



GolfRSA Safeguarding Policy

Supplement 5: Clubs & Safeguarding

[Version: January 2024]

Safeguarding Policy

1. All GolfRSA affiliated clubs must have a safeguarding policy in place.
2. The safeguarding policy and information on safeguarding must be communicated to all golfers and staff at the club. All golfers and staff must be made aware of the procedures for reporting concerns.
3. GolfRSA, its Unions and affiliated clubs must address the following environmental factors:
 - Provide an open training environment where coaches and golfers can be observed during training at all times especially by other employees and parents/carers;
 - Ensure there is a clear policy for use of changing rooms and toilets;
 - Make a provision for first aid facilities; &
 - Compliance with the *Protection of Personal Information Act* in respect of storage of personal and sensitive information.

Safeguarding Officer(s)

4. All GolfRSA affiliated clubs must appoint a competent person(s) as their Safeguarding Officer(s). The club safeguarding officer(s) must be registered with GolfRSA and must complete approved Safeguarding Training for GolfRSA Club Safeguarding Officers.

Member Registration with Clubs

5. All GolfRSA affiliated clubs must maintain accurate records of participants in their activities including:
 - Name and address;
 - Date of birth;
 - Parent/Carer information;
 - Emergency contacts;
 - Medical details - allergies, existing conditions, including any specific actions to take;

- Information on any disability or special needs;
 - First language;
 - Medical consent;
 - Indemnity forms;
 - Consent for participation in golf;
 - Consent for photography and filming or option to object;
 - Information required for the purposes of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture annual transformation survey.
6. GolfRSA clubs should ensure that this information is collected at the earliest opportunity to enable any necessary risk assessments based on medical information and/or disability to be completed prior to participation.
 7. Parental/guardian consent forms should always be sought prior to participation of a child in golf activity at the club.
 8. The *Protection of Public Information Act* requires clubs to conduct themselves in a responsible manner when collecting, processing, storing and sharing personal information and holds them accountable should they abuse or compromise the personal information collected in any way. Clubs need to explain clearly how the personal information being collected will be used and why and with whom it may be shared.
 9. GolfRSA affiliated clubs who publish images of children must comply with the GolfRSA guidance on photography and use of imagery.

Inclusion of Parents, Guardians or Carers

10. Parents, guardians and carers should be welcomed at GolfRSA affiliated clubs to observe training sessions that their child or an adult they are providing support and care for are participating. The presence of responsible adults observing training sessions helps create a safer environment.
11. Clubs should in the case of new or potential members, encourage them to view a session and remain with their child or vulnerable adult until the child or vulnerable adult is happy to be left on their own.
12. Clubs should provide a suitable area for parents, guardians or carers to view training sessions. It may be appropriate for parents, guardians, carers and other spectators to sign in and out of the viewing area.
13. GolfRSA does not permit livestreaming of training sessions due to concerns regarding the security and management of such images of children.
14. Clubs should facilitate viewing of training sessions by parents, guardians and carers and may not restrict their ability to observe such sessions by:
 - Refusing reasonable requests to view;

- Asking parents, guardians or carers to leave without due cause;
 - Justifying the prohibition of viewing on spurious health and safety grounds.
15. The inclusion of parents, guardians and carers in creating an open training environment is much more than providing them with a viewing area. It involves creating a culture of openness between the club and parents, guardians or carers. This can include:
- Regular written and oral communication with parents, guardians or carers;
 - Providing regular feedback on a child or person with a mental disability's progress;
 - Opportunities to discuss the child or person with a mental disability's progress and training regime;
 - Opportunity to raise concerns and receive feedback on the outcome;
 - Encouraging parents, guardians and carers to become involved in the club;
 - Inviting parents, guardians and carers to attend welfare briefings prior to an away event; &
 - Encouraging parents, guardians and carers to attend events or keep in close contact with their child or adult requiring care.

Changing Room Policy (for Minors)

16. GolfRSA affiliated organisations, Unions and clubs have a duty of care to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, including the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults in changing rooms.
17. GolfRSA affiliated organisations, Unions and clubs must have in place a policy, or rules, relating to the use of changing facilities. Where the organisation or club operates at a public facility the policy for changing rooms should be developed together with the facility owner.
18. Separate changing facilities, or times, should be provided for males and females except where there are village style changing is being operated at the facility and no one should enter changing rooms whilst these are being used by members of the opposite sex.
19. Separate changing facilities should be provided for adults and children; adults should not be permitted to get changed in the same room at the same time as children.
20. Mobile phones must not be used in changing rooms.
21. Any concerns or incidents occurring in a changing facility must be reported without delay. Golfers, parents, coaches, volunteers attending the club should know how to report such concerns.
22. Where clubs are unable to provide safe changing rooms all members should be advised to arrive wearing their training attire under their clothes.

Changing Room Guidance for Parents

23. It is not recommended that supervision is provided within changing rooms, as this places both the adult and children at risk of harm or allegation. Instead, clubs may wish to place a club official outside of the doors to the changing room which enables children to call for assistance if required.
24. Additionally, parents should specifically be advised around:
 - The type of changing facilities at the venue – for example, are they separate for males and females;
 - Whether changing facilities will be accessible by members of the public using the facilities as well as club members, and if club members over 18 years of age will be accessing them at the same time as members under 18 years of age; or
 - Avoiding being in the changing rooms whilst the golfers are changing unless their child requires additional assistance. In these circumstances the parent/carer must be the same gender as the child unless there is access to a family changing room or the venue has village changing facilities.

Supervision and Support

25. Where children, persons with a mental and/or physical disability, young people or other vulnerable adults are participating in a golf activity there must always be a minimum of two unrelated responsible adults present. This ensures there is supervision in the event of an accident or incident that requires one of the adults to leave the group to accompany a golfer.
26. Individuals assigned supervisory roles should be clear of their responsibilities.
27. The ratio of those being supervised to those undertaking supervision roles should be based on a risk assessment which takes into consideration the age of the golfers, the needs of the golfers, the type of activity and where the activity is taking place.
28. GolfRSA does not impose restrictions on adults training alongside children, but clubs have a responsibility to ensure they consider the differences in the golfers' needs based not only on age but also experience and each individual's stage of development. Where clubs have adults training with children, the club has a responsibility to create a safe environment for all its participants including putting safeguards in place to protect all participants.
29. There may be circumstances where some golfers will need help with personal and intimate care such as going to the toilet, changing and washing. This need is most likely to arise for pre-school children or some golfers with mental or physical disabilities.
30. GolfRSA recommends that clubs require parents of children aged 3-4 years to remain nearby during golf activity and contactable in case their child becomes distressed or requires assistance. Parents of children under three years of age and of children who require assistance to use the toilet must remain with their child.

Children and Adults with Disabilities

31. Some children and adults with disabilities, as a result of their need for practical assistance in daily living, may be more vulnerable to abuse and the risk may be greater where there are a number of carers. This may increase the likelihood of exposure to abusive behavior and make it more difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries. It can be difficult, particularly for children and adults with a mental disability, to differentiate between different roles if carried out by the same person. This may lead to confusion and additional vulnerability.
32. Taking account of the above factors and the safeguarding concerns that can arise from coaches and others putting themselves in a position where they are alone with a child or vulnerable adult, GolfRSA views as unacceptable the routine provision of personal care by coaches. GolfRSA requires all intimate care to be carried out by someone other than the coach (except when the coach is also the parent) whose sole role in relation to the child or adult is to address their care needs.
33. In order to provide adequate support to golfers, GolfRSA advocates that either a professional carer or the golfer's parent or guardian should carry out the role of "carer."
34. Although it is acknowledged that some disabled children or adults who take part in events that require an overnight stay may require overnight support, GolfRSA considers that it is not acceptable for GolfRSA coaches, or other GolfRSA members in responsible positions, to share a room with an unrelated golfer in order to provide overnight support.
35. GolfRSA suggests that overnight support should be provided by the golfer's parents, guardians or full-time or part-time carers.
36. It is the responsibility of every GolfRSA affiliated organisation and club to consider the needs of children and adults with mental or physical disabilities; making reasonable adjustments to help provide for the inclusion of any child or adult who wishes to participate in the sport.
37. All GolfRSA affiliated organisations and clubs should work with parents, guardians and carers to ensure support is in place for those children and adults with disabilities who require assistance can access golf activity.

Late Collection of Children

38. Occasionally parents/carers may become delayed or unable to collect children from training sessions.
39. When new junior members join the club their parents should be advised who to contact if they will be delayed in collecting their child and advise them of the action to be taken, for example they would need to advise if another club member could take their child home. It is important that emergency contact details are collected for all junior members. If you are unable to contact their primary contact, emergency contact details are essential.
40. Club officers must never leave a child under 16 years of age alone, and they must have written parental permission to leave athletes over 16 years of age on their own. It is recognised that some parents will allow their child to travel to and from training sessions on their own, or with club mates, and in these situations the parent would be required to notify the club of this.

41. Club coaches and officers should avoid:

- Asking the child to wait alone with them or being left alone with any child who has not been collected;
- Taking any child home or to another location; &
- Allowing the child to leave with another club member without permission.

Missing Child Guidance

42. In the unfortunate incident where a child goes missing during club or golf activities or at events it is important to remember that most children are found within a few minutes of their disappearance. GolfRSA provides the following guidance in relation to the actions that should be taken in this occurrence:

- Ensure any other young people you are responsible for are appropriately looked after while the search is being completed for the missing child;
- Organise all available adults to fully search specified areas, particularly obvious areas of danger;
- If the child cannot be found after a good search of the immediate surroundings, contact the child's parents to advise them of the concern and reassure them that everything is being done to locate the child;
- Ensure that the area in which the child has gone missing is fully searched, including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas;
- Ensure that there is a single point of contact for all individuals searching to report back to. This individual should record all of the events that have occurred as well as creating a physical description of the young person to include approximate height, build, hair and eye colour in addition to what they were last seen wearing, where and when they were last seen;
- If the young person has not been found within 20 minutes the SAPS should be informed, even if the search has not been fully completed;
- Once you have contacted the SAPS, they will advise if further action is required before their involvement. If the SAPS act upon your report, follow their guidance and requests for progressing the search; &
- As soon as the young person is located be sure to communicate this to all individuals involved in the search.

Including Children in Decision Making

43. The South African Government ratified in 1995 the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. South Africa has enshrined children's rights in the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), the supreme law of the country that was designed to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights of all people in the country.

44. One of the four core principles of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* is the need to show respect for the views of the child. Article 12 of the Convention states: 'children have a right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and be taken seriously'.
45. Clubs should ensure that children have an opportunity to be consulted and, where appropriate, be involved in decisions that relate to their involvement in the sport, as well as within the specific area of safeguarding policy and procedures.
46. Key principles when involving children:
- The extent that a child can be involved in decision making will depend on their age and level of maturity and understanding;
 - Children and young people's involvement and opinions must be acknowledged and appreciated;
 - Children should be treated honestly. Their expectations need to be managed and boundaries that may limit their involvement explained;
 - Children should be provided with timely feedback about how their involvement has shaped or influenced a policy or approach;
 - All children should be given the opportunity to be involved irrespective of race, religion, culture, disability, age, ethnic origin, language or the area in which they live;
 - Children should always be provided with age-appropriate information to help them understand;
 - Information for children should be clear and accessible and in appropriate language and style of communication;
 - Children and young people should be supported to enable them to make a positive and effective contribution, e.g., by the Safeguarding Officer.
47. Some ideas on involving children and young people include:
- Establishing a youth forum to seek the views of children in the club;
 - Identifying a young person's representative to communicate the views in formal settings such as Club Committee Meetings;
 - Involving children in helping develop literature, posters and website, information on child safeguarding issues;
 - Carrying out questionnaire-based surveys to seek views and comments from children;
 - Holding meetings with children when considering changes to policies and gathering their views.

