DOHA RFC

SAFEGUARDING POLICY – COACHES, MANAGERS & VOLUNTEERS

Version: 2.1
Effective Date: 19th September 2026
Review Date: 1st June 2027

Safeguarding team

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL):

Keanu James Odendaal
📞 +974 3010 2679
✉️ DSL@doharfc.com

Deputy safeguarding Lead **(Emergency contact)**

Tim Newnham
✉️ Chairman@doharfc.com

Safeguarding committee:

Keanu Odendaal (DSL)

Tim Newnham (Club Chairman, Deputy DSL)

Ian Driscol (Safeguarding officer)

Laura Gillard (Safeguarding officer)

1. PURPOSE

Doha RFC is committed to providing a **safe, respectful, inclusive and enjoyable environment** for all children and young people.

Player welfare always comes before performance or results.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy follows **World Rugby safeguarding principles** and uses current **KCSIE guidance** as a good-practice benchmark, alongside applicable Qatar requirements.

2. WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to all adults involved with Minis & Youth rugby, including:

- Coaches and managers
- Volunteers and officials
- Committee/club management
- Medical and support staff
- Visitors and external coaches

It applies at **training, matches, tournaments, tours, camps, club events, travel and online**.

3. OUR SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS

Everyone must:

- Put children's safety and welfare first.
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Provide suitable supervision.
- Never tolerate abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment, discrimination, grooming or exploitation.
- Listen to children and take concerns seriously.
- Report concerns immediately — **you do not need proof**.
- Never investigate a safeguarding concern yourself.

4. MINIS & YOUTH SAFEGUARDING

All coaches and regular volunteers working directly with children must complete the appropriate identity, reference, safeguarding and criminal/background checks required by Doha RFC and applicable local requirements before working independently with children.

Doha RFC will aim to maintain the following minimum ratios:

- Cubs/U4: 1 adult : 6 children
- U5–U8: 1 adult : 8 children
- U9–U12: 1 adult : 10 children
- U13–U18: 1 adult : 12 children

Two responsible adults should be present wherever reasonably practicable, particularly during training, travel, tournaments, changing areas and one-to-one conversations. Ratios should be reduced where additional risks or individual needs require it.

5. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Adults must never:

- Have romantic or sexual relationships with players under 18.
- Send inappropriate or private messages to players.
- Request or send inappropriate photographs/videos.
- Meet players privately outside approved club activities.
- Show favouritism or give secret gifts.
- Create emotional dependency or inappropriate relationships.
- Use inappropriate jokes, comments, threats or behaviour.
- Ask children to keep inappropriate secrets.

Club communication should use **approved club channels** and, where appropriate, include a parent/guardian or another club representative.

6. SAFE COACHING & PHYSICAL CONTACT

Physical contact must always be:

Necessary • Appropriate • Proportionate • Age-appropriate

Contact must never be used to punish, intimidate, embarrass or humiliate a player.

Coaches should respect privacy in changing areas and **must never photograph or record children in changing rooms, toilets or other private areas.**

One-to-one conversations should take place in an **open or observable area** wherever possible.

7. DIGITAL COMMUNICATION & PHOTOGRAPHY

The same safeguarding standards apply online.

Adults must:

- Use approved Doha RFC communication channels.
- Keep communication professional.
- Follow club photography and consent requirements.
- Never request or share inappropriate content.
- Never communicate secretly with players.
- Never photograph or record in private areas.

Coaches should also be aware of risks associated with **AI-generated or manipulated images and online exploitation**.

8. BULLYING & CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Doha RFC has **zero tolerance** for:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Harassment
- Racism or discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Threats or intimidation
- Violence or abusive behaviour

Concerns involving one child harming or mistreating another must be reported to the DSL.

The welfare of **all children involved** must be considered.

9. RECOGNISING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Concerns may involve:

- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Grooming or exploitation
- Online abuse
- Bullying or harassment
- Child-on-child abuse
- Criminal exploitation
- Radicalisation or extremist influence
- Significant changes in behaviour, mood, attendance or relationships

Do not investigate. Report your concern.

10. SAFEGUARDING REPORTING & RESPONSE PROCEDURE

SEE IT → HEAR IT → RECORD IT → REPORT IT → DO NOT INVESTIGATE

Once a safeguarding concern is reported, the **Designated Safeguarding Team will take responsibility for assessing and managing the concern.**



STEP 1 – REPORT

Any coach, manager, volunteer, parent or member who has a safeguarding concern must report it **immediately** to the DSL.

DSL: Keanu James Odendaal
📞 +974 3010 2679
✉️ DSL@doharfc.com

If the concern is about the DSL, report directly to:

Chairman: Tim Newnham
✉️ chairman@doharfc.com

STEP 2 – SAFEGUARDING TEAM REVIEW

The Designated Safeguarding Team will:

- Receive and record the concern.
- Assess the information and level of risk.
- Discuss the appropriate response and next steps.
- Consider the safety and welfare of everyone involved, including the **child, coach, volunteer and/or parent**.
- Decide whether further information or action is required.

STEP 3 – TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION

The Safeguarding Team will follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures and, where necessary:

- Put immediate safety measures in place.
- Speak with the relevant people.
- Seek advice from appropriate safeguarding professionals or authorities.
- Make an external referral where required.
- Put temporary measures in place to protect those involved while the matter is assessed.

STEP 4 – RECORD & MONITOR

All actions and decisions will be recorded confidentially.

The Safeguarding Team will continue to monitor the situation and take further action if required to ensure that the **child and all relevant individuals remain safe and supported.**

IMPORTANT

The person reporting the concern should not investigate the matter themselves.

Their responsibility is to **REPORT** the concern and provide any information they have.

The **Designated Safeguarding Team will assess the situation, decide what action is appropriate and ensure the correct safeguarding steps are followed.**

If there is an immediate risk of harm, emergency services or the appropriate statutory authority should be contacted immediately.

11. CONCERNS ABOUT A COACH, VOLUNTEER OR OTHER ADULT

Any concern or allegation involving an adult working with children must be reported immediately.

Do not investigate or confront the person involved.

Where necessary, the individual may be removed from child-facing duties while the concern is assessed. This is a safeguarding measure and **does not determine guilt**.

If the concern involves the DSL, report to the Chairman.

12. LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

A concern does not have to involve abuse before it is reported.

Examples include:

- Repeated unnecessary one-to-one contact
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Favouritism
- Inappropriate jokes or comments
- Private messaging
- Repeated boundary testing

Report all concerns to the DSL.

Small concerns can form a pattern and should not be ignored.

13. CONFIDENTIALITY & RECORDS

Safeguarding information must be:

- Kept confidential.
- Shared only with those who need to know.
- Recorded accurately, factually and promptly.
- Stored securely.

Confidentiality does not mean secrecy.

Information may need to be shared to protect a child.

14. CODE OF CONDUCT

All Doha RFC coaches, managers and volunteers agree to:

- Put player welfare first.
- Treat everyone fairly and respectfully.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Provide positive coaching.
- Never bully, threaten, humiliate or discriminate.
- Use appropriate physical contact.
- Follow safeguarding procedures.
- Report concerns immediately.
- Complete required checks and training. (DRFC Safeguarding course is compulsory)
- Lead by example.

Breaches may result in removal from duties, club disciplinary action or referral to appropriate authorities.

DOHA RFC SAFEGUARDING

SEE IT. HEAR IT. REPORT IT.

Don't investigate.
Don't promise secrecy.
Don't ignore it.
Don't delay.

PLAYER WELFARE COMES FIRST.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to relevant guidance, regulations, environmental conditions, or operational requirements.

Date of Next Review - June 2027

Approved by: DRFC Safeguarding Lead

Date: 30 August 2026

SIgned by: Keanu Odendaal

Signature: 

DOHA RFC

SAFEGUARDING POLICY – COACHES, MANAGERS & VOLUNTEERS

COACH / MANAGER / VOLUNTEER DECLARATION

I confirm that I have read, understood and agreed to follow the Doha RFC Safeguarding Policy.

Name: _____

Role: _____

Team: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

DOHA RUGBY F.C.
EST. 1974