children or young members to be protected from harm.

19.5 Ballymena RFC has a clear statement about confidentiality and how this is to be respected. This statement covers much broader issues than child protection. We insist that families and children in contact with our organisation are sure, for example, that personal and sensitive details which they have confided about their lives or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without their consent.

19.6 However, the legal principle that 'the welfare of the child is paramount' means that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children or young members to be protected from harm. Everyone in our Club, including children, must be aware that they can never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis. Our Statement of Confidentiality makes this clear.

19.7 In any situation where there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, it is important that the rights of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information.

19.8 However, this will mean, at the very least, informing:

19.8.1 the Club Welfare Officer

19.8.2 where relevant, a statutory child protection agency

19.8.3 the parents of the child

19.8.4 The alleged perpetrator

19.9 Informing the parents of a child about whom there is concern, must be handled in a sensitive way and should only be undertaken in consultation with a statutory agency.

19.10 Any individual under suspicion whether or not he/she is a coach or volunteer within a group has a right to be notified of the cause of the concern. This will also need careful consideration and should only be undertaken in consultation with a statutory agency.

19.11 Depending on the outcome of our initial inquiries, volunteers and other agencies who have contact with either the child concerned, or the alleged perpetrator, may need to be given brief details of the incident and subsequent action. The Club Welfare Officer or a statutory agency will provide advice on who should be told, when they should be told, and the kind of information which it is appropriate to share.

19.12 All information of a personal nature will be stored in a safe and secure setting. Those who will be given access to this information will be:

19.12.1 Club Welfare Officer.

19.12.2 Club Membership Secretary or Honorary Secretary responsible for mailing addresses, fees, Club information etc.

19.12.3 Club Mini or Youth Coaches and Rugby Development Officers for information relating to a child's ability to participate in any activity.

20. Data Protection

20.1 Ballymena RFC is committed to ensuring that any information gathered in relation to our youth/mini squads meets the specific responsibilities as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

20.2 To achieve this the following guidelines have been drawn up:

20.2.1 The Youth/Mini Convenors will use the same registration form to ensure consistency of information and that the child/guardian is made aware of why we require the information. See Appendix 6 for an appropriate registration template.

20.2.2 The names and addresses of children and guardians are only gathered for the purpose of maintaining player records throughout the representative age-grade structures.

20.2.3 The information requested is relevant to the needs of the IRFU database and to ensure adherence to good child protection practices.

20.2.4 We will make every effort to ensure the information entered onto the database from paper records is accurate and kept up to date. The paper record will be stored in a secure place & to the same standards as the data base.

20.2.5 The IRFU will only keep a child's information for up to 5 years.

20.2.6 The database will be maintained centrally and can only be accessed by eligible IRFU staff members and those authorised in Ballymena RFC.

20.2.7 The database or any individual's name and address will not be forwarded to a third party without the prior permission of the child and guardian.

20.3 The Club must adhere to the principles laid out in the Data Protection Act (N.I.) irrespective of the volume of data collected. The Club, Volunteers and Participants must reach agreement as to what cannot be divulged to a third party without the prior permission of the person concerned. This does not preclude the disclosure of information relevant to:

20.3.1 Evaluation for competitive selection.

20.3.2 Pursuit of disciplinary action and investigation of alleged breaches of the Code of Ethics by Statutory Authorities.

20.3.3 Information necessary for the benefit of the safety of the greater public.

21. Availability of Information

21.1 It is important that there is a free flow of information between Ballymena RFC Officials, members, coaches/volunteers, children and parents, in terms of the promotion of Rugby and what we aim to achieve in relation to your young person.

21.2 Parents should know what we do and how we do it, and the coaches/officials will always be on hand during, or after coaching sessions, for consultation or advice.

21.3 When appropriate, letters (or telephone contact) will be issued in relation to further information or specifics in respect of an event etc.

21.4 A regular review of Ballymena RFC policies will take place through meetings with members and Officials as well as coaches / volunteers and feedback from the young persons and parents.

22. Disclaimer

22.1 This Club Welfare Policy is issued by Ballymena RFC to assist, guide and encourage its Members in achieving best practices for the benefit of all involved in the Game of Rugby Football. Club Members should however take their own advice as may be appropriate. Ballymena RFC cannot accept responsibility for supervising its Members, and in particular disclaim liability for damage, loss or injury to person or property arising from any neglect, default or omission by any Club Members or persons acting on behalf of any Club Members.

23. Useful Reference and Source Material

- Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport.(Sports Council NI 2003)
- Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.
- IRFU Safeguarding Policy.
- Our Duty to Care – DHSS&PS 2000.
- Sports Council of N.I. - Code of Ethics.
- Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) order Information Notes 1-3
- Children (NI) order 1995
- Getting It Right DHSSPS 2004
- Co-operating to Safeguard Children DHSS&PS 2003
- Area Child Protection Committee – Regional Child Protection Policy 2005

APPENDIX 1 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

The IRFU Serious Injury and Concussion Report Form

This form should be used by all teams to report injury as categorised by the IRFU. A copy should be retained by the Head Coach, a copy should go to the Community Rugby Director or CWO (for onward transmission to the Ballymena RFC Hon Secretary) and a copy should be sent to Ulster Branch.

This is different to an “incident” the reporting of which should be carried using the Ballymena RFC internal form at Appendix 2 to this policy document

A copy of the most up to date form should be downloaded from:

<http://www.ulsterrugby.com/rugby-in-ulster/resources/player-welfare.php#.ViANm8vwwIU>

APPENDIX 2 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

BALLYMENA RFC - INCIDENT REPORT FORM

(An incident could be a child protection issue, theft, bullying, a child running away, abuse from a member of another team etc)

Your name:
Your position:
Are you reporting your own concern or that of someone else? Own concern: <input type="checkbox"/> Other person's concern: <input type="checkbox"/> Name: Contact details:
Child's name:
Child's address:
Parent's/carer's names and address:
School:
Child's date of birth:
Date and time of any incident:
Your observations/What prompted concerns?
State exactly what the child said and what you said: (Remember; do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)
Has anyone been named as an alleged abuser?
What Action has been taken so far?

APPENDIX 2 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

BALLYMENA RFC - INCIDENT REPORT FORM cont..

<p>Have the child's parents/carers been informed? Yes/No</p> <p>If so state date and time: _____</p>	
<p>Have any External Agencies been contacted? Yes/No</p> <p>If so, state date and time: _____</p>	
<p>Police yes/no</p>	<p>If yes: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Social services yes/ no</p>	<p>If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Ulster Branch yes/no</p>	<p>If yes: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Local Council/ Education Dept yes/no</p>	<p>If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Other (e.g. NSPCC)</p>	<p>If yes - which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Print name: _____ Signature: _____</p> <p>_____</p>	

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a *need to know* basis – only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

NB. If appropriate a copy of this form should be sent to the Social Services after the telephone report. The Club Welfare Officer should receive the original for monitoring purposes.

APPENDIX 3 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

GUIDELINES ON TRANSPORTING A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON IN A PRIVATE CAR

The issue of transporting children has become very sensitive for sports leaders and parents. Many coaches argue that their club could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents ensuring that children are returned home or transported to events in a private car.

The guidance from the Sports Council for Northern Ireland encourages coaches **not** to take children on journeys alone in their car. This view has been taken as our knowledge has grown of how those who want to harm children has developed. The vast majority of coaches and volunteers will help out through their genuine desire to see children or their particular sport develop. Unfortunately we must face the reality that a minority of others will join a sports club to gain access to children and create an air of acceptability about their role, justifying their close contact with children.

Best practice is clearly to avoid transporting a child alone, but we recognise that in some circumstances it is an essential part of a child's participation in training and competition.

If all alternatives have been exhausted and an adult has to transport a child there are a number of safety measures that BRFC recommend should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- Any regular driver like all coaches / volunteers who have access to children in our organisation should undergo an Access NI criminal record check.
- The head coach is to confirm that drivers hold the correct category of licence and that the vehicle is insured and taxed prior to travel. Further, the head coach should also check the number / type of endorsements held by the driver. More than 3 points should be referred to the Convenor and if necessary Director of Community Rugby / CWO for approval.
- The Parents, and a Club Official, should be informed of the person who will be transporting the child, the reasons why and how long / where the journey will take. The Irish Sports Council App can be downloaded for all those with smart phones and use of the “**Travel Tracker**” contained within it would be recommended.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans (i.e. the Head Coach should brief his / her age grade group and allow time for objection / comment prior to journey start).
- The driver should attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- When leaving children off after a match or training session coaches / volunteers should alternate which child is dropped off last. The driver should try to ensure that the last two children would be left off at an agreed point e.g. one of their family homes or club car park. A child should not be left alone at a drop off point (i.e. the driver or appointed person should remain until the parent / carer collects the child). Should there be a significant delay in collection then the parent / carer should be phoned to establish how long they will be.
- The person who leaves children home should be alternated as this would reduce the risk of any one individual from always being alone with a child.
- The driver should have a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down.
- Children should wear seatbelts at all times. The driver is legally responsible to ensure that a child under 14 years wears a seatbelt (i.e. the adult would have to pay any fine) but morally responsible to ensure all passengers wear seatbelts.

Like all advice, these procedures will only reduce the risk, and still the best advice is to avoid transporting children alone in a private car.

APPENDIX 4 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

GUIDELINES FOR AWAY TRIPS

Travelling to away fixtures / tournaments is a regular event for all clubs. Trips may vary from short journeys to more complicated arrangements involving overnight stays. But even what may appear as the most straightforward of trips will require some level of planning. The following will outline a number of issues that need to be considered when travelling with children.

Communication with:

- **Children** – they should be aware of the travel plans, venue and time for collection, time of return and any costs. Children should also have a clear understanding of what standard of behaviour is expected of them. Children must know what sports kit they need to bring with them.
- **Parents** – should be made aware of the above and must have completed a consent form detailing any medical issues that the team manager should be aware of. Parents should also have the name and contact details of the team manager in the event of an emergency.
- **Other coaches/volunteers** – need to be made aware of what their responsibilities are in advance of the trip. If the trip is a long journey, it is important that all coaches/volunteers have an itinerary.

Transport

Transport guidelines are available in Appendix 3 consideration should be given the following factors when touring or on trips away:

- Book your transport through a reputable hire company, where drivers will be correctly trained and experienced. Also that they are vetted and have a criminal record check completed on them.
- Allow an appropriate length of time to complete the journey.
- Consider the impact of traffic and weather conditions.
- If using a mini-bus ensure that all seats are forward facing and they all have seat belts fitted if carrying children.
- Ensure leaders and children wear seat belts.
- Check there is appropriate insurance for the journey.
- Clarify supervision requirements with other leaders. The driver should not be considered as a supervisor during the journey.
- Ensure that the vehicle is road worthy.

Ratio

Dependent on the age the ratio of adult to child may vary but what ever is considered appropriate would generally need to be increased when travelling away from home. For some younger groups it would be recommended that a parent / carer should accompany the child on longer trips away e.g. when an overnight stay is planned.

Insurance

In addition to the bus/mini-bus/car insurance, the team manager needs to ensure that the club's general insurance covers travel to away events.

Emergencies

Ensure that the vehicle has breakdown and recovery cover. At least one of the leaders should be trained in First Aid procedures and a First Aid Kit should be available.

The leader should have access to a mobile phone and contact details for all the children.

APPENDIX 5 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

GUIDELINES FOR OVERNIGHT STAYS

Hosting

Being a host family, or being hosted, is an integral part of many sports and, if handled appropriately, can add to a child's enjoyment and experience at a competition. The whole area of hosting, though, can create a great deal of concern for parents, children and the hosts.

Being a host can be a particularly challenging role, but also very rewarding. A host should be provided with as much information about the child/children staying with them and details of the competition. They in turn should agree to provide references and be vetted when this is available. With the introduction of the Criminal Records Bureau, Disclosure Scotland and the Protection of Children Service, access to vetting for sports clubs organising events within England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland should be achievable.

Overseas Trips

When arranging for events/trips abroad, the Club will be dependent on the ability of the host organisation to access vetting services and obtain appropriate references. It is still the responsibility of the trip organiser to provide the hosts with the relevant information on the children and details of what is expected.

Child/Youth Member

Right To:	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be safe• Have any concerns listened to• Be respected by their coach and host family• Have easy access to phone contact with the trip organiser• Have a list of events (itinerary)• Regular group meetings with other young people• Have their religious needs facilitated• Have prior knowledge of the climatic variation to enable them to bring adequate clothing• Be made aware of the codes required for phoning home• Maps of the local area• Have the currency of the country they are visiting explained to them• Be made aware of collection and drop off arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show respect to their host families• Show respect to other youth members and their leaders• Keeping themselves safe• Reporting inappropriate behaviour or risky situations• Attending any prior planning meeting to ensure they are fully informed of the plans• Maintain the sport's reputation by adhering to their code of conduct• Discussing their dietary needs with the host family (though it is the parent's/organiser's responsibility to ensure this information is passed on in advance)• Maintain the accommodation to the standard set by the family• Be aware that they are acting as an ambassador for their sport and on occasions their country• Dependent on arrangements with parents, manage their own money

APPENDIX 5 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

GUIDELINES FOR OVERNIGHT STAYS cont.

Coach / Manager

Right To:	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have support from the Club if reporting any concerns about the arrangements • Be protected from abuse by children/youths, other adults, members or parents involved in the trip • Not be left vulnerable when working with children • Receive the relevant information from parents/guardians in advance of the trip i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dietary needs - Any personal care needs - Emergency contact numbers - Signed medical consent form/permission form - List of any medication/allergies - E111 form completed (EU visits) • Be respected by the children in preparation for and during the trip • To have any personal “out of pocket” expenses reimbursed • To be able to apply sanctions in line with the I.R.F.U. guidelines and discussed prior to the trip • To have time off i.e. that another adult is the point of contact for an emergency rather than one individual all the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To plan well in advance of the trip • Check I.R.F.U. guidelines • Gather information on destination and venue (if possible carry out a risk assessment) • Facilitate information meetings prior to the trip for parents and children • Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information • Be a role-model during the trip (disciplined/committed/time keeping) • Fostering team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care • Respond to children/youth members’ statements and concerns • Record any complaints or accidents on relevant documentation • Provide the children, parents and host with an itinerary of events • Have clear arrangements for collecting and transporting children during the trip • Ensure that if a young person has to share a room that it is with someone of the same sex and that they are aware of who this is in advance • Check adequate insurance cover is arranged • Ensure they have received the relevant documentation from the child’s parents/guardians • To inform parents and children of standards of behaviour required and possible sanctions • To ensure that there is an appropriate adult/child ratio • To submit a report to Club after the trip • Make parents and children aware of photographic policy and obtain parent’s signature (or include on permission form)

APPENDIX 5 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

GUIDELINES FOR OVERNIGHT STAYS cont.

Parents/Guardians

Right To:	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know their child is safe • Be informed of any problems or concerns relating to their children • Be informed if their child is injured • Have their consent sought prior to the trip • Contribute to the decisions in planning the trip (when appropriate) • Have knowledge of where their child is staying and with whom • Have a contact number for their child's hosts and trip organiser • Have a detailed itinerary of events that their child will be taking part in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be aware of the Code of Conduct for children, coaches and hosts • To agree sanctions with the coach and child prior to the trip • Ensure the child has appropriate spending money • To pay for relevant costs prior to their child going on the trip • Provide the coach with all relevant documents and emergency contact number • Ensure the child has a passport (if required) prior to the trip • Provide appropriate clothing to meet the needs of the child while away from home • Drop off and collect their child at agreed time • Encourage their child to play by the rules

Hosts

Right To:	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be treated with respect by the children, coaches and parents • To have prior knowledge of any special requirements e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical Food Religious Transport Mobility • To have telephone contacts, lists of parents and coaches in the event of an emergency • To be financially reimbursed for any expenses (when agreed) • To be informed of competition details • To have clearly defined roles prior to the event • To be consulted about any change in plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have agreed to a Code of Conduct • To consent to checks/references being sought into their appropriateness of being hosts • To provide a safe and supportive environment for the children while they are hosting them • To attend host family meeting prior to and during the competition of arranged • To provide the child with a positive experience of staying way from home and possibly a different culture

APPENDIX 6 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

PLAYER REGISTRATION & PARENTAL / GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Anything written on this form will be held in confidence. Club coaches/Officials need to know these details in order to meet the specific needs of your child.

Ballymena RFC is committed to ensuring that any information gathered in relation to our youth or mini squads meets the specific responsibilities as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

I give permission for my child to attend for training and playing sessions.

Player details:

Surname:
First Name:
Address:

Home Phone:	E-Mail:
Mobile:	Playing position:
Passport No:	Club:
D.O.B.	Province:
Place of Birth:	School:

Kit Info

Medical Info

Height: m / cm		GP Name:	
Weight:kg		GP Number:	
Tracksuit M/L/XL/2XL/3XL		Any Medical Condition:	
T-shirt/polo:		Medicines	
Jersey: M/L/XL/2XL/3XL			
Shorts: M/L/XL/2XL/3XL			

APPENDIX 6 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

PLAYER REGISTRATION & PARENTAL / GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM cont.

Family Contact 1 Information:

Contact Name:	<input type="text"/>	Home No:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>	Work No:	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	Mobile:	<input type="text"/>

Contact 2 Information: (If 1st Family contact unavailable)

Contact Name:	<input type="text"/>	Home No:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>	Work No:	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	Mobile:	<input type="text"/>
	<input type="text"/>	Fax No:	<input type="text"/>

Photographic/Video Permission:

I hereby consent to Ballymena RFC or its agents photographing / digital imaging or videoing my involvement in the Age-Grade Development Squads Programme.

(Player) _____ **(Parent/Guardian)** _____

I will inform the coaches of any important changes to my child's health, medication or needs and also of any changes to our address or phone numbers given.

In the event of illness, having parental responsibility for the above named child, I give permission for medical treatment to be administered where considered necessary by a nominated first-aider, or by suitably qualified medical practitioners. If I cannot be contacted and my child should require emergency hospital treatment, I authorise a qualified medical practitioner to provide emergency treatment or medication.

APPENDIX 6 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

PLAYER REGISTRATION & PARENTAL / GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM cont.

I have been made aware that Ballymena RFC has developed a child protection policy & they are committed to ensuring the safety of my child by having;

- A coaches / volunteer charter.
- Clear recruitment policy which includes vetting all coaches & volunteers.
- Guidelines for transporting children.
- A photography policy.
- An anti-bullying policy.
- Disciplinary procedures (see Club Rules).
- A designated person for Child Protection.
- Guidelines on confidentiality.

I confirm that all details are correct to the best of my knowledge and I am able to give parental consent for my child to participate in & travel to all activities.*

Signature: Child

Signature: Parent/Guardian

Print Name Date

Please return this form to the relevant Coach or Manager of your age-group.

For away trips:

I undertake to pay the required sums by the dates specified in the information and accept that in respect of any withdrawal from the trip, for whatever reason, there can be no refund of the whole or part of the payments unless the circumstances are covered by insurance.

I confirm that I have received the details of the above activity and consent to my child taking part in the visits and activities indicated. I acknowledge that the club will be liable in the event of any accident only if they have failed to take reasonable steps in their duty of care for my child during the trip. I understand that the Club Officials have a common law duty to act in the capacity of a reasonably prudent parent.

I have read the Player Charter and agree that my child should abide by this whilst in the care of the club and I understand that a serious or continued breach of this code may result in my child being sent home early at my expense.

Any contact with contagious or infectious diseases within the last four weeks? Yes / No

If yes, give details: _____

Any Special dietary requirements? _____

Has your young person an allergy to any medicines if yes which ones? _____

APPENDIX 7 - Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

THE COACHES CHARTER

All coaches & volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect children in their care and themselves from false allegations. All Coaches / Volunteers/ Helpers within the Club are to abide by the following charter:

All Coaches / Volunteers/ Helpers

- 11 Shall respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of their sport.
- 12 Shall always put the welfare of each child/young person first, before winning or achieving goals and place the well-being and safety of the child above the performance.
- 13 Should follow all guidelines laid down by Ballymena RFC and IRFU.
- 14 Are to develop an appropriate working relationship with children based on mutual trust and respect. Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- 15 Shall encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance making sport fun, enjoyable and fair. Enthusiastic and constructive feedback, encouraging achievements should be given rather than negative criticism.
- 16 Shall where appropriate, hold up-to-date and nationally recognised I.R.F.U. coaching qualifications, and hold appropriate insurance cover.
- 17 Are to ensure that activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity and ability of the individual.
- 18 Shall at the outset clarify with performers (and where appropriate with their parents) exactly what is expected of them and what players are entitled to expect from their coach. A simple checklist may sometimes be appropriate.
- 19 Will co-operate fully with specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interests of the performer.
- 20 Shall always promote the positive aspects of Rugby (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- 21 Shall consistently display high standard of behaviour and appearance. They should be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking, drinking alcohol, using foul language or taking drugs in the company of young people
- 22 Shall always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment, e.g. no secrets)
- 23 Shall maintain a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room, tent, shower / bath or changing facilities with them).
- 24 Should build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in decision-making.

APPENDIX 7 - Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

THE COACHES CHARTER cont.

- 25 Shall ensure that if any form of manual / physical support is required, it is provided openly and according to agreed guidelines. If physical support is needed, talk aloud to the child / young person explaining what you are doing and why, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when a child is constantly moving. Children / young people should always be consulted before they are touched and their agreement gained.
- 26 Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person.
- 27 Shall involve parents / carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents / teachers / coaches / officials work in pairs.
- 28 Shall ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female coach. Be aware of the potential for same gender abuse by male adults of boys and female adults of girls.
- 29 Shall ensure that at tournaments or residential events, adults do not enter children's rooms, invite or permit children into their rooms or become involved in unobserved or unsupervised 1 to 1 situations with children and young people.
- 30 Shall recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children / young people, including those with a disability – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- 31 Shall secure parental consent in writing to act 'in loco parentis' and if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and / or other medical treatment.
- 32 Coaches should keep a written record of any incident or injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given. See Appendix 1 & 2.
- 33 Coaches should request written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars and not doing so without the presence of a second adult.
- 34 Coaches should keep a written record of any inappropriate body contact with a child.
- 35 Coaches should immediately report any accusations made against you or your colleagues.
- 36 Coaches should challenge bullying in any form.i.e. physical or emotional. Bullying is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone at Ballymena RFC be they child, coach, volunteer or parent. Anyone found to be bullying others will be dealt with in accordance with policy guidelines.
- 37 A Coach should understand that any misdemeanours or breach of this code will be dealt with immediately and reported to the CWO. Persistent breach of the code may result in dismissal from the club.
- 38 Dismissals can be appealed by the coach / volunteer with final decisions taken by the club Board of Directors.



IRFU Declaration of Intent

This Declaration of Intent is for Sports Leaders & relevant personnel working in regulated activity and/or with regular & continuous access to young people and vulnerable adults. Sports Leaders and relevant personnel should familiarise themselves with IRFU's Safeguarding Policy, in particular this 'Code of Conduct'. Sports Leader & relevant personnel should read and agree to abide by these terms, and should update the self-declaration questions annually. This is to be done in conjunction with a vetting check.

For the latest version of this form please refer to the IRFU web site and follow link, player development / Safeguarding / and see pdf form links supplied on this section of the web site.

APPENDIX 9 - Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

BALLYMENA RFC - VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Please complete this form clearly in Block capitals

Position to be filled:	
Full Name	Maiden Name (if applicable):
Current Address:	Date of Birth:
No. of years at above address	
Tel. No(s): Home Mobile	
Previous experience/involvement in this or any other club	Yes /No
Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation	Yes /No
Do you agree to abide by the guidelines and codes of conduct contained in the Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy, Sport Council NI Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport and the IRFU Safeguarding document?	Yes /No
Do you agree to abide by the Rules of Ballymena RFC?	Yes /No
Have you completed Child Protection Awareness Training?	Yes /No
Do you agree to undergo any specific training for the role?	Yes /No

Please give the Names /Addresses / Tel No /Designation of two referees. By providing these details you authorise Ballymena RFC to contact (if deemed appropriate by the Age Grade Convenor / CWO / Club Official) these referees to confirm character suitability for the role listed above.

1.	2.
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By completing this form you agree to complete an Access NI. Form and an IRFU Declaration of Intent Form

Signed: _____

Date: _____



INFO, PIN NOTIFICATION AND ID VALIDATION FORM

Your sport’s governing body needs certain information to process AccessNI applications online on your behalf. Please follow the instructions below, sign the form and follow the validation process.

Applicant instructions

1. Go to www.nidirect.gov.uk/apply-for-an-enhanced-check-through-a-registered-body
2. Select the green button to Apply for an enhanced check through a registered body.
3. Register your account by creating a user ID and password [keep these details safe as you will need them to track the progress of your case].
4. Once you have successfully logged in, you will be taken to the on-line application.
5. Enter the PIN number below at Step 1 of the form completion. This is the **IRFU (Ulster Branch)** PIN number and will ensure that your application is automatically forwarded to **IRFU (Ulster Branch)** for processing. Please enter it carefully.

9	1	2	2	0	8
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6. Complete the remainder of the form and click on **confirm and proceed** to finish the on-line process.
7. You must note below the 10 digit AccessNI reference number you are provided with once you have submitted the application on-line:-

Application Reference

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

8. Please return this form to the person who asked you to undertake an AccessNI check and present relevant identification as listed on final page

Name of Applicant: _____ Club/Organisation _____

Applicant’s Confirmation: *‘I agree to passing this information to the IRFU (Ulster Branch), for the purpose of completing an AccessNI check. I understand that this process will include a check against the barred list and it is an offence for a barred person to apply for a regulated activity post.*

Yes No (please tick as appropriate)

Applicant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

For further information the applicant can contact your own governing body.

IDENTITY VALIDATION-To be completed by the Club/IRFU (UB) Authorized person

Three documents should be produced in the name of the applicant; **one from Group 1 and two from Group 2**. If this is not possible, then **four documents from Group 2** should be produced, one of which being a birth certificate issued after the time of birth. At least one of these documents should be photographic identification.

Applicant details as they appear on the ID documentation provided:

Applicant Full Name :

Date of Birth :

		/			/				
--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--	--	--

Current postcode :

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

*Please note if you do not have a post code please include full address on this page.

Position applied for :

I confirm I have seen the original ID documentation as indicated on the attached sheet.

Date of ID check :

		/			/				
--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--	--	--

Signed :

Name (Capitals) :

Email :

Mobile :

Club/Organisation :

Position in club/governing body:

RETURN TO: Paul Whitten at IRFU (Ulster Branch)

Applications will not be forwarded to Access NI for processing until this fully completed form has been received by IRFU (Ulster Branch)

GROUP 1

GROUP 2

- Current passport (any nationality)
- Biometric Residence Permit (UK)
- Current driving licence (UK, ROI, Isle of Man, Channel Islands or any EU country)
- Original birth certificate (UK, Isle of Man or Channel Islands) issue at time of birth
- Original long form Irish birth certificate – issued at time of registration of birth
- Adoption certificate (UK, Isle of Man or Channel Islands)

- Birth certificate (UK, ROI, Isle of Man or Channel Islands) issued after time of birth
- Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate (UK, Isle of Man or Channel Islands)
- HM Forces ID card (UK)
- National Insurance Card or notification letter with NI number (UK)
- Firearms licence (UK and Channel Islands)
- Bank / Building Society Account Confirmation Letter
- Electoral ID card (NI only)
- EU National ID card
- Cards carrying the PASS Accreditation logo (UK and Channel Islands)
- SmartPass (Translink) (NI only)
- Current UK driving licence (old paper version)
- Examination certificates (16-18 year olds only)
- Bank/Building Society Statement (UK or EEA)*
- Credit card statement (UK or EEA)*
- Utility Bill (UK or ROI)* – not mobile phone
- Benefit statement (UK)*
- Addressed payslip*
- Mortgage statement (UK or EEA)**
- Financial statement (UK)**
- P45/60 statement (UK and Channel Islands)**
- Land and Property Services Agency rates demand (NI only)**
- Work Permit/Visa (UK) (UK Residence Permit)**.
- Letter from a Head Teacher or Further Education College Principal (16-18 year olds in full time education – only to be used when other documentation routes are exhausted)**

* documentation must be less than 3 months old

** documentation must be issued within the last 12 months

**THIS FORM SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO IRFU (UB)
PLEASE DO NOT SEND IT TO ACCESSNI**

APPENDIX 11 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

BULLYING - THE “NO BLAME APPROACH”

Step 1 – Interview with the victim

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim?
- Was it within his/her own peer group?
- Assure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation.
- Actively listen.

Step 2 – Meet with all involved

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable.
- Make a point of calling a ‘special’ meeting.
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all.
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim.
- Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

Step 3 – Explain the problem

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed. Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions:

- Would they like it if it happened to them.
- “Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?”
- Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone.

Step 4 – Share the responsibility

Explain what steps/controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result.

Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas

At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases “if it were you” to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

APPENDIX 11 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

BULLYING - THE “NO BLAME APPROACH” cont.

Step 6 – Leave it to them

Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week’s time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done.

Step 7 – Meet them again

Meet with each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what, and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Again enforce the idea of the ‘team’ looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is know that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

Step 8 – Review Outcome

The results of the above approach should be reviewed with the Children’s Officer, to see if issue resolved in the short term. A set review interval should be agreed with the Children’s Officer to ensure problem does not reoccur with the group.

APPENDIX 12 - Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

PLAYER CHARTER

- Play for enjoyment and become part of the rugby family.
- Respect the Game of Rugby and play within the laws of the Game.
- Accept the referee's decision and let your captain or coach ask any relevant questions.
- Play with control. Do not lose your temper.
- Always do your best and be committed to the game, your team and your club.
- Be a "good sport". Applaud all good play whether by your team or the opposition.
- Respect your opponent. Treat all players, as you would like to be treated. Do not "bully" or take advantage of any player.
- Rugby is a team sport and make sure you co-operate with your coach; teammates and members of your club.
- Remember that the goals of the game are to have fun, improve your skills and feel good.
- At the end of the match thank your opponents and the referee for the match.
- Always remember that you owe a duty of care to your opponents. Tackle hard but fairly, do not intend to hurt your opponent.
- Winning and losing is part of sport: Win with humility – lose with dignity.
- As part of the team it is important that you attend training regularly and listen to your coach and help your team.
- As a team sport it is important to understand that all members are important to the team.
- Remember you are representing your team, club, family and the Game of Rugby.

APPENDIX 13 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

PARENT CHARTER

It is your responsibility to ensure that the young people you are responsible for have:

- The correct kit / equipment and that it is in a good state of repair. Are suitably dressed for the weather conditions forecast and will be warm and dry in the event of inclement weather.
- Inform your year coach of any underlying injuries or medical conditions which may have occurred from the start of the season when you filled out the Club registration form.
- Been informed who they may talk to if they have any concerns or worries.
- Are dropped off and escorted to the area they are training at and handed over to a member of the coaching staff.
- Are picked up by ensuring you arrive at games/training in plenty of time to collect your children. If you are running late it is your responsibility to let us know so we can make appropriate provision.
- Know the areas of the club which are out of bounds and ensure your children know them.
- Remember, young people play rugby for their enjoyment, not yours.
- Encourage your child always to play by the Laws of the Game.
- Help young people to work towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship.
- Set a good example by applauding good play on both sides. Never ridicule, humiliate or shout at young players for making a mistake or losing a match.
- Do not place emphasis on winning at all costs. Teach young children that honest endeavour is as important as winning, so that the result of each game is accepted without disappointment.
- Do not force an unwilling child to participate in the playing of rugby. If the child is to play, he/she will do so in good time through your encouragement.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from rugby.
- As a spectator do not use profane language or harass referees, coaches or players.
- Do not publicly question the referee's judgement or their honesty.
- Recognise the value and importance of volunteer referees and coaches.
- Identify and acknowledge the good qualities of the Game of Rugby and uphold these values.
- Remember you and your child's contribution to the Game of Rugby are very important to the IRFU and be proud of your contribution.
- Understand the value of team sport and its importance.

APPENDIX 13 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

PARENT CHARTER cont.

Parental Contact with Coaches

These Guidelines, whilst extensive, do not cover every scenario and are to be used as an indicator of Best Practice. We promote open, transparent, ethical and child friendly policies.

Show Respect and treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself.

- All our Coaches are volunteers and as such must be afforded courtesy and their efforts recognised.
- Parents are asked to work with them constructively.
- Ballymena RFC are keen that all participants reach their full potential and this is done in a safe environment for everyone involved with Age Grade Rugby.
- Ballymena RFC subscribes to the policies and procedures of the IRFU with regard to Long Term Player Development, Child Protection and Mini / Youth Rugby Regulations
- All our coaches have the best interests of your child at heart and give of their time freely.
- All concerns must be dealt with as per the established Protocol outlined later in this document.
- All dealings with volunteers should be amicable, constructive and free from confrontation.
- Violent or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated.
- We will investigate any incidents using the established club disciplinary protocols.
- Anyone found to have acted inappropriately will be subject to investigation.
- An appropriate level of sanctions will be enforced on anyone found to have acted inappropriately.
- The Club retains the right to cancel or suspend a member's subscription and discontinue involvement with Age Grade Rugby.

APPENDIX 14 – Ballymena RFC Club Welfare Policy

BRFC Age Grade Group Risk Assessment Template

Applies to: (insert section /group name)

TASK / ACTIVITY: (e.g. General hazards).....DATE.....ASSESSED BY.....

LOCATION: (e.g. BRFC Eaton Park)

REVIEW DATE.....

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	EXISTING CONTROLS	RISK LEVEL (Low / Medium / High) ¹	FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED TO REDUCE THE RISK LEVEL IF DEEMED NECESSARY
<i>Illustrative purposes: Group use Hegartys pitch - children crossing roads</i>	<i>Hit by cars</i>	<i>Pedestrian crossing Speed limit</i>	<i>Medium at key times</i>	<i>Ask all parents to drop off / collect at Hegartys car park If juice and biscuits after session move as group across to clubhouse Ask convenor to be moved to clubhouse pitch - swap with P7</i>

¹ **Risk Level** = is a subjective assessment by the group leaders of the likelihood and severity of harm or occurrence to the young person / group.



Ballymena RFC - Youth Player Declaration

Dear Youth Player,

This document contains extracts from the Ballymena Child Protection Policy (soon to be known as the Club Welfare Policy). The club is keen to ensure that all relevant age grade players are aware that such a policy exists, its broad concepts and that in the club there are people and processes for ensuring it is implemented and complied with. Also that there is support for anyone who feels they require it as a result of being subjected to discrimination, bullying or abuse. The complete club policy along with the new IRFU Safeguarding document is available to view on the club web site. You are being asked to sign on page two that you have read this letter and that you agree to abide by the extracts and our club policy.

Codes of Conduct

It is essential for everyone involved in the club to be made aware of the behavioural standards required at Ballymena RFC and what is and is not acceptable. All players and volunteers should be aware of the acceptable general code of conduct below:

- No foul or abusive language.
- No bullying.
- Respect other participants.
- Be on time.

Ballymena RFC shall use the club web site to make available copies of its policy, codes of conduct and handbooks and everyone is asked to make themselves familiar with the contents of each.

Ballymena RFC Coaches, Player and Parent Charters/Conduct are at Appendices 7, 12 and 13 to the club policy and they summarise in point form the standards which are deemed acceptable / unacceptable by Ballymena RFC. The club may take appropriate action against anyone who is proven to be in breach of these codes of conduct.

Extracts from the Policy which are especially important and relevant to Age Grade players are as follows;

Smoking, Alcohol, Drugs & Bullying Policy

Smoking

- It is illegal to sell cigarettes to anyone under the legal age.
- Anyone who does not comply with the Smoke Free Law will be committing a criminal offence. Smoking is prohibited within all Ballymena RFC buildings and breach of this important safety rule may result in removal from the club. Smokers are also required not to smoke immediately outside any open entrance to the clubhouse, due to passive smoking implications.
- Every individual has the right to a "smoke free" clubhouse. Only those who are the appropriate legal age should be allowed to smoke on club property. Anyone found smoking who is not the legal age should be requested to extinguish the cigarette and if appropriate their guardian / carer informed of the incident. Smoking should be avoided by the Age-Grade Player. Smoking is a serious health risk. It should play no part in a player's lifestyle.

Alcohol

- Alcohol should only be consumed on club property by those who are the appropriate legal age. Anyone under the legal age found to be drinking on club property should be requested to stop and if appropriate their guardian / carer informed of the incident. It is a legal requirement not to sell alcohol to anyone under the appropriate age.
- Alcohol and alcohol advertising is part of everyday life. Young people are not only influenced by trends and peer pressures but are also exposed to constant alcohol advertising. These advertisements seek to make the consumption of alcohol acceptable and trendy and therefore making the awareness of the pitfalls of alcohol consumption more difficult. Sports Leaders should ensure Age-Grade Players are aware of the dangers of alcohol abuse.

Drugs

Ballymena RFC is concerned to provide a safe and healthy sporting environment. It recognises that this can be put at risk by those who misuse drugs to such an extent that it may affect their health, performance, conduct and relationships. The effects of drugs in sport can also create serious health and safety risks not only to the player but also fellow team mates and opposition. Substance abuse will not be tolerated and its discovery may lead to legal and club disciplinary action being taken. The following rules should be adhered to by all age grade players, coaches and helpers:

- Do not come to Ballymena RFC under the influence of non-prescribed drugs. Instances of this being discovered may be reported to a member of the Club Board of Directors, PSNI, Parents/Carer and appropriate social services.
- Do not bring non-prescribed drugs onto club premises. Instances of this being discovered may be reported to the Club Board of Directors, PSNI, Parents/Carer and appropriate social services.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about the side-effects of prescribed medications and inform your team coach if required.
- Offer support and advice to players who you suspect of suffering from alcohol or drug abuse: Do not "protect" them by keeping silent.
- Ask for assistance if you feel that matters are beyond your own control. Your request will be dealt with in strictest confidence subject to the provisions of the law.

Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated by Ballymena RFC and is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone; be they young person, coach, volunteer or parent. All instances of alleged bullying will be investigated and appropriate actions will be taken by the Club officers. Anyone being bullied should not keep it to him / herself. Any incidence of bullying can be reported to a Coach or a parent who should then inform the CWO so that the correct protocol can then be followed.

Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

The Club Welfare Officer (CWO) is Gary Donald, see the notice board in the club foyer for contact details should you wish to talk to him regarding any Club Welfare / Safeguarding issue you may have.

Sometimes things can happen that make us feel down or bad, for example; being dropped from the team, getting injured or being picked on by another person. There is always someone you can talk to you about this. If you don't want to chat to the CWO then talk to a friend or family member and they will help you get assistance with your problem.

I hope you have a safe, fun and enjoyable season.

In Rugby

Glen Boyd

Director Community Rugby

In consultation with your parent / carer please sign and return the slip below to your head coach ASAP



Ballymena RFC Child Protection Policy Extract - YOUTH PLAYER'S DECLARATION

I have read the above extract and hereby declare my intention to adhere to club policy and guidelines.

Player Name..... Signature.....

TEAM..... DATE.....

I have seen and agree the player's declaration of intent to adhere to club policy and guidelines.

Player Parent/Carer Name Signature.....