

# SAFEGUARDING



To all parents, guardians, coaches, members and supporters at Firwood Waterloo,

In view of the recent safeguarding allegations reported widely in the media concerning football coaching, we are writing to reassure you that here at Firwood Waterloo we take a very proactive approach in Safeguarding and Child Welfare/protection, and also to tell you what to do if you should ever have any concerns whatsoever.

Please be assured that safeguarding is one of our club's top priorities and the RFU Safeguarding Policy is embedded and fully implemented at Firwood Waterloo. This policy is based on four key principles (for full details go to [www.englandrugby.com/governance](http://www.englandrugby.com/governance)):

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All participants regardless of age, gender, ability or disability, race, faith, size, language or sexual identity, have the right to protection from harm
- All allegations, suspicions of harm and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately
- Everyone will work in partnership to promote the welfare, health and development of children

In cases of possible abuse this club acts swiftly, working in partnership with the Lancashire County Safeguarding Manager, the RFU safeguarding team from Twickenham and where and when necessary with police and social services, to protect an individual or individuals from harm. We have robust safeguarding procedures in place, should such a situation ever arise, the club will manage it with confidence and efficiency in collaboration with the appropriate persons/departments/agencies.

The club's safeguarding function is led by Safeguarding Officer Paul Whittaker. All our coaches are Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checked (see [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)). Safeguarding Training provided by the RFU is mandatory and is made available to all coaches to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities as positive role models as well as ensuring children's safety and wellbeing at all times. Injuries are recorded and reported at the M&J executive committee (hence our ban on blade-type studs) and you may have seen Eddie Prendergast in his Safeguarding Jacket monitoring events on Sunday mornings.

The RFU's aim is to create a culture where everyone feels confident to raise legitimate concerns without prejudice to their own position and here at Firwood Waterloo we fully support and encourage this approach. Concerns about the behaviour of coaches, officials, staff, volunteers or visitors to the club which may be harmful to a child or vulnerable adult in their care will be reported to the RFU Safeguarding Team through the Club Safeguarding Officer.

If you should ever have a concern, please report it to either or both of the following:

- Paul Whittaker, Firwood Waterloo Club Safeguarding Officer (0151 9247961)

- Carol Baker, Lancashire County Safeguarding Manager (07783 637631, [safeguarding@lancashirerugby.com](mailto:safeguarding@lancashirerugby.com))

But if you are concerned that a child is at risk of immediate serious harm, dial 999.

Additionally, the following contacts may be useful:

- RFU Safeguarding Department                      0208 831 7454/79 [safeguarding@therfu.com](mailto:safeguarding@therfu.com)
- NSPCC Child Protection In Sport Unit            <https://thecpsu.org.uk>
- Childline    0800 1111

Unpleasant as it is to say, it is fundamental to any successful Safeguarding policy that we all recognise that some people may use their position within sport and youth organisations to gain access to children or vulnerable adults win their trust and then abuse it for inappropriate or illegal purposes. We are all responsible for policing the rugby environment and ensuring that everyone within our sport is protected and remain safe. If abuse of position or contraventions against safeguarding practices occur, the reporting, investigation and sanctions will be robustly adhered to and addressed by this club, Lancashire County, RFU Governing body with the involvement of police services and local authorities/social services if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

George Moore, Chair

Paul Whittaker, Safeguarding Officer

Kevin Bookman , Mini & Junior Chair