SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHANGING ROOMS
TIVERTON RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Document owner	Club Safeguarding Officer
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Applies to	Mini, youth, Colts/U18, adult teams involving 17-year-olds, coaches, managers, volunteers and visitors

The RFU Safeguarding Policy States that **'Adults and children must never use the same changing or washroom facilities at a venue to shower or change at the same time'.** It is recognised that:

- Using changing rooms and washroom facilities can be an uncomfortable experience for some children and can make them feel vulnerable
- Getting changed with others can cause anxiety for some children and adults
- Staff and volunteers can feel unsure about changing supervision and how to ensure that all children and adults are safe

Supervision

When children are too young to get changed on their own, clubs should encourage those children to come to rugby already changed.

If children need supervising in changing rooms, or coaches or managers need to carry out a range of tasks in that environment, this must involve two individuals cleared to work in regulated activity and of the same sex as the children.

In most circumstances, if supervision is required, it should be sufficient for these adults to be within earshot of the changing rooms, ideally, just outside the door to enable support, while maintaining the children's privacy.

Adults must only enter children's changing rooms by themselves when absolutely necessary due to poor behaviour, injury or illness, or in an

emergency and when waiting for another adult could result in harm to a child.

17 Years Olds in the Adult Game

When 17-year-old children are playing in the adult game, they should be offered separate changing and shower facilities and should not be made to shower with adults if they are not comfortable doing so. No pressure should be placed on children who feel uncomfortable changing or showering with others. If this is the case they should be allowed to shower and change at home, or if possible, use the facilities after everyone else.

Mixed Groups

For all mixed-sex activities, separate changing and washroom facilities for each sex will be available.

For 17- and 18-year-olds playing together in the Colts, there is no requirement to have separate changing facilities as players are part of the same peer group.

Facilities

Where clubs have limited access to facilities, and the same changing and washroom facilities must be used by adults and children on the same day, then a clear timetable should be established. No pressure should be placed on the children who feel uncomfortable changing or showering with others; if this is the case, they should be allowed to change and shower at home.

Photography and videography in the changing rooms

The use of mobile phones and/or photographic equipment should be always prohibited within the changing room and washroom facilities. Clubs should ensure all children are aware of this rule and the reason for it. If team photos are being taken, they should be done outside the changing rooms, with everyone appropriately dressed.

Best Practice

As we have recognised, changing, and using the changing and washroom facilities can be daunting for some children and adults. To help reduce any anxiety for them, we recommend that you:

- Consider encouraging children and adults to come to matches or training already changed, while having suitable clothing to travel

back from training in, such as tracksuits
• Consider whether the use of cubicles is possible for children or adults with added anxiety or worries
• Be sensitive, and if a child or adult tells you they feel uncomfortable changing, allow them to do this at home, or when the other children have left
• Involve the child's parents/guardians if they have any additional needs
• Always check ahead of departure to any away venue what the changing facilities will be, and communicate any important information, such as the lack of accessible facilities, to players and parents
• Consider the needs of different sexes

Where a disability requires significant support from a parent or carer, the child concerned, and their parents/guardians should decide how they should be assisted to change or shower. Before any assistance is offered by another person, appropriate consent should be given by a parent/guardian and the child or adult at risk themselves if they are of sufficient maturity/capacity to consent.

Young Match Officials

Young match officials should be given separate changing and shower facilities to players, regardless of age. Where the club only have access to one changing room, the young match official should be offered the chance to use the changing and washroom facilities either before or after it has been used by the players.

Clubs should acknowledge that the young match official is a young person who is about to officiate. It would not be appropriate for an official to change in the same room as the players, therefore, the young match official should not be expected to.