



## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

### **Current Safeguarding Officer: Fiona Devlin**

Safeguarding of all participants in our sport. Everyone can develop valuable qualities and skills and have the right to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Safeguarding is extremely important to Edinburgh Giants. We believe that no one should ever have to experience or risk experiencing abuse, exploitation or neglect. We are committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our members, as well as taking all reasonable steps to ensure that those who come into contact with Edinburgh Giants or its programmes do not, as a result, come to any harm.

This policy relates to Edinburgh Giants Inclusive Sports Club (Edinburgh Giants) safeguarding activity in the UK. Its purpose is to:

- Protect all children and adults who engage with Edinburgh Giants.
- Make our approach to safeguarding accessible to staff, volunteers, supporters and everyone who engages with us.

All bespoke safeguarding procedures will be agreed by Edinburgh Giant's Welfare Manager.

If volunteers, beneficiaries or members of the public have complaints about Edinburgh Giants, its staff or partners that do not relate specifically to the welfare of children and adults at risk, they should follow the procedures set out in Edinburgh Giants's Feedback and Complaints Policy.

For Edinburgh Giants's staff: Compliance with these procedures is mandatory (as defined below).

For Edinburgh Giants's trustees: Board members and trustees must act at all times in the best interests of Edinburgh Giants and its beneficiaries, they are also expected to comply with these.

For partnership organisations: Edinburgh Giants has agreements in place with all partners. These require partners to provide the same, or higher, level of safeguarding for children, adults at risk and those coming into contact with the partner as those set out in these procedures. Partners must have either their own

safeguarding procedures or equivalent document in place, and must implement procedures which include substantially the same principles, expectations and responsibilities as these procedures. Otherwise, they must abide by Edinburgh Giants's safeguarding procedures as detailed in this document.

Failure to comply with the Edinburgh Giants safeguarding policy will be managed in a number of ways, depending on the nature and consequences of any incident.

In some cases, a combination of responses may be required, including:

- Local authority co-ordinated safeguarding investigation
- Police investigation
- Referral to Disclosure Scotland
- Serious incident reporting to The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) should the incident pose a significant impact to the charity
- Internal review or co-operation with an external review
- Disciplinary Action and/or termination (for staff and trustees)
- Enforcement Action in accordance with the agreed partnership arrangements (for partners) It is the responsibility of all who work with Edinburgh Giants to act if there is a cause for concern about a child or an adult at risk.

## Definitions

**Child:** means anyone under the age of 18, irrespective of the age of majority in the country where they live or were born.

**Adult at risk:** means anyone aged 18 or over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

**Safeguarding:** means actions we take to prevent harm to children and adults at risk, and actions we take to protect children and adults at risk where harm has occurred or is likely to occur without intervention.

**Edinburgh Giants Welfare Manager ('Welfare Manager'):** means the member of Edinburgh Giants staff designated as the contact person for all safeguarding issues.

We believe that:

- No one should ever experience abuse, exploitation, or neglect.
- It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk from abuse and to take action when made aware of the risk of harm.
- In line with UK legislation, Edinburgh Giants recognises that it has particular responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all:
  - children who engage in Edinburgh Giants activities, including the children of adults that use Edinburgh Giants services or attend Edinburgh Giants events.
  - all adults at risk who engage in Edinburgh Giants activities.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount, including when considering disclosure of confidential information.
- All children and adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, racial heritage, nationality, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children and adults at risk are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

The Welfare Manager will remain accountable for ensuring the safeguarding risk is managed properly. Any safeguarding issues in which the Welfare Manager is implicated or has a conflict of interest are dealt with by the Rugby Football League Safeguarding Officer.

**Safeguarding Lead Trustee:** means the trustee nominated to have oversight of Edinburgh Giants's safeguarding arrangements and liaise with the Welfare Manager. Safeguarding remains a collective responsibility of all trustees and the Safeguarding Lead Trustee is required to report back and share information with the full board of trustees as appropriate.

**Staff/ Volunteer:** means anyone who works for, or is engaged by, Edinburgh Giants (or its partner where the context requires). This can be in a paid or unpaid, full time or part time, capacity. This includes but is not exhaustive, directly employed staff, contractors, consultants and volunteers.

## Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

A safeguarding concern may arise in several ways. The following are examples of how a safeguarding concern may come to your attention:

- You may witness abuse or harm taking place;

- A child, adult at risk or other person may tell you that they have suffered abuse or harm or are fearful of suffering abuse or harm;
- You may notice behaviour which gives rise to a suspicion that a child or adult at risk has been harmed or is at risk of harm. Recognising harm or risk of harm can be complicated and it is not Edinburgh Giants's responsibility to decide whether harm has occurred.

However, it is our responsibility to look out for signs of abuse and harm and act if there are any concerns. You should therefore ensure that you are aware of the risks of abuse and harm which include:

- Physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint.
- Domestic abuse: including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse. It also covers so-called 'honour'-based violence.
- Sexual abuse: including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material, abuse of a position of trust. Overarching Safeguarding Policy UK
- Psychological or emotional abuse: including belittling, name-calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation and 'conversion' therapy.
- Bullying, harassment, cyber bullying or discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, biphobic, homophobic, transphobic abuse; abuse based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment; slurs or similar treatment
- Criminal exploitation: including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.
- Financial or material abuse: including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Modern slavery: covering slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can to pressurise, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.
- Neglect and acts of omission: including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth; ignoring medical or physical care needs.
- Self-neglect: covering a wide range of behaviour which shows that someone isn't caring for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.
- Institutional or organisational abuse: including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe practices, lack of person-centred care or treatment.
- Female genital mutilation forced marriage and other 'honour-based' violence.

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse can be a one-off incident or repeated, ongoing ill treatment. People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life.

They may be relatives, friends, neighbours, or people who are benefitting from the same Edinburgh Giants programme as the person experiencing abuse.

If you are concerned that someone is at immediate risk of harm, whether because of something you have witnessed or something you have been told, you should take steps to ensure that person is not in immediate danger (for example by contacting the emergency services).

Seek advice from the Welfare Manager, do not delay taking action to consult the Welfare Manager as that may increase the risk of harm.

Responding to disclosure of harm or risk of harm: If someone tells you that they or another person have been harmed or are at risk of harm:

- Listen carefully.
- Avoid asking detailed or leading questions, but do TRY to confirm basic information about who, when, where, what and whether they are at imminent risk of harm. Explain to them that:
- You (and Edinburgh Giants) take what they are saying seriously.
- You will need to share that information with the Welfare Manager, who will make a decision about whether the information should be shared with relevant agencies in order to protect the child or adult at risk.
- Once spoken to, Welfare Manager do-not offer to help the person further. Do not attempt to intervene directly in relation to a safeguarding concern or provide children and adults at risk with personal contact details. This risks further harm, including to yourself.

You should make it clear that you will be sharing information with the Welfare Manager, who is a trained and experienced person and will be able to take the right actions, including signposting to appropriate bodies and/or specialist organisations that are better able to help.

## **Reporting a safeguarding concern to the Welfare Manager:**

- Everyone is required to report any concerns or suspicions of harm or risk of harm as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours after being made aware of the concern.
- All concerns should be reported to the Welfare Manager, using the Safeguarding Concern Form.
- If the Welfare Manager is not available, concerns should be reported to the Deputy Welfare Manager. If the Welfare Manager is implicated or may have a conflict of interest in relation to the concern, it should be reported to the RFL.
- Otherwise, keep the matter strictly confidential and do not seek to investigate the incident or suspicion yourself, as you may cause further harm. (If you need to speak to someone about the incident the Welfare Manager will give you guidance on who is best to speak to.
- You should not discuss the matter with anyone else and must ensure that all information (including the Safeguarding Concern Form) is stored securely and in accordance with data protection law. This will be done using Google Drive or Google Form.

- The names of the Welfare Manager, Deputy Welfare Manager, can be found on the club's website.

## **What happens when you report a safeguarding concern?**

From the point at which a concern is reported, the Welfare Manager is accountable for making sure the safeguarding risk is managed properly.

The Welfare Manager will take the following steps (subject to specific advice or guidance provided by the relevant authorities):

- Confirm that the individual(s) involved are safe.
- Address any gaps in the information provided to them, being careful to only seek the information needed to make a decision about appropriate next steps.
- Where the concern relates to an adult at risk, check that their views have been sought and recorded and that they are kept informed of any actions we take in response to the safeguarding concern.
- Where we are taking action that is not in line with the adult's wishes, the Welfare Manager is accountable for making sure the person understands why we are taking that step. If the report relates to a third-party organisation, the Welfare Manager should, if it is appropriate and safe to do so, notify the safeguarding lead or other appropriate person in that organisation as soon as possible and agree joint actions.
- Where a professional disagreement arises between the person reporting the concern and the Welfare Manager, this should be raised with the Chairperson. If the disagreement remains unresolved then the incident should be reported to the RFL.

## **Disclosure and onward referral:**

Where there is evidence that abuse or harm has occurred or is at risk of occurring, the Welfare Manager will contact the relevant safeguarding authorities to disclose information. In most cases, the relevant authorities will be the Local Authority, though in some instances the appropriate authority health services.

The Welfare Manager may need to contact the police if it is deemed necessary. Decisions to report to external authorities will be fully risk assessed and anonymisation considered when necessary. Reporting will still occur even if it may harm Edinburgh Giants's reputation or give rise to litigation.

Any concerns in relation to data protection will not act as a barrier to reporting, although they will be carefully considered to ensure that the disclosure is made within the legal framework.

Decisions about whether to report concerns to external authorities must be kept under review as a concern is handled in case the provision of additional information indicates that such a decision may need to change.

Edinburgh Giants will fully cooperate with relevant authorities and provide all reasonably practicable assistance during any external authority's investigation. Staff must not do anything that may compromise the authority's investigation.

## **Disclosure of suicidal behaviour:**

**Children:** Where a child clearly expresses suicidal thoughts and intentions and/or discloses recent suicide behaviors, the Welfare Manager will be notified immediately and a safeguarding concern form will be submitted in line with our policy on recognising, recording and reporting concerns.

Where appropriate, this concern will be disclosed to the relevant authority. Wherever possible, we will do this with the consent of the child or young person and, where appropriate, their primary caregivers.

However, we will always raise a concern and disclose risk of suicide to the relevant authorities, whether or not consent is given.

**Adults:** Where an adult clearly express suicidal thoughts and intentions and/or discloses recent suicide behaviours, they will be considered an adult at risk and a safeguarding concern form will be submitted in line with our recognising, recording and reporting concerns policy for consideration of disclosure to the relevant authority.

Wherever possible, we will do this with the consent of the adult at risk, by supporting them to seek help from mental health services.

However, we will always raise a concern and disclose risk of suicide to the relevant authorities, whether or not consent is given.

## **Investigations & Actions:**

Where there is an external investigation by the Police, Edinburgh Giants will not conduct any internal investigation until such time as a charging decision is made.

However, in the case of allegations against any person involved in Edinburgh Giants, we will take steps to protect children and vulnerable adults in the interim.

This includes suspending any person involved in Edinburgh Giants from their duties where necessary.

In all other cases, having made an onward referral, the Welfare Manager will make a decision as to whether an internal investigation is needed. This may be to improve existing practices or take necessary steps in relation to poor conduct or failure to follow policy by staff or volunteers.

Edinburgh Giants will in all cases consider whether any referral ought to be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service in England or its equivalent in other UK jurisdictions under country-specific legislation.

## **Charity Commission Reporting:**

Edinburgh Giants is committed to reporting all serious incidents to the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) via their [“Raise a Concern”](#) procedure and Edinburgh Giants’s Safeguarding incident risk rating :

### **Severe Risk**

Immediate escalation to Trustee Board for consideration of reporting under Serious Incident Reporting Procedure. Incident report for Trustee Board required.

A beneficiary or other individual connected with the charity’s activities has/alleges to have suffered serious harm, for instance;

- Allegation that a trustee, staff member or volunteer has been sexually assaulted by another trustee, staff member or volunteer
- Allegation that a staff member has physically or sexually assaulted or neglected a beneficiary while under the charity’s care
- A staff computer is found to contain images of child sexual abuse
- A beneficiary or individual connected with the charity’s activities has died or been seriously harmed; a significant contributory factor is the charity’s failure to implement a relevant policy
- Edinburgh Giants failed to carry out DBS/PVG or equivalent checks which would have identified that a member of staff or trustee was disqualified in law (under safeguarding legislation) from holding that position
- Breach in safeguarding policy/procedure presents risk of legal action, and/or High Risk there is a likelihood of reputational damage and loss of trust for Edinburgh Giants.

Immediate escalation to Trustee Board for consideration of reporting under Serious Incident Reporting Procedure. Incident report for Trustee Board required.

### **High Risk**

Incident report for Safeguarding Advisory Committee required.

Threshold for Significant harm met; and/or

- Response not in line with policy and procedures; and/or
- Risk of reputational damage/loss of trust for Edinburgh Giants. Immediate escalation to Safeguarding Advisory Committee.

### **Moderate Risk**



Threshold for external referral met. Incident response appropriate. Actioned by Welfare Manager. Reported to Safeguarding Advisory Committee in line with Quarterly cycle and included in Safeguarding Metrics to the Board.

## **Low Risk**

Threshold for external referral not met. Concern documented and appropriate signposting to support services provided if necessary. Incident response appropriate. Actioned by Welfare Manager.

Any serious incident reports to the Charity Regulators must be reviewed and approved by the board of trustees in accordance with Edinburgh Giants's Serious Incident Reporting policy. We will also report incidents to other regulatory bodies and government departments or donors, where appropriate.

**Confidentiality** It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared only on the basis that it is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure. A record should be kept of what has been shared, with whom and for what purpose.

## **Responding to concerns:**

The club and Scotland Rugby League will take seriously any concerns raised about safeguarding, child protection and wellbeing. Our priority will always be the victim and any witnesses. Concerns will be responded to the club Welfare Manager. Where necessary, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

## **External contacts:**

Children1st 0800 282223/[www.children1st.org](http://www.children1st.org) Scotland's National Children's Charity  
ChildLine 0800 1111/[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) 24/7 helpline  
NSPCC 0808 800 500/[www.nspcc.co.uk](http://www.nspcc.co.uk) 24/7 helpline  
Police Scotland 101 non-emergency  
CEOP [www.ceop.police.co.uk](http://www.ceop.police.co.uk) online concerns/protection/reporting