



The Midlands Rugby Union Referees Society has put this guidance together to assist Society referees and coaches in understanding good and bad practices that may be encountered whilst carrying out officiating duties.

## **SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE FOR REFEREES**

### **1. Good Practices**

- All referees should conduct themselves in a professional manner whilst fulfilling their duties as a referee.
- All referees should treat all players equally, with respect, dignity, and fairness.
- All team chats and stud checks should be conducted outside.
- All referees should ensure that the clarification of suitable clothing for women's rugby should be done in conjunction with the coaches.
- All players should be told that visible piercings must, if possible, be removed rather than simply covered up.

### **2. Unacceptable Practices**

- Referees must not swear or use discriminatory language when dealing with players, coaches, or spectators.
- Referees must not make sexually suggestive comments when dealing with players, coaches, or spectators.
- Referees should not – wherever possible - use the same changing and shower facilities as adult teams of their own sex and should not use those facilities if they are officiating games involving members of the opposite sex or youth rugby matches.
- Referees should not tolerate swearing or discriminatory language from players during matches involving children and young adults.
- Referees must not allow players to continue playing if there are doubts about their fitness to play. Remember – If in doubt, Sit them out.
- Referees must not, when refereeing children and young adults, overtly criticise any player or players or use language that may humiliate them.



## **SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE FOR REFEREE COACHES**

### **3. Good Practices**

- Coaches should treat all young referees equally, with respect, dignity, and fairness.
- Coaches should build balanced rugby related relationships based on mutual trust.
- Coaches are encouraged to include the young referee in the decision-making process.
- Coaches should always work in an open environment, wherever possible. Avoid private or unobserved situations.
- Coaches by definition, should be an excellent role model, including not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of your younger referees.
- Coaches should give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Coaches are encouraged to recognise the developmental needs and capacity of the young referee.
- Coaches should avoid placing excessive goals on the young referee, pushing them against their will and putting undue pressure on them.

### **4. Unacceptable Practices**

**Referee Coaches should not at any time, whilst in the company of referees:**

- Engage in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Engage in rough or physical contact.
- Form intimate emotional, physical, or sexual relationships with your referees.
- Allow or engage in touching a young referee.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young referee, even in fun.
- Reduce a young referee to tears as a form of control.