

Sheffield Giants Child protection policy



Principle

To ensure the welfare and safety of children and young people is our overwhelming aim, that they should be safe and feel safe whilst they are participating in training and playing with Sheffield Giants. The legal definition of a child (Children Act 1989) is anyone under the age of 18.

Policy -

Recruitment of coaches

Coaches are largely volunteers who do not have a formal selection procedure. In order to ensure that they are safe to work with children they are asked to complete a declaration form and, after three introductory sessions, will undergo a check as to their suitability with the DBS agency.

Coach development

All coaches should complete BAFA Level 1 coaching training as soon as is reasonable. This will be paid for by the coach, and claimed back from the club. All coaches are required to have this level of qualification by the end of their first year as a coach.

Changing rooms and showers

Children and young people have the right to privacy and respect when changing or using showers. Coaches should not observe or unnecessarily occupy changing rooms other than to appropriately and sensitively supervise in an adult capacity. Photography is strictly prohibited whilst changing or being undressed. **Under general rules children and young people should not be alone with a coach, or adult.**

Coaches should not assist in dressing or undressing a child or young person unless agreed beforehand with parent and child in exceptional circumstances for example due to an injury.

Touching/hugging/fitting of equipment

Touching players should be avoided if possible, however as with any contact sport there is sometimes a need to have physical contact with the young person in a coaching capacity (for example when demonstrating blocking), in the first instance this should be done on another adult or using two players. All touching must be on parts of the body which are not private, it is never acceptable to touch bottom, genitalia or breasts. It is also appropriate to have celebratory hugs only when on the field and in public.

Children and young people may be assisted to wear and place pads on their bodies. Again this should be done by other players if possible and should be done on their head and upper bodies only, though great care should be taken with female players. Pads that are for the lower body should be placed in situ before they are worn.

General welfare – Training and games

The wellbeing of players is the first concern of all coaches. It is more important than winning or the game. Coaches should allow players regular access to water, particularly on hot days.

The concussion protocol should be followed at all times. However, the most important factor is that any player suspected of concussion should be removed from all training or games until checked by a medical professional.

Coaches should not engage in any games with players which are of physical, sexual or verbally inappropriate in any way. Coaches should avoid promoting excessive or dangerous contact in training and specific 'targeting' of opposition players is unacceptable.

No under 13s will be left alone at training or on match days. There should always be a responsible adult who is accountable for that child. This does not have to be a family member, but can be another player's parent for example, as long as this is pre-arranged and coaching staff and/or Welfare Officer is aware.

No under 16s will be allowed to make their own way home, and must be taken by an appropriate adult. If this is not pre-arranged, the child must be happy with the arrangements and a parent/carer contacted to authorise said journey. Child to be spoken to, to make sure they are comfortable with the new arrangements. Anyone under 16 and wanting to make own way home, needs parent/carer to pre-arrange with coach/manager/welfare officer beforehand.

Players should have on the appropriate clothing, which includes suitable footwear for the ground and adequate training wear. They should also have weather appropriate clothing for example, hats for sunny days, or coats if the weather is inclement, and should have access to plenty of fluids for hydration. These fluids should not be fizzy drinks and energy drinks (ie Monster or other caffeinated drinks) are discouraged. It is recognised that players may have sports style energy drinks such as Lucozade, which are suitable, alongside water.

Transport and Overnight stays

Any transport for children and young people should be done so safely, with seat belts used as appropriate. All adults are expected to ensure that safety rules are followed. Adults should not normally transport children alone, in their cars or other vehicles. However, this might sometimes be necessary, with the agreement of parents, in exceptional circumstances. When children are being 'dropped off' care should be taken for different children to be the last one leaving the transport.

Adults must not share a bedroom with a child or young person during residential stays, unless they are family members.

Coach behaviour

Coaches are responsible adults, setting examples for the children and young people engaging with the club. They should take care to challenge in a positive way, for example encouraging players to strive to improve without negative language about the child, young person or other.

Racist, sexist, misogynistic or homophobic language is not acceptable. All adults and coaches have a responsibility to act where inappropriate language or behaviour is used.

Where there is conflict or aggression during a match or training session, including aggressive language by players, coaches will adopt calming, appropriate language, when things are getting out of hand players may be removed from the field for a time to calm down.

Parental involvement

It is acknowledged that older children are able to make informed choices for themselves. However, wherever possible and in all cases of suspected safeguarding issues the club will consult and inform parents of any issues of concern.

Reporting

Any child or young person can alert their parent or carer, a coach or any trusted adult if they feel that there is behaviour with which they feel uncomfortable or is putting them at risk of harm. Any such reports will be taken seriously by the club and action will be taken to ensure the child is safe. All adults and coaches are responsible for acting to protect children by reporting any behaviour that they suspect as being a risk to a player.

Any concerns about children should be passed onto Katy Pickering as the Welfare officer as soon as possible. She can be contacted directly or by emailing welfare@sheffieldgiants.com. If the concern is about her, then please contact the club Chairperson at chair@sheffieldgiants.com

Confidentiality

All children and adults have the right to the strictest confidentiality in relation to concerns to harm. Within these rules of confidentiality, the club has responsibility to refer concerns, where there is reason to suspect a crime has been committed, or Children's Services need to be alerted due to safeguarding concerns. This includes where concerns are raised by the home life of a child or young person.