**Safeguarding Children and Young People Guidance Policy and Procedure**

Safeguarding is a term used in the United Kingdom and Ireland to denote measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, which allow people — especially children, young people and vulnerable adults — to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Rossendale Drum Majorettes (RDM) acknowledges its duty of care to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people (defined as those under 18) involved in activities within the club. RDM will endeavour to ensure the safety and protection of all young people involved with RDM through the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the Committee. They (the group) aim to provide advice and guidance for children, parents and individuals on safeguarding matters. If any concern(s) arise at the club (or are brought to our attention as part of group activities, outings, events etc.) then we are advised to contact the Lancashire Council Safeguarding compliance team as soon as possible.

RDM can also provide template policies and procedures and the facilitation of training courses for Club Welfare Officers and other staff/volunteers[[1]](#footnote-1).

## Policy Aims & Objectives

* To provide young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the club and help them to enjoy their experience of RDM.
* Reassure parents (and carers) that their children will receive the best care possible whilst participating in club activities and communicate policy and procedure to them through website/letter/consents.
* Support adults (volunteers, Professionals, coaches, members and visitors to the club) to understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to the Duty of Care and protection of children; and
* Provide appropriate level training and support to volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues and to fulfil their role effectively.

## Principles

* The welfare of young people is paramount.
* All young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, ethnic origin and religious beliefs have the right to protection from abuse or harm and/or the threat of abuse or harm.
* All suspicions and allegations of harm, abuse and/or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
* All staff and volunteers working in bowls have a responsibility to report concerns to their Club Safeguarding Officer.
* **Adults** – club members, volunteers and parents/guardians will be supported to understand their role and responsibility with regards to the duty of care and protection of young people by the club and the National Governing Body.
* A child is defined by law as a person under the age of 18 years.
* All children have the right to be safe.
* All children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
* The Rossendale Drum Majorettes will work with children, their parents and external organisations to safeguard the welfare of children participating in Rossendale Drum Majorettes; and
* We recognise the authority of the statutory agencies and are committed to complying with Local Safeguarding Children Board Guidelines (LSCB) and any documentation which supersedes these.

Safeguarding concerns may arise through:

* + Bullying of children by their peers or by adults.
  + Individuals exploiting their position to gain access to children.
  + Placing unrealistic performance expectations on children.
  + Lacking awareness of the needs for safeguarding; and/or
  + Poor planning.

## Responsibilities & Implementation

The Rossendale Drum Majorettes and partner organisations will seek to promote the principles of safeguarding children by:

* Reviewing their policy and procedures annually or whenever there is a major change in legislation. Guidance from OFSTED will be sought as part of the review process.
* Conducting a risk assessment of club activities with regards to safeguarding and take appropriate action to address the identified issues within suitable timescales.
* Using appropriate recruitment procedures to assess the suitability of volunteers and working with children, in line with guidance from OFSTED.
* Following National Governing Body (NGB) procedures to report concerns and allegations about the welfare of children or the behaviour of adults and ensure that all members, volunteers, parents and children are aware of these procedures.
* Directing club volunteers to appropriate safeguarding training, where this is appropriate to their role.

## Recruitment & Training

The Rossendale Drum Majorettes will endeavour to ensure that all volunteers working with children are suitable to do so and that they have all the information they require to perform their job effectively and appropriately. Each role which involves an element of responsibility with regards to children, particularly those involving the regular supervision of children; whether voluntary or paid will be assessed to establish which qualifications, checks and other requirements are necessary.

These (checks) will include the following (which can be obtained from the Director on request):

* Section Leader Form.
* A self-disclosure form.
* References from 2 people if possible.
* A signed Code of Conduct.
* A Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check on people involved in ‘regulated activity’ with children.

Details of the requirements and the qualifications and checks of individuals will be recorded by the Director/senior committee team who will also hold copies of the necessary Safeguarding and Protecting Children (SPC) certificates and OFSTED Compliance approval letters. The nominated person will possess all relevant and appropriate contact details of all volunteers and other relevant bodies.

All Volunteers will be offered access to appropriate child protection training and the RDM Committee will ensure that all volunteers who have significant contact with children attend as part of their participation on said committee. Attendance at the training will be mandatory and reviewed annually for those involved in regulated activity.

All Volunteers working with children will be asked to read and become familiar with the Rossendale Drum Majorettes Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (this document). In addition, all volunteers involved with children will be asked to read the Rossendale Drum Majorettes Code of Conduct for Adults, and sign to indicate their agreement to act in accordance with the code.

## Complaints, Concerns & Allegations

If a member, parent/carer, volunteer or external body has a concern about the welfare of a child, or the conduct of another child/young person or adult (whether they are a parent, volunteer, member, or otherwise), these concerns should be brought to the attention of the Club Committee. The person reporting the concern is not required to decide whether abuse or harm has occurred, but simply has a duty to pass information to the Chairman. Please refer to Scenarios 1 & 2 for further details (see below).

The committee member will:

* Reassure the child/young adult/adult that they have done the right thing to share the information/concern.
* Not make promises that cannot be kept, such as promising not to tell anyone else.
* Not question the child/young adult/adult or lead them in any way to disclose more information than they are comfortably able to (this may compromise any future action); and
* Record what the child has said as soon as possible on an incident report form.

All concerns will be treated in confidence, details should only be shared with those who can help with the management of the concern. Concerns will be recorded on an Incident Report Form and retained confidentially within the club within GDPR guidelines. RDM will work with OFSTED, Lancashire Safeguarding team and/or other external agencies to take appropriate action in the case of abuse or serious poor practice it should also be noted that RDM disciplinary procedures will be applied and followed where possible.

In the event of a child making a disclosure of any type of abuse or harm, the following guidance is that they do not notify the parents unless you have first sought advice from the Lancashire Safeguarding team.

There is also an NSPCC Helpline is available to discuss concerns regarding poor practice and abuse in confidence with members of the public, no referrals are made from the calls.

Those with concerns are encouraged to use this service.

### Scenario 1

What to do if you are worried about what is happening to a child outside of the Club (but the concern is identified through the child’s involvement in club):

* Concern identified about a child.
* If the child requires urgent medical attention call an ambulance and inform the hospital doctor that you have a child protection concern.
* Report your concern to the committee member who will, if necessary; refer the matter to Children’s Social Care/Police without delay.
* Make a record of everything that the child has said and /or what has been observed with dates and times, using the relevant Incident Report Form.
* If there are no committee members available, then contact with the Lancashire Council Safeguarding Team or referral of the matter directly to Children’s Social Care/Police if requires. Remember delay may place the child at further risk and/or
* Complete a report form and copy it to Children’s Social Care/Police within 48 hours.

### Scenario 2

What to do if you are worried about the behaviour of any member, parent/carer, RDM volunteer or affiliated organisations:

* Concerns identified.
* Complete the Incident Report Form.
* Report to a committee member; and/or
* If you have urgent concerns or the Welfare Officer is not available, refer immediately to Children’s Social Care/Police and copy the incident report form to them within 24 hours.

In any scenario or incident, if the child (or adult) requires immediate medical attention, call an ambulance and additionally inform the call handler/nurse/doctor there is a child protection concern.

### Scenario Outcomes

In cases of alleged ‘minor’ poor practice then the Lead Child Protection Officer is able to assist clubs in managing – their Complaints Procedure, their Disciplinary Process or dealing with no further action and how this is managed.

In cases of alleged ‘serious’ poor practice, cases of ‘poor practice with wider implications or alleged child abuse then then a ‘Case Management Group’ will assist in deciding the ‘route’ the case should take either within Rossendale Drum Majorettes and/or via external agencies. Possible outcomes could be - no case to answer, complaint resolved with agreement between parties, training/mentoring agreed, disciplinary sanction and/or more significant concerns emerge.

Possible processes involved in any/all of the above are:

* Child protection investigation
* Criminal investigation/proceedings
* Investigation under disciplinary proceedings – including possible temporary suspension of person accused.

The RDM investigation, dependent upon outcome of Children’s Social Care/Police investigation; could result in (one or more) of the possible outcomes:

* No case to answer.
* Less serious – referred to complaints procedure.
* Disciplinary hearing – sanctions; and/or
* Civil proceedings.

## Emergencies & Incidents

Parental Consent Forms will be obtained and retained by RDM for all children who are participating in events or activities, or attending events organised by the club. These forms will be treated in confidence and only shared with those who require the information they contain to perform their role effectively, with GDPR considerations in mind in relation to data owner, data processor and retention periods.

### In the event of a child requiring medical attention:

* The parents will be contacted immediately’.
* In the event of failure to contact parents, the alternative emergency contacts will be used.
* The consent form will be consulted to establish whether parents have given their consent for a club representative to act in loco parentis.
* An adult club representative will accompany the child to seek medical attention, if appropriate, ensuring that they take the consent form with them.
* A record of the action taken will be made and retained by a club representative.

### Where a parent is late in collecting their child, the following procedure will apply:

* Attempt to contact the parent/carer using the contact details on the Parental Consent Form
* Attempt to contact the first, then the second emergency contact nominated on the Consent Form
* Wait with the young person(s) at the venue with, wherever possible, other staff/volunteers or parents.
* If no one is reachable, contact the Club’s Chairman for advice.
* If all attempts to make contact fail, consideration should be given to contacting the police for their advice.

## Committee Members, Volunteers & Supervision

Volunteers should try to avoid:

* Taking the child home or to another location without consent.
* Asking the child to wait in a vehicle or the club with them alone.
* Sending the child home with another person without permission.

During practice sessions the club will endeavour to ensure that there is at least one volunteer present for every 8 children.

Parents are currently not encouraged to stay for training sessions (where adequate staffing is in place in a controlled environment) but are welcomed at competitions and other events where their children are of an age where their supervision is required due to travel/transport, alternative locations etc.

If there are young children (under 10 years of age) attending events, activities, training or playing sessions they will need be supervised at all times.

All parents/guardians to please either sit and wait in the coffee bar or drop off and come back for their young person(s) at 7.30pm and wait in the foyer.

Wherever possible adults will avoid changing uniforms at the same time as children, but parents will be made aware that with limited changing room space there will be occasions when adults and children may need to share the facilities.

Parents should be aware that if children are left at a venue unsupervised, other than to attend specific training sessions, competitions, or other organised events, the club cannot accept supervisory responsibility.

Special arrangements will be made for away trips. Parents will receive full information about arrangements for any such trip and will be required to provide their consent for their child’s participation.

## Good Practice Guidelines

Behaviour of adults and children:

Adults who work with children are placed in a position of trust in relation to children, and therefore it is important they behave appropriately and provide a strong positive role model for children, both to protect children and those working with children from false allegations of poor practice. Codes of conduct will be issued to junior members & adults working with them to promote good practice.

The Rossendale Drum Majorettes requires that all staff and volunteers working with children adhere to the standards set out in the Code of Conduct. Similarly, children are expected to follow their own code of conduct to ensure the enjoyment of all participants and assist the club in ensuring their welfare is safeguarded.

Parents should also work together with the club to ensure that the safety of all children is safeguarded. A sheet on Parental Guidance is provided to assist them in understanding how they can best assist the club.

Adults and Children performing/training together:

One of the reasons for the popularity of majorettes is that the activity is not restricted by ability, age or gender. Responsible interaction between adults and children helps bring mutual respect and understanding and will be encouraged to partake.

Club activities:

Adults should always be aware however that age related differences do exist and conduct themselves in a manner that recognises this.

Physical Contact:

Physical contact with children by volunteers should always be minimal and intended to meet the needs of the child and the activity, not the adult. That is, to develop performance technique, to protect the child from injury, to provide first aid or treat an injury. It should always take place in an open environment, and should not, as a general principle, be made gratuitously or unnecessarily.

Transport:

The club believes it is primarily the responsibility of parents/guardians to transport their child/children to and from events. It is not the responsibility of club volunteers to transport children and young people to and from events, activities, tournaments or competitions.

The club may make arrangements for transport in exceptional circumstances, such as team events. Where this is the case, the written permission of the parents of the relevant children will be sought. The drivers used will be checked for their suitability to supervise children (see Section 1 Recruitment and Training) and their insurance arrangements verified.

Photography / Videoing:

Permission will be sought from parents/guardians prior to the publication or use of any video, audio or photographic images of their child, for instance in newspapers, social media platforms, websites or for training purposes. The personal details of the child will not be used in any promotional material.

Any press/official photographers attending events will be required to seek permission from the club before taking photographs and permission of parents to use the images.

## Anti-Bullying Procedures

We believe that every effort must be made to eradicate bullying in all its forms.

Bullying can be difficult to define and can take many forms which can be categorised as:

* Physical – hitting, kicking, theft, punching, slapping, pushing which results in physical contact.
* Verbal – swearing, homophobic or racist remarks, threats, name calling, derogatory intention of abuse.
* Emotional – isolating an individual from activities or a group.

### All forms of bullying include:

* Deliberate hostility & aggression towards an individual(s)
* A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies
* An outcome which is always painful & distressing for the victim

### Bullying behaviour may also include:

* Other forms of violence
* Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
* Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation
* Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
* Unwanted physical contact or abusive or offensive comments of a sexual nature.

The Club and its Volunteers will not tolerate bullying in any of its forms during club training, competitions, events or at any other time while at the club.

We are intent that we will:

* Provide a point of contact where those being bullied can report their concerns in confidence.
* Take the problem seriously.
* Investigate any and all incidents and accusations of bullying.
* Talk to bullies and their victims separately along with their parents/guardians.
* Impose sanctions, which may include expulsion from the club for bullies.
* Inform all members of the club about the incident and action taken if appropriate.
* Keep a written record of all incidents and the action taken.

## Confidentiality

Details of all juniors will be kept on file in a folder with the Director/senior committee team and will not be shared with a third party without parent/guardian consent. Access to this information will be granted to RDM committee and safeguarding children’s bodies.

Details will be passed onto the County Organisations as requested when juniors have reached an ability level that meets the relevant county criteria.

All concerns/allegations will be dealt with confidentially by the club and information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, either internally or externally depending on the nature/seriousness of the concern/allegation.

## Useful Contact Number(s)

* Simon Creasey – RDM Chairman 07557 760170
* NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 5000.
* Lancashire Children’s Social Care Team – 0300 123 6720 (8am - 8pm) or out of hours 0300 123 6722 (8pm - 8am).
* Police – 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency situation)

## Version Control

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Author/Reviewer** | **Date** | **Comments** |
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| RDM\_SG001 | Becky Nightingale | November 2019 | Content review and version control |
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| RDM\_SG004 | **Emma Mainwaring** | **June 2024** | **Contact review and update** |
|  |  |  |  |

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis as a minimum or in line with any legislative changes.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)