

RJCC Child Protection Policy

1. This document

1.1. This document sets out the principles, rules and procedures that constitute the RJCC's child protection policy. This document is the RJCC's central policy in relation to child protection, but should also be read in conjunction with the following documents and policies:

- Information for Parents – how parents and the club will work together, what the RJCC expects from parents, how parents should raise issues or make complaints
- Away Fixtures– rules and procedures for away tournaments
- Good Conduct Guide and Disciplinary Procedures – what RJCC expects from children, and how the RJCC deals with misbehaving children
- Coaches Charter – what parents and the club are entitled to expect from coaches
- Guidelines for Internet Chess Clubs

1.2. It is also important that members of staff understand that, given a choice between protecting a child from potential abuse and protecting the reputation or job of an adult, the laws of the land – and the club - will (rightly) choose to protect the child.

1.3. Therefore, following the principles, rules and procedures set out in this policy not only protects children from abuse, it also protects members of staff from unsubstantiated allegations of abuse. It is also important that members of staff understand that, given a choice between protecting a child from potential abuse and protecting the reputation or job of an adult, the laws of the land – and the club - will (rightly) choose to protect the child.

2. Guiding principles

2.1. The guiding principles of the RJCC are that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children have the right to protection from abuse, irrespective of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

2.2. In this document:

“Staff” means employees, volunteers, club officials, and anyone working with the club.

“Child” means a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

“Parent” means parent or carer.

“CPO” means the club’s Child Protection Officer. The CPO, together with contact details, is identified on the club’s website, and will be identified in the club’s various communications to parents from time to time.

3. Policy aims and statement

- 3.1. The RJCC has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in the RJCC and to ensure that they are treated in accordance with the guiding principles set out above. The RJCC will always report suspicions of sex abuse and physical abuse, irrespective of who the alleged abuser may be.
- 3.2. The RJCC implements this duty by adherence to this Child Protection policy.
- 3.3. Each member of staff also has - individually - a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in the RJCC and to ensure that they are treated in accordance with the RJCC’s child protection policy.
- 3.4. If a member of staff ever feels that there is a conflict between his or her duty to the club and his or her duty to safeguard a child, the duty to the child must take precedence.
- 3.5. Any member of staff that is worried about sharing concerns about abuse within the RJCC may contact social services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.
- 3.6. In addition to providing children with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of RJCC, this document is intended to allow all staff to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- 3.7. However, it is important to remember that it is not the responsibility of member of staff to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to act in accordance with this policy and to promptly report his or her concerns to the club’s CPO, or the authorities, as appropriate.

4. Inside the club, outside the club

- 4.1. Abuse can occur inside the club and outside the club (e.g. home, school, etc). Although this document is primarily about child protection within in the club, it is important for staff to appreciate that club and staff have a responsibility to act in relation to suspicions of abuse of children which occurs outside the club.
- 4.2. RJCC staff will have regular contact with young people and may be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. The club and each member of staff has responsibility to safeguard children by acting on any concerns and contacting the appropriate authorities.

5. What is abuse?

The abuse of children falls into one of four categories. These are:

5.1. Physical Abuse

The commonly known symptoms are children being hit, shaken, squeezed, burned, or bitten.

5.2. Emotional abuse (including bullying)

Unrealistic pressures on children by a parent or coach, or constantly bullying in order to consistently perform to high expectations; shouting, reducing to tears, verbal abuse. Note that the RJCC has specific guidelines on bullying – see below.

5.3. Neglect

This is where a child may be ignored or not looked after. It can also include the ignoring of a child's needs or even their potential (e.g. negative favouritism).

5.4. Sexual abuse

- 5.4.1. Sexual abuse of children can arouse strong emotions in those having to deal with it. It is important to recognise these feelings and not allow them to interfere with a judgment about the appropriate action to take.
- 5.4.2. Although the incidence of sexual abuse is likely to be low, the RJCC recognises that – as a children's club - paedophiles may seek employment or voluntary work with the club in order to have access to children.

Rules and good practice in relation to child protection

6. Good practice guidelines - RJCC

6.1. So as to make it easier for staff to discharge their duties in relation to child protection:

- The club will provide an open environment for its staff to work in so that the activities of its staff are not hidden from view.
- The club will ensure that, whilst staff may operate as the only adult with a large group of children they NEVER have to work as the only adult with one or two children.
- The club will involve parents wherever possible.
- The club will encourage a culture of open communication with no secrets.
- The club will develop policies and practice that both aims to protect the children attending plus those members of staff or volunteers who interact with the children

7. Good practice - Staff

7.1. Staff should work in the open where their activities are visible to all.

7.2. Staff should ensure that, wherever possible, they are not alone with individual children, without at least one other adult being present. If cases arise where being alone with a child is unavoidable (for example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session) the member of staff should immediately notify a member of the RJCC committee or the child's parents.

7.3. Staff should maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children. Although staff should be friendly towards children, it is wrong – because of the age gap and the inequality in status - to assume that you can be friends with the child.

7.4. Chess is not a sport which requires coaching staff to touch children, and therefore staff should avoid touching children unless, in the circumstances, it is clear that the act cannot be misconstrued (i.e. a pat on the back).

7.5. Staff should not do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults (i.e. taking to the toilet), that they can do for themselves.

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and written consent of the parents. It is good practice to ensure that a second adult is aware of, and can monitor, the specific conduct.

8. Rules – Staff

- 8.1. Unlike the guidelines set out above, which call for judgment from staff, this section sets out rules which are mandatory on staff.
- 8.2. Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching with a child is not permitted in any circumstances.
- 8.3. Also, a member of staff shall not:
 - 8.3.1. Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay (but playing football with children in between games at a tournament is OK, provided the other rules and guidelines are followed).)
 - 8.3.2. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
 - 8.3.3. Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- 8.4. Furthermore, there are some things which a member of staff is not allowed to do, even if parental consent is obtained. Parental consent is insufficient to permit the activities below because experience shows that, in most of cases of child abuse the parents themselves have been successfully “groomed” by the abuser and accept inappropriate behaviour.

A member of staff may not:

- 8.4.1. Invite or allow children to stay at their home, except where the member staff is providing private chess coaching to the child. Coaches should notify the CPO and the Secretary (in advance and by email) of children to which they are giving private coaching.
- 8.4.2. Invite or allow children to meet them outside the official activities of the club, without prior written permission (email) of the Chair of the RJCC.
- 8.4.3. Phone, email, or text a child. All club communications should be via the parents.
- 8.4.4. Chat online with a child, except as part of a bona fide internet chess club (such as the ICC). The club will issue guidelines to parents on Internet chess clubs. The guidelines will inform parents on how to turn off the chat facility, and will recommend Internet chess clubs with good Child Protection practices (e.g. recording and storage of all online chat).
- 8.4.5. Share a hotel room with a child.
- 8.4.6. Except in emergencies, share a car with a child, unless accompanied by another adult.

8.4.7. Offer gifts to a child.

9. Incidents that must be reported/recorded.

9.1. If any of the following occur members of staff should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident, and ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If a child is hurt, accidentally or otherwise.
- If a child seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child appears to be sexually aroused by another's actions.
- If the conduct of a member of staff is inappropriate (e.g. a member of staff keeping their hands below the table/ seen to touch a child/ offering inducements) or the reaction or behaviour of a child suggests that a member of staff has behaved in an inappropriate manner.

10. How to respond to child's disclosure of abuse

10.1. If a child talks about possible abuse, the member of staff should:

- Try to react calmly
- Remember that the child is likely to be frightened or anxious
- Tell the child that he or she was right to tell and is not to blame
- Listen carefully and take what the child says seriously. Don't ask direct questions. Avoid 'Who?', 'What?', 'When?', 'Where?'
- Encourage the child to talk - 'Do you want to tell me about this?' - But do not pressurize him or her.
- Recognise the inherent difficulties interpreting what is said by young children
- Ask no more questions that are necessary to ensure that the child is clear enough about what has happened to pass the child's concerns on.
- Do not prevent a child from recalling events;
- Reassure the child but do not promise confidentiality. Explain that you will have to speak to someone else who can help.
- Remember that young or disabled children may not be able to express themselves verbally. Communication differences may mean that it is hard for them to complain or be understood. Sometimes abuse of disabled children has gone unrecognized because behavioural clues were interpreted as part of their disability.

10.2. The member of staff should not:

- Panic
- Allow their shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Speculate or make assumptions about what has happened
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Approach the alleged abuser
- Agree to keep secrets.

10.3. When the child has finished, make a detailed note of what he or she has said, using the incident record form (set out below) if possible. Make sure this record is dated and signed and, if the disclosure is witnessed by a colleague, that they also sign the report.

10.4. As soon as possible, pass the information to the club's CPO. If the CPO is not easily reached, contact a committee member of RJCC. **Do not delay.**

10.5. Do not contact or confront the alleged abuser.

10.6. If you have serious concerns about the immediate safety of the child contact the Police or Social Services. Record the name of the person you spoke to and tell your club CPO what you have done.

CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT RECORD FORM

Club: Richmond Junior Chess Club	
Your name:	
Your position:	
Child's name:	
Child's address:	
Parents/carers names and address:	
Child's date of birth:	
Date and time of any incident:	
Member of staff involved incident (if any)	
Place where incident occurred:	
Your observations:	
Exactly what the child said and what you said: (Remember, do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)	
Action taken so far:	
External agencies contacted (date & time)	
Police yes/no	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
Social services yes/no	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
RJCC CPO or other yes/no	Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
Local authority yes/no	If yes – which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
Other (e.g. NSPCC)	Which: Name and contact number: Details of advice received:
Signature:	
Print name:	
Date:	

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 A copy of this form should be sent to social services after the telephone report and to the RJCC Child Protection Officer

11. Recruitment and training of staff

- 11.1. RJCC recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.
- 11.2. Therefore, for every member of staff, an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check must be carried out (and updated every 2 years). This includes:
- all coaching staff
 - all team captains
 - all committee members
- 11.3. In addition, for all coaching staff (but not parents), the following checks must (at a minimum) be carried before work (paid or unpaid) begins at the club:
- 11.4. All staff applicants should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record. [standard form to be obtained]
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children (or a statement that the applicant has not previously worked with children).
 - Applications should provide verifiable evidence of identity (passport or driving license with photo).
 - Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau (Enhanced Disclosure)
- 11.5. NB: The two references set out above must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact by the CPO. The Enhanced CRB check should be initiated as soon as the candidate accepts the offer of employment (paid or unpaid) from the RJCC.
- 11.6. The returned Enhanced CRB form should be signed off as verified by CPO and one other member of the committee, and a copy (showing the sign-off) filed with the RJCC administrator.
- 11.7. It is the duty of the CPO to confirm to the RJCC Committee that the checks set out above, and any other checks deemed appropriate, have been completed in relation to each member of staff.

Interview and Induction

- 11.8. As part of the recruitment process,
- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).
 - A candidate's qualifications should be substantiated, where the qualifications are relevant to the role they will undertake
 - The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
 - RJCC's policies are explained, including the Child Protection Policy, are explained to the candidate
 - Child protection training needs are identified.

12. Training

12.1. In addition to reselection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff to:

- Recognise abuse
- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely effectively with children.

12.2. Every member of staff will attend at least one 3-hour good practice and child protection awareness training workshop every three years. This applies to:

- all coaching staff (the Chair and CPO may make an exception for coaches that are 18 or younger)
- all team captains
- all committee members

13. How the RJCC responds to allegations of abuse arising in the RJCC environment

13.1. As set out above, it is not the responsibility of members of staff to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, the club and each member of staff has responsibility to promptly act on any concerns by contacting the appropriate authorities.

13.2. RJCC will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

13.3. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation, led by the police
- A child protection investigation, led by social services
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation, led by the RJCC
- The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but will not necessarily do so.
- If there is a Police investigation then this will take precedence. The RJCC will co-operate with any Police and/ or Social Services investigation by providing relevant information or attending meetings if necessary.

Allegations of poor practice:

13.4. If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the club CPO will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

13.5. If the allegation is about poor practice by the club CPO, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Chair of the RJCC who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Allegations of suspected abuse:

13.6. Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a member of staff should be reported to the club CPO, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

13.7. The club CPO shall refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.

13.8. The parents of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.

13.9. The club CPO shall also notify Chair of the RJCC (unless the Chair is the subject of the allegation).

13.10. If the club CPO is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to Chair who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

Confidentiality

13.11. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. Need-to-know includes the following people:

- The club CPO.
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation.
- Social services/police.
- Chair of the RJCC (who may inform the RJCC committee in general terms of the allegation)
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

13.12. The CPO should seek Police advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

14. Internal Enquiries and Suspension

14.1. The RJCC CPO and Chair will make a prompt decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.

14.2. Unless of the findings of the social services or police inquiries preclude the RJCC from so acting, the RJCC Disciplinary Committee will investigate and assess all individual cases to recommend what action, if any, should be taken in relation to the member of staff that forms the subject of the allegation.

14.3. The RJCC Disciplinary Committee consists of the RJCC Chair, CPO, and such other members of the committee, and external independent persons, as the Chair and CPS shall co-opt. Allegations of sexual abuse must always be externally investigated first. The RJCC will endeavour to have an external independent person (ideally with child protection experience) as part of the RJCC Disciplinary Committee.

14.4. RJCC Disciplinary Committee shall report to the RJCC Committee, and make a recommendation to the RJCC Committee.

14.5. The RJCC Committee shall decide what action should be taken in relation to the member of staff that forms the subject of the allegation.

14.6. Where the allegation relates to a member of the RJCC Committee, that member may not sit as member of the RJCC Committee during any discussions relation to the allegation or its handling. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the RJCC Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true.

14.7. The welfare of the child (and RJCC children in general) should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Allegations of previous abuse

14.8. Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or about a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

14.9. Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside chess, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is by law excluded from working with children.

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse

14.10. Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, E-mail: bac@bacp.co.uk, Internet: <http://www.bacp.co.uk>.

14.11. Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

15. Bullying

15.1. If bullying is suspected, the procedures set out above in relation to other forms of abuse should be followed.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in the RJCC:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.

- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Report any concerns to the CPO. (Note that bullies may bully because they, themselves, are the victims of abuse and when they are considered by Police and SSD there is always consideration of whether they are a victim themselves)
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).

Action towards the bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken (where appropriate).
- Keep a written record of action taken.

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