



Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Racketlon

1. Introduction

Everyone who participates in Racketlon is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. The English Racketlon Association (ERA) have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people, coaches and volunteers provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

The ERA is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in sport accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of ERA and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

The policy and procedures of ERA apply to everyone, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, including coaches, volunteers and officials in clubs and counties, markers, umpires and referees, helpers on club and county trips and medical staff. Everyone has a responsibility.

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989)

1.1 Policy Statement

English Racketlon is committed to the following:

- The welfare of the child or young person is the first consideration
- All children and young people, regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, race or sexual identity have a right to protection from abuse
- The rights, dignity and worth of all young people should always be respected
- All ERA employees or members of the management board who work with children will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures
- All volunteers, staff, board members and members of English Racketlon have a responsibility and failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action
- All allegations will be taken seriously and responded to quickly and fairly in line with England Racketlon Policy and Procedures
- England Racketlon recognises the role and responsibilities of the statutory agencies safeguarding children and young people and is committed to complying with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Working in partnership with parents and carers is essential for the safeguarding and protection of young people
- Confidentiality should be upheld in line with legislation and government guidance

1.2 Responsibilities

England Racketlon is committed to the following:

- Appoint a designated person within the Management Board to manage Safeguarding and Child Protection ('The Club Welfare Officer')
- Respond to all allegations and concerns and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures when necessary
- Work in partnership with the statutory agencies as required
- Provide access to the CRB service for Board Members, Volunteers and Staff to be checked

The implementation of procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed. The policy will be reviewed every 3 years or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation.

1.4 Government Guidance and Legislation

The ERA Safeguarding Policy is based upon principles contained within U.K. and international legislation and government guidance. ERA has a legal and moral obligation and responsibility to contribute to making Racketlon a safe and child-friendly sport, our policies and procedures take into account the following:

- Every Child Matters 2003
- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Police Act 1997
- The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- "Caring for the young and vulnerable" - Home Office guidance for preventing the abuse of trust 1999
- The 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' - 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children - 2006
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - 1990
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Act 2006

2. Recruiting and Selecting Personelle with Children

To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children the following steps will be taken when recruiting:

- All staff, paid and unpaid, and volunteers will complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about the applicants past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent will be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children will be obtained.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo)
- A check will be made that the application form has been completed in full, including sections on criminal records and self disclosures
- The job requirements and responsibilities will be clarified
- Child Protection Procedures are explained

ERA requires:

- All staff and volunteers to receive advisory information outlining good/bad practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person
- All coaches will have an up to date first aid qualification
- All staff and volunteers who have access to children to undergo a CRB check:

All adults who have regular contact with young people must complete a CRB Enhanced Disclosure. If an enhanced disclosure has not been completed and cleared, adults working with young people must be supervised at all times whilst the county/club waits for the outcome of the disclosure.

Adults requiring a check include:

- All deployed members of the workforce
- Coaches
- Event Organisers

- Team Managers
- Parents taking children and young people to and from matches
- Management Committee Members
- Club/County Welfare Officers
- Referees
- Professional Staff
- Support staff including physiotherapists, fitness staff or doctors
- Adults supporting at any event
- Squash volunteers/committee members/officials of clubs

2. Codes of Conduct

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in Racketlon all staff and volunteers must operate within an accepted ethical framework such as The Coaches Code of Conduct. In addition all personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- make the experience of (your sport) fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying
- treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity
- always put the welfare of the young person first, before winning
- maintain a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given
- Involve parents/cares wherever possible, e.g. where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents, coaches etc work in pairs
- all parents and performers will be made aware when coaches use video equipment as a coaching aid.
- request written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars
- gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays
- ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff
- ensure that at away events adults should not enter a young person's room or invite young people to their rooms
- be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people

- secure written parental consent for the club to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given
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2.1 Poor Practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all Racketlon Staff and Volunteers:

- unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others
- taking young people alone in a car on journeys, however short
- taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you
- sharing a room with a young person
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
- allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves

2.2 Positions of Trust

All adults who work with children/young people are in a position of trust that has been invested in them by the parents, the sport and the child/young person. This relationship can be described as one in which the adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their position.

Adults in a position of trust must recognise that there are certain boundaries between the coach/official/volunteer and the player which must not be crossed in terms of the relationship with the young player. The relationship, in essence, is no different to that between a teacher and the young people in their care, in relation to the abuse of trust.

Adults must not encourage a physical or emotionally dependant relationship to develop between the person in a position of trust and the young person in their care.

All those within the organisation have a duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of coaches, umpires, volunteers, administrators and professional staff which may be harmful to the child/children, young people in their care, without prejudice to their own position.

3. Defining Child Abuse

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

3.1 Types of Abuse

ERA recognises the following definitions of abuse:

Physical Abuse: where adults physically hurt or injure a young person e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse. In a sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body

Emotional Abuse: the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the young person is constant criticised, given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying.

Neglect: Neglect occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse. In sport, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also the power of the coach over young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

5. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in ERA in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies both to allegations/suspicions of abuse occurring within ERA and to allegations/suspicions that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

5.3 Confidentiality

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

- The Club Welfare Officer
- The parents of the child
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services/police
- ERA Directors
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)

Implementation

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in ERA. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Declaration

On behalf of **the English Racketlon Association** we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed:

Name:

Name:

Position within [CLUB NAME]:

Position within [CLUB NAME]:

Date:

Date:
