



## **RCC Guidance on Welcoming and Safeguarding Children with Disabilities**

RCC are committed to ensuring cricket is open, and accessible, to all members of the community and they are supported to achieve their potential in any capacity whether as a player, employee, volunteer, coach or official. This principle applies regardless of, age, race, disability, ability, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation or background.

Children with disabilities should enjoy cricket in a safe environment. RCC will ensure disabled children or children with special needs and autistic spectrum disorders are welcomed into the Club. Once RCC have been informed of the child's disability the appropriate RCC officers/volunteers will discuss with each child and their parents/carers their abilities and identify what they may need some assistance with and the different arrangements that can be put in place to allow them to participate at various levels of the game.

### **Disability**

Disability has many definitions and not all disabilities are readily identifiable. While some disabilities, especially visible ones, are easy to identify, there are many which are not as obvious. Many disabled people have these less obvious disabilities including - learning difficulties, sight or hearing conditions, mental health issues, and long-term progressive impairments/illness' such as epilepsy, rheumatoid arthritis and asthma.

### **Vulnerability**

RCC is a Clubmark Club and safeguarding of all children including disabled children is a priority for the club. RCC recognise disabled children may be at increased risk of abuse and neglect including an increased risk of bullying. Disabled children may also be less likely to understand, resist and communicate their abuse.

### **Support**

To ensure a disabled child feels welcome and can participate in Club activities RCC Welfare Officers and appropriate age level Coaches will, once we have been informed of the child's disability, discuss their needs and abilities with the child and their parents/carers. The child(ren), parents and carers in many cases will be able to offer RCC practical advice on adaptations to equipment, environment and coaching practices or other arrangements that can be made to enable them to participate in cricket and enjoy their cricketing experiences. This support plan will be regularly reviewed as the child's skills develop and on any changes in the child's condition which may affect their safety in the cricketing environment.

### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is an essential aspect of protecting all RCC's children and young people, including disabled children and young people. Staff and Volunteers working with children must be vetted as per the 'ECB Guidance on Roles in Cricket that require a Vetting Check'. The Club is responsible for ensuring that this happens. In addition RCC has developed specific, ECB recommended, safeguarding policies and procedures which are available in our Key Documents folders, these include but are not limited to:

Code of Conduct for Coaches Working with Children  
Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers Working with Children

These documents underpin RCC's safeguarding principles and apply to all children and young people. These Codes recognise children and young people, including disabled children and



## RCC Guidance on Welcoming and Safeguarding Children with Disabilities

young people, may need to be touched in order to help them understand, acquire or visualise a cricket posture. It must be remembered that the guidance detailed below applies equally to all children and young people. In addition, it is a requirement of the Codes that adults working with children and young people must be appropriately dressed and professional when operating in a cricket environment and never touch a child inappropriately.

As a responsible adult they only use physical contact if its aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques
- Treat an injury
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring
- Meet the requirements of the sport

They should seek to explain the reason for the physical contact to the child i.e. reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission.

***Physical contact should always be intended to meet the child's needs NOT the adult's.***

### **Physical contact guidance for working with children and young people**

- If a child becomes injured during a junior session and the injury requires the child to be carried to a place of treatment, always seek support from another adult before moving the child. Any first aid administered should be in the presence of another adult or in open view of others.
- If the child seems uncomfortable in any way with the physical contact, stop immediately.
- If the child you are working with is visually impaired, you should tell them who you are and ask their permission before you come into physical contact with them.
- Never attempt to adjust the grip of a child when in the normal batting stance position.
- Never find yourself in a situation where you are the only adult present around children, e.g. in changing rooms, showers, or on a minibus.
- Where physical contact is for motivational or celebratory reasons, agree with the children, teachers or other appropriate adults that to praise good performance a 'High Five' or similar action will be used.
- Never help children dress e.g. to put on pads, helmets, or clothing unless they request this and genuinely require assistance.
- Never help children to put on an abdominal protector.
- Never take on one to one coaching with a child unless another adult or parent is present.
- If you need to communicate with a child for the purposes of organising junior cricket or passing on cricket information, use a parent's mobile telephone number.

If any of the following incidents take place or you observe them, you **MUST** report them to the Club Welfare Officer and make a written note of the event using the ECB Incident Reporting Form and inform parents where appropriate if:

- You accidentally hurt a child.
- A child seems distressed in any manner.
- A child acts in a sexually inappropriate manner.
- A child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

### **Responding to disclosures, suspicions and allegations**

There may be a number of reasons where an adult finds it necessary to report a concern including:

- In response to something a child has said.
- In response to something they have seen, for example observations of significant behaviour or



## RCC Guidance on Welcoming and Safeguarding Children with Disabilities

mood changes.

- In response to signs or suspicions of abuse, for example visible bruising or other injuries.
- In response to allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- In response to allegations made about a parent, carer or someone not working within cricket.
- In response to bullying.
- In response to a breach of code of conduct/poor practice.
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour.

### **Responding to a child who tells you about abuse**

You need to:

- Stay calm; do not show disgust or disbelief.
- Keep an open mind.
- Do not dismiss the concern, make assumptions or judgements.
- Listen carefully to what is said and take the child seriously. Let the child know that if what they tell you makes you at all concerned about them or someone else, you will have to pass the information on to someone who can help them.
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Be very careful not to promise that you will keep the information to yourself.
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words. Do this as soon as possible, using the RCC/ECB incident reporting form. BE AWARE that the child may use the word 'complaint' rather than allegation.
- Report the incident to the Club Welfare Officers.

### **Never**

- Approach any alleged abuser to discuss the concern.
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Take sole responsibility. Always consult someone else (the person in charge or the designated welfare officers) so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

### **Recording the incident and confidentiality**

Information passed to the ECB, children's social care, LADO and/or the police needs to be as helpful as possible, which is why it is important to make a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Use the RCC/ECB Incident Reporting Form wherever possible.

Information needs to include the following:

- Details of the child, for example, age/date of birth, address and gender.
- Details of the parent or guardian and whether they have been informed or not
- Details of the facts of the allegation or observations.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
- The child's account, if it can be given, regarding what has happened and how
- Witnesses to the incident(s).
- The name, address and date of birth of any alleged offender.
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A signature, date and time on the report.