



Ballymena Rugby Football Club

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PROCEDURES

CODES OF CONDUCT

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BALLYMENA RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY, **PROCEDURES AND CODES** **OF CONDUCT**

Ballymena Rugby Football Club Youth and Mini Sections exist to provide rugby facilities for boys and girls from the local area, and are run on a voluntary basis.

Policy Statement

The Youth and Mini 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.

This will be achieved by:

- Creating an environment in which the Participants receive the best possible training, appropriate to their age, maturity and ability.
- Raising the awareness of Child Protection issues with coaches/volunteers, parents and children.
- 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 Code of Ethics**.
- 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.
- Providing information about the aims of the Youth and Mini Sections of Ballymena RFC and what is expected from the Volunteers, Parents and Participants.
- Establishing and maintaining acceptable standards of all ethical behaviour.
- Developing the basic skills of the games of Rugby Football.
- Promoting the enjoyment of the game of Rugby Football.
- Remembering that children play primarily for fun and enjoyment. Skill-learning and enjoyment, as well as the well-being and safety of the children, must take priority over winning.

Child Protection

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.

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

This policy applies to all those involved in B.R.F.C., - coaches/volunteers, officials, parents and young people.

Awareness of the Issues

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 the issue of Child Protection of 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.

Four types of abuse are recognised:

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.

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.

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.

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).

In addition to these the Club recognises a responsibility to protect children from bullying and to have policies and procedure in place to do so (See P13).

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

Dealing with allegations and Procedures – General Guidelines for Volunteers.

The club has appointed a member, with expertise in that area, as **Children’s Officer**, 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 himself readily available to handle any inquiries of any nature, concerning the personnel, or any activities at B.R.F.C.

It is the responsibility of all Volunteers to be constantly on the look-out for **any signs/indicators of abuse**, such as: unusual behaviour, like continuous crying or being uncharacteristically withdrawn, or having visible marks like burns or bruises, etc

If a child 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:

- Arrange a time and place, as soon as possible, where the child can talk freely but confidentially. (under conditions outlined later).
- Deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent manner through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem.
- Stay calm and do not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying and take it seriously.
- Permit the child to speak without interruption, listen to everything he/she has to say, accepting what is said.
- Do not interrogate the child, but be clear what he/she has actually said.

- 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.
- Alleviate feeling of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement on the person against whom the allegation is made.
- False promises should not be made such as saying no-one else will be told.
- Explain to the child that if the complaint is of a serious nature, that it may be necessary to inform others.
- Indicate what should happen next, such as informing parents, the Club Children's Officer reporting to statutory authority etc.
- Any and all consultations with others should be entirely confidential and should not involve investigative procedures.
- Write a detailed accurate account of any discussion, or action taken, including telephone calls, regarding alleged or suspected abuse, as soon as possible after the discussion has taken place.
- Do not trivialise child abuse issues or trivialise or exaggerate what the child has told you.

Contact the Club Children's Officer immediately, in order to seek guidance in relation to the complaint. After this discussion, the Children's Officer may contact the Social Services and, if appropriate, make a direct referral. If the Children's Officer is not available, contact Social Services. [Telephone Number (028) 2565 3333]. 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. 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.

While this procedure should be followed, the Club Children's Officer may consider that for complaints of a lesser nature eg. bullying or cheating, that the matter **may be handled internally** without outside involvement. However, it must be emphasized that all cases must be thoroughly investigated and remedied, to the satisfaction of the child and parent concerned, and that appropriate action be taken.

It is important to maintain strict **confidentiality**. Personal and sensitive matters, or any alleged incident, should not be discussed with anyone except those closely involved.

Equality Statement

Ballymena Rugby Football Club 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:

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

Ballymena RFC recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help, i.e.

- 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.

To address this vulnerability, coaches will seek guidance on working with children with a disability, from external agencies, parents/guardians and the children themselves.

Conduct Code

It is essential for everyone involved to be made aware of the behavioural standards required at B.R.F.C. and what is not acceptable. On joining the Club, all participants and Volunteers will be given a written brief on the general conduct code:

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

(See Appendix 7 – The Coaches Charter)

Responsible Club Officers

(1) Director of Community Rugby:-

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

(2) Youth Convenor:-

He has responsibility for Youth and Mini rugby, is a member of the Board of Governors and reports to the Director of Community Rugby. He is responsible for the organisation and coaching of rugby football at U-18, U-16 and U-14 levels. He is a member of the Club Board of Governors.

(3) Mini Rugby Convenor:-

Has responsibility for the organisation and coaching rugby football at P4, P5, P6, P7 and Maxi levels. He is a member of the Club Board of Governors.

(4) Children's Officer:-

He will:

- Act as a resource to all members with regards to Children's issues.
- Ensure that children have a say in the running of the Club.
- Promote the values, attitudes and structures which make sport enjoyable to all participants.
- Communicate with Ulster Branch and Club Officers information relating to Children in Sport.
- Attend Club training sessions to act as a resource to children and volunteers.
- Encourage involvement of parents/guardians in Club activities.
- Report regularly to relevant Club Committees.
- Influence policy and practice within the Club to prioritise children's needs.
- Accept and act upon reports from other Volunteers.
- Report cases of child protection concerns to the Northern Health and Social Services Board, and to the relevant Statutory Authorities.

General Guidelines for Volunteers

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

- Adhere to Child Protection guidelines as set out by the **D.H.S.S.**, and adopt policies favoured by the **Sports Council for Northern Ireland**.
- Adhere to the **I.R.F.U. Code of Ethics**.
- Share information about child protection, and encourage other Volunteers to develop their training and awareness in this field.

The Club is committed to reviewing its policy, and what constitutes good practice, at regular intervals.

1. 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.

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

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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 the **Paramedics** who will be at the **ambulance**, which is always present at the Club during sessions/matches, and notify the Parent(s) of the injured child. Accidents should be fully reported in an **Accident Report Form** held in the Clubrooms.

6. 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 children.

7. 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.

8. 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. Club outings/travel:

- These should always be well organized:
- Parents should be informed by letter or e-mail, of times of departure and return.
- 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.
- Buses will only be hired from a reputable firm.

(see **Appendix 4** for detailed Guidelines)

10. For overnight stays:-

- Parents should be clearly informed of travel arrangements, times of departure and return, details of the residential accommodation being used, pocket money, etc.
- In such accommodation a Volunteer should never ask a child to his/her room, or share a room with a child.
- Volunteers should check children's rooms in pairs.
- The children should be made aware of the availability of telephones to contact home.
- Parents should be supplied with contact telephone numbers in case of any emergency.
- Parents should sign a **Consent Form (Appendix 6)**, and be asked for any relevant medical information. (see **Appendix 5** for detailed Guidelines)

11. Volunteers should never:-

- Engage in a sexually provocative manner, or indulge in horseplay which may be construed in the wrong manner.
- Allow children to use foul language unchallenged.
- Smoke in the presence of children.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a child, even in fun.
- Allow complaints or allegations made by a child pass without being recorded and passed on.

Communication

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

All Participants, Volunteers and Parents will be issued with a copy of the Ballymena RFC Child Protection Policy, which will be updated as required. All Volunteers will verify that they are familiar with this Policy by signing the Record of Awareness Form.

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

Guidelines for Volunteers for Reporting Allegations/Incidents/Concerns

- 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.
- 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.
- 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-ordinating the management of such cases also rests with the Statutory Authorities.
- It is not appropriate for individuals, Clubs or Branches to carry out internal investigations into cases where child abuse is suspected.
- 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.
- 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.
- He or she should be assured that all information will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner within the Club or Branch.

- The Official should be made aware of the general nature of any allegations made against him/her (except in the case of child sexual abuse allegations) and of any allegation being made known to the Statutory Authorities.
- The Official concerned should be afforded the opportunity to present a formal response to the allegation to senior personnel in the Club or Branch. From this point onwards the matter should only be dealt with by the Statutory Authorities.
- 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.
- Where possible, inform the parents/guardians of the child unless in doing so the child will be further endangered.

Dealing with a concern

It may be appropriate for a person to discuss concerns they have with another person in the club (e.g. Children's officer 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. It is advisable that all inquiries are made directly to the local Statutory Authorities.

The type of discussions referred to in 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.

When matters regarding the safety of children arise (except in the event of abuse) in the Club scenario, it will also be necessary for a Senior Club official to be informed of the allegations made, so that suspension of the person, against whom the allegations have been made, from activities which involve age-grade players, may be carried out until the conclusion of an investigation by the Statutory Authorities. To this end the Club has designated a senior club official to act as **Children's Officer**.

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. Communicate only on a "need to know basis"
- A copy of the completed form should be given to the respective Club Children's Officer within 24 hours.
- The Club Children's Officer will be responsible for storing any report in a safe and secure environment
- The Club Children's Officer will also be responsible for forwarding information on to the Branch designated officer for monitoring purposes and, on occasions, advice.

Important Points.

- Should you witness or receive information that leads you to believe that a serious breach of this Code has occurred, in addition to observing the Reporting Procedures defined above, you are required to bring the matter to the attention of the relevant management body of the Club. No further action is to be taken on your part, and no information is to be provided to others, save as provided below.
- If you have evidence of an illegal activity that directly relates to the Game, you are obliged to inform the Police Service of Northern Ireland as appropriate and you should notify the Branch and the I.R.F.U. of that fact.
- You are not to discuss the matter with persons not already involved except with the express permission of the investigating authorities.
- You are 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.
- Should a member of the Club make or repeat false allegations against a fellow member, then the former should be held liable.

If a complaint of concern or an allegation of **abuse by a Volunteer**, reaches the Club Children's Officer:-

- He will record and investigate the complaint.
- If it is **bad practice**, he will deal with it as a misconduct issue, take appropriate action, and inform the parent/child of the action taken.

- If it is **abuse**, he will report the complaint to the appropriate Statutory Services, the Club Children's Officer, the Club Board of Directors and the Ulster Branch (IRFU).
- If it is of concern or an allegation about **abuse by external persons**, then the Club Children's Officer will record what the child says, or what has been seen, and report the concern to the appropriate Statutory Services.

The present **Club Children's Officer** is:

**Trevor Gillen,
23 Gracefield,
Gracehill,
Ballymena.
Co. Antrim.
BT42 4RP
Tel No. (028) 2563 1324(home) 07713 326 358 (M)
e-mail: trevorgillen1@yahoo.co.uk**

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>**

**Director of Childrens' Services
Homefirst Trust Headquarters,
5 Greenmount Avenue,
Ballymena
Tel: (028) 2563 3719 or (028) 2563 3700**

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

**Training & Development Officer,
Northern Area Child Protection Committee Office,
Holywell Hospital Site,
60 Steeple Road,
Antrim.
BT41 2RJ
Tel: (028) 9448 7655
E-mail: acpc@homefirst.n-i.nhs.uk**

P.S.N.I. Care Unit
Tel: (028) 2565 3355

PSNI Child Abuse enquiry Unit
(028) 9065 0222

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Child Protection in Sport Unit: (028) 9035 5756

Bullying.

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. Coaches should challenge bullying in any form ie physical or emotional. **Bullying will not be tolerated by Ballymena R.F.C. and is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone at Ballymena, be they child, coach, volunteer or parent. Anyone found to be bullying others will be dealt with seriously both in regards to the behaviour exhibited and the reasons for the behaviour. Instances of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the Club officers.** Anyone being bullied should not keep it to him/herself. Such an incident should be reported to a Coach, the Children's Officer, a teacher or a parent, who should immediately be told exactly what is going on. The web site: <http://www.bullying.com/> was created by a schoolboy who was himself bullied and now offers help and support to kids and parents, including guidance on ways of dealing with bullying. It also contains an e-mail helpline which will answer any relevant questions.

Guidance for Anti-Bullying

For the Individual

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect for every individual's feelings and views.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.

Bullying

- Bullying will not be accepted or condoned. All forms of reported bullying will be addressed by the Club.
- Bullying can include:--
 - Physical** – assault like pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching or unwanted physical contact, damage to personal belongings etc
 - 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.
- 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.

- Everybody has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying – the child, the parent, the coach, the Club official
- If required, Ballymena RFC will establish a forum, including children, parents & coaches, to address, monitor and stop bullying.
- Ballymena RFC is committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt collective action to deal with it
- Children should be encouraged to take a role in stopping bullying in the club's age-grade squads.
- Policy and practice should be reviewed regularly in the light of changing needs and changes adopted by other agencies (e.g. schools)
- Coaches will have access to appropriately trained staff for support when dealing with bullying.

Support to the Child

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Any advice and assistance should be given by an experienced coach.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Children should be told what is being recorded, in what context and why.
- 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.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported, whether the child being bullied or the child who is bullying.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children 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.
- Those who bully will also be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions involving long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, should be avoided.

Support to the Parents

- Parents should be advised on Ballymena RFC policy and practice about bullying.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s).
- Parental advice on action will be sought and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be given.
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

Vulnerable Adults:

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. 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.

Recruitment:

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.

In recruiting volunteers/coaches, the following procedure will be carried out by the Club, for those who have completed the relevant Application Form (Appendix 9).

- Confirmation of their identity and other details.
- Find out how they think they can contribute to the development of the Club.
- Ask for references and referees.
- Potential recruits should be made aware of the Club's ethos, Child Protection Policy and Conduct Code, and running procedures at the Club, by the Mini-Rugby Convenor, the Youth Convenor or the Director of Community Rugby, who together will decide if the potential recruits are suitable.
- 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.
- All accepted recruits will be ratified by the Club's Community Rugby Directorate.
- All accepted recruits at the Club should be given a current copy of the Child Protection Policy and give a signed agreement to abide by it.
- Before commencing duties, all B.R.F.C. coaches/volunteers must be checked by completing a **P.O.C.A.V.A. Form**, which is supplied by, and then submitted to the Ulster Branch (IRFU)
- **Self-Declaration Forms (Appendix 8)** must be completed by Volunteers, before commencing their duties, and annually, by which they would indicate if they were being investigated or had been convicted of any criminal offence.
- Appointment of Volunteers/Coaches may be on the basis of their current or previous experience in either playing or coaching Rugby.

Training for Volunteers/Coaches

- 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*.

- 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 Child Protection Policy and updating it where necessary.
- Child protection training should include basic awareness of child protection issues and of the Club's Child Protection Policy and Procedures including the IRFU Code of Ethics.
- 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.
- 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.
- Training courses currently provided by Ulster Branch are:-

Coaching:

- Introduction to Rugby
- Mini- Rugby
- Foundation level
- Levels 1, 2 and 3

Refereeing:

- Associate Referees
- Schoolboy Referees
- Newcomers Course
- Levels 1, 2 and 3

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

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 B.R.F.C. and to identify any training or further support they require.

Guidelines for Good Practice and Safety Considerations

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

Ethical standards comprise such values as integrity, responsibility, competence and confidentiality. Individuals who are members of B.R.F.C. are deemed to have assented to the Child Protection policy and as such, recognise and adhere to the principles and responsibilities embodied in it.

The Child Protection policy creates a framework within which Age Grade Coaches, when engaged in coaching – in the fullest sense of the expression - should always work. It has been written as a series of guidelines rather than a set of instructions.

However, violations of the Child Protection policy may result in complaints being made to the Club, and, in which case, the Board of Directors in determining whether a conduct complained about, has brought the sport into disrepute, or amounts to a violation of the IRFU Bye-laws. This Board will then consider the Child Protection policy provisions when assessing the guilt of individuals against whom complaints have been made and/or the appropriate sanctions to apply.

Issues of Competence

(a) Coaches shall confine themselves to practice in those fields of Coaching in which they have been trained, and which are recognised by the I.R.F.U. 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.

(b) Coaches should regularly seek ways of increasing their professional development and self awareness.

(c) Coaches should welcome evaluation of their work by colleagues, and be able to account to Players, Clubs, and the I.R.F.U. and colleagues for their actions.

(d) 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.

Ballymena RFC will ensure:

- Proper supervision of children within the Club premises, with an appropriate ratio of coaches: children. This may vary depending on nature and location of activities along with ability and ages of the children.
- Use of proper, recommended equipment including.
- Sport specific guidelines
- identification markers/ cones, clearly visible
- playing /coaching surfaces, free from debris
- Use of equipment only when supervised by a coach.
- A clearly defined area of play/ in bounds, fenced and safe from vehicular traffic.
- Public Liability Insurance in place, covering all members of the Club
- Only children within same/ similar age bands will be selected for team playing/ coaching.
- A First-Aider and first-aid kit on hand in event of an accident, with accident/ incident forms to be completed for every relatively serious accident. NB All accidents must be reported to parents at collection.
- In the event of transport being required, this will be provided and supervised by coaching/ volunteers in possession of driving license and roadworthy vehicles only. Permission must be sought from parents prior to any transport being facilitated. **(See Appendix 3)**
- A safe environment for members
- Ongoing training and information for Leaders
- Implementation of policy and procedures in line with guidance from Our Duty to Care and the Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport
- Facilitation of open discussion on member protection issues

- Support to members who report accusations of abuse
- Suspected abuse information treated confidentially
- Appropriate action is taken if members breach standards of reasonable behaviour
- The establishment and maintenance of a coaching register
- The setting of standards of good practice
- The designated officer has knowledge of statutory child protection procedures and their responsibility in reporting concerns from Co-operating to Safeguard Children DHSSPS
- That parents are kept informed, therefore parents should have access to the club's policy guidelines for away trips / overnights and the use of photography and video equipment.

The implementation of good and safe working practice is the mutual benefit of the member, the local area and community as a whole.

BRFC has the right to:

- Expect all leaders to comply with its Code of Conduct
- Expect all youth members to maintain standards of reasonable behaviour
- Take appropriate action if members breach the Code of Conduct or Child Protection Policy
- Expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to
- Expect all members to report any faulty equipment to club senior official
- Expect leaders will not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually
- Take appropriate action in the event of accusations
- Acquire pre-employment checks on all coaches/volunteers
- 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.

Coaches can significantly reduce the **risk of injury** to Players by:-

- Checking the play area is safe.
- Explaining safety procedures to players.
- Using only the level of training appropriate to the age, maturity or ability of the group involved.
- Always include a warm-up and cool-down period during coaching sessions.
- Being aware of any medical problems any players may have.
- Regularly checking equipment.
- Suitably planning and organising all coaching sessions.
- Having an Emergency Procedure to follow if necessary.
- Having access to a telephone.
- Ensuring full First Aid kits are available.

In the event of an accident, the Coach should:-

- Stop the activity immediately.
- Quickly assess the extent of the injury.
- Give immediate appropriate treatment, remaining mindful of limitations listed earlier.

- If the injury is worse than trivial, contact the Paramedics and Ambulance in attendance, or emergency services.
- Make contact with the child's parents.
- Record in detail all facts surrounding the accident, including the names of witnesses.
- Fill in 3 copies of the Club Accident Form (**see Appendix 1**). Forward two copies to the Club Children's Officer, who will keep one and store the other in the Club

Guidelines on Photography and Videoing of Children

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.

B.R.F.C. 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.

- B.R.F.C. 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.
- If the child is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the child.
- Ask for the child's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport.
- Ask for parental permission to use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is representing the sport.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use
- Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to children. Follow the child protection procedures, ensuring both your sports Children's Officer and the Social Services and/or Police are informed.

B.R.F.C. has:

- Established the type of images that appropriately represent the sport for the Web and other media.
- Thought about the level of consideration given to the use of images of children in other publications, eg, the Club Newsletter or Web site.

Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at Sporting Events.

B.R.F.C. will:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- 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.
- Not allow unsupervised access to children or one to one photo sessions at events.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at a child's home.
- 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.
- Inform children and parents that if they have concerns they could report these to the organiser.
- 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.

Confidentiality statement:

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.

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.

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:

- evaluation of the Player for competitive selection purposes;
- pursuit of disciplinary action involving Players;
- pursuit of disciplinary action by the I.R.F.U. or statutory bodies involving fellow coaches in alleged breaches of the Code of Ethics.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

- the Club Children's Officer;
- where relevant, a statutory child protection agency;
- the parents of the child;
- The alleged perpetrator.

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.

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.

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 Children's Officer or a statutory agency will keep any coach/volunteer right about who should be told, when they should be told, and the kind of information which it is appropriate to share.

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:

- Club Children's Officer
- Club Membership Secretary or Honorary Secretary responsible for mailing addresses, fees, Club information etc.
- Club Mini or Youth Coaches and Rugby Development Officers for information relating to a child's ability to participate in any activity.

Data Protection

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.

To achieve this we have drawn up the following guidelines:

- The Youth and 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.
- The names and addresses of children and guardians are only gathered for the purpose of maintaining player records throughout the representative age-grade structures.
- The information requested is relevant to the needs of the IRFU database and to ensure we adhere to good child protection practices.

- 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.
- The IRFU will only keep a child's information on the database for up to 5 years.
- The database will be maintained centrally and can only be accessed by eligible IRFU staff members and the B.R.F.C. Registration officer.
- 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.

The Club will inevitably gather a great deal of personal information about its members, participants and volunteers, but must adhere to the principles laid out in the Data Protection Act (N.I.). 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:

- Evaluation for competitive selection.
- Pursuit of disciplinary action.
- Investigation of alleged breaches of the Code of Ethics by Statutory Authorities.
- Information necessary for the benefit of the safety of the greater public.

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 Age Grade Rugby “Code of Ethics”.
- IRFU Policy on Child Protection.
- 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

Availability of Information

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 child.

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.

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

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

Disclaimer:

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

Equal Opportunities Guidelines

- 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.
- All members are expected to abide by the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976, Sex Discrimination Act 1986 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Specifically Discrimination is prohibited by:
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - Victimisation of an individual
 - Harassment of an individual, by virtue of discrimination
 - 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.
- B.R.F.C. 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.
- Any member found guilty of discrimination will be instructed to desist forthwith. Since discrimination in its many forms is against the Club's policy, any members offending will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

- The Club commits itself to the disabled person whenever possible and will treat such members, in aspects of their recruitment and membership, in exactly the same manner as other members. The difficulties of their disablement permitting assistance will be given, wherever possible to ensure that disabled members are helped in gaining access. Appropriate training will be made to such members who request it.

G. K. McCullough
Honorary Secretary
Ballymena RFC

December 2007

APPENDIX 2: 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?

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

APPENDIX 3: 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 UBIRFU recommend should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- The driver like all coaches / volunteers who have access to children in our organisation should have agreed to a Protection of Children (NI) service check being carried out on them. The club should also have sight of the driver's licence to ensure there are no endorsements.
- The Parents, and a Club Official, should be informed of the person who will be transporting a child, the reasons why and how long the journey will take.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans
- The driver (and club) must ensure that they have insurance to carry others, particularly if they are in a paid position or claiming expenses.
- 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. He should try to ensure that the last two children would be left off at an agreed point i.e. one of their family homes.
- 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.
- Ensure that children are aware of their rights and they have someone to turn to or report any concerns they may have. If a culture of safety is created within the Club then the child is more likely to talk to another person if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation.
- 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.
- Late collections. These can present the club and coaches with particular difficulties. Parents/guardians will be provided with guidelines addressing the issue and outlining their responsibility and the consequences of late collections. The club should have contact numbers for

parents/guardians and if possible be provided with an alternative contact number. Parents/guardians should have a contact number for the club/coach to inform them of emergencies and possible late collections.

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

APPENDIX 4: 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

More detailed transport guidelines are available in appendix 10, but the following are some basic points:

- Ensure the driver has an appropriate and valid driving licence.
- 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. Is the driver experienced in driving a mini-bus?
- 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.

Insurance

In addition to the mini-bus / car insurance, the team manager needs to ensure that the UBIRFU or clubs 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: 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

Coach/manager

Right To:	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have support form their UBIRFU 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 medial 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)

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 away from home and possibly a different culture

APPENDIX 6: PLAYER PROFILE & 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:		Fax No:	
Passport No:		Playing position:	
D.O.B.:		Club:	
Place of Birth:		Province:	
School:			

Medical Info

Kit Info

Height:	m	cm
Weight:		kg

Sizes
(M/L/XL/2XL/3XL)

Tracksuit:	
T-shirt/polo:	
Jersey:	
Shorts:	

GP Name:	
GP Number:	
Any Medical Condition:	
Medicines required	

Family Contact Information 1

Contact Name:		Home No:	
Address:		Work No:	
		Mobile:	

Contact Information 2 (If 1st Family contact unavailable)

Contact Name:		Home No:	
Address:		Work No:	
		Mobile:	
		Fax No:	

Photographic/Video Permission

I hereby consent to Ballymena RFC or its agents photographing or videoing my involvement in the Ulster 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.

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 (Appendix 7)**
- **Clear recruitment policy which includes vetting all coaches & volunteers**
- **Guidelines for transporting children**
- **A photography policy**
- **An anti-bullying policy**
- **Disciplinary procedures**
- **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

* Parental consent is defined by the children (NI) Order 1995 Article 6 (i)

Natural mother always has parental responsibility.

Natural father gains parental responsibility;

- If married to the mother at the time of birth or subsequently marries her
- Through an agreement witnessed by solicitor or a Parental responsibility Order
- Post 15 April 2002 if the jointly register the baby's birth.

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 Code of Conduct 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? _____

What type of pain/flu medication may be given to the Child/Youth? _____

APPENDIX 7: 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. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within the club.

- All Coaches/Volunteers within the Club must agree to the following charter:
- Coaches should respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of their sport.
- Coaches should place the well being and safety of the child above the performance. They should follow all guidelines laid down by the I.R.F.U.
- Coaches should 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.
- Coaches should encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- Coaches should hold up to date and nationally recognised I.R.F.U. coaching qualifications and hold appropriate insurance cover.
- Coaches should ensure that activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity and ability of the individual.
- Coaches should 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.
- Coaches should co-operate fully with specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interests of the performer.
- Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of Rugby (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Coaches should 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
- Coaches should always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment, e.g. no secrets)
- Coaches should treat all service users equally, and with respect and dignity
- Coaches should always put the welfare of each child/young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- Coaches should maintain a safe and appropriate distance with service users (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)
- Coaches should build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in decision-making
- Coaches should make sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- Coaches should 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. Parental/carer views about manual support should always be carefully considered

- Physical contact for testing or para-medical purposes must only be done in public and should be appropriate in nature. Any doubts of a medical nature should be passed on to a suitably qualified medical person.
- Coaches should 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
- Coaches should 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.
- Coaches should 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 1:1 situations with children and young people
- Coaches should give enthusiastic and constructive feedback, encouraging achievements rather than negative criticism
- Coaches should 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
- Coaches should secure parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment
- Coaches should keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- 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
- Coaches should keep a written record of any inappropriate body contact with a child
- Coaches should immediately report any accusations made against you or your colleagues
- Coaches should challenge bullying in any form i.e. physical or emotional. Physical bullying can take the form of attacks, such as hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings. Emotional bullying may be a verbal assault, including name-calling, insults, repeat teasing, sectarian/racist assaults, or it may take more indirect forms, such as spreading malicious gossip, rumours or excluding someone from a social group. Bullying is not an accepted behaviour towards anyone at UBIRFU be they child, coach, volunteer or parent. Anyone found to be bullying others will be dealt with seriously both in regards to the behaviour exhibited and the reasons for the behaviour. (See Anti-Bullying policy for more details.)

Practices coaches /volunteers should avoid:

- Spending any time alone with children/young people away from others.
- Taking children/young people to your home.

Practices never to be sanctioned by coaches/volunteers

The following should never be sanctioned. A Coach should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room/tent/changing room/bath or shower with a child/young person
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children/young people to use foul, sexualised or discriminatory language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person, even in fun
- Reduce a child/young person to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Undertake personal care for children/young people. Ensure that a parent or carer is responsible for personal care.
- Invite or allow children to stay with me at my home, unless as part of a pre-arranged tournament hosting agreement or as a friend of my own child. But always with parents permission.

A Coach should understand that any misdemeanours or breach of this code will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the Children's Officer. Persistent breach of the code will result in dismissal from the club.

Dismissals can be appealed by the coach / volunteer with final decisions taken by the club Board of Directors.

Emergency Action/First Aid

All coaches, leaders and members should be prepared with an action plan in the event of an emergency and be aware of simple First Aid Procedures

This will include:

- Access to First Aid equipment
- Telephone contact if the participant is a minor
- Telephone contact to the Emergency Services.

APPENDIX 8: BALLYMENA RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

SELF DECLARATION FORM

CONFIDENTIAL

Part A

If you need more space to enter your details, or wish to give additional information, please use a separate sheet.

Personal Details

Surname: _____

First Name(s): _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

E-Mail: _____

Home telephone number: _____

Mobile telephone number: _____

Work telephone number: _____

Part B

- 1. Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offences or accepted any reprimands or cautions or Police warnings?**

Yes/No

If yes, please supply details of any criminal convictions:

- 2. Are you a person known to any Social Services department as being an actual or potential risk to Children or Vulnerable Adults?**

Yes/No

If yes, please supply details: _____

3. Have you ever had a disciplinary sanction relating to child or vulnerable adult abuse?

Yes/No

If yes, please supply details:

4. Have you ever been the subject of an abuse investigation or enquiry?

Yes/No

If yes, please supply details:

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 9: BALLYMENA RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Full Name: _____

Maiden Name (if applicable): _____

Current Address: _____

No. of years at this address: _____

Tel. No(s): _____

Date of Birth: _____

Previous experience/involvement in this or any other club: _____

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation? Yes /No

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the Code of Ethics and Good

Practice for Children's Sport? Yes /No

Do you agree to abide by the Rules of Ballymena RFC? _____

Have you completed Child Protection Awareness Training? Yes /No

If yes, give details: _____

Do you agree to undergo specific training on the role of: _____

Yes /No

Give the Names/Addresses/Tel No/Designation of two **referees**:

(1) _____

(2) _____

Do you agree to complete a P.O.C.A.V.A. Form and a Self-Declaration Form?

Yes /No

Signed: _____

Date: _____