



HILLS ROAD SPORTS & TENNIS CENTRE

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Hills Road Sports & Tennis Centre (HRSTC) is a public, mixed-use community facility used by Hills Road students and members of the public. HRSTC has a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of everyone who uses our facility and is committed to sustaining a safe organisational culture. HRSTC also has a specific duty of care to protect children (under 18s) from abuse, harm and exploitation, and is committed to responding effectively if child protection concerns arise.

Children interact with HRSTC in a range of ways. They may attend clubs and organisations that hire our facilities, use our sports areas recreationally, or take part in events and activities held on site. Whenever children come into contact with us, we want them to be safe and to enjoy their time here. We are committed to protecting all children who use our facilities so they can develop and thrive in a safe environment.

Everyone has a responsibility to recognise child protection concerns, however they may be encountered. This includes concerns where risk to children may arise from family members, members of the public, or from the behaviour of colleagues, volunteers, managers, coaches or others involved in the delivery of activities at HRSTC.

This policy sets out how HRSTC will respond to child protection concerns and outlines the responsibilities of staff, volunteers, hirers and visitors. This policy should be read alongside the HRSTC Safeguarding Policy (the overarching safeguarding framework for our public, mixed-use environment) and the College Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy for College-led activity. It also links to the STC Safeguarding Checklist & Declaration (for hirers), Changing Room Policy, Visitor Procedures, and event-specific safeguarding plans.

Scope

This policy applies to all HRSTC colleagues (paid/unpaid), contractors, hirers, coaches, volunteers, visitors and members of the public whenever activities involve under-18s on HRSTC premises or in connection with HRSTC-booked events.

Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Early identification and timely action help prevent harm; concerns must be acted on immediately and shared appropriately.

- Children's experiences in mixed-use, leisure and sports environments require clear supervision expectations and safe systems of work.

Definitions

- **Child:** anyone under 18.
- **Child protection:** action to protect a child who is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- **Abuse:** physical, emotional, sexual, neglect; includes child-on-child abuse and exploitation (CSE/CCE).

Roles and responsibilities

- All adults working in or using HRSTC must remain vigilant and report concerns immediately.
- The Sports Centre Manager (Welfare Officer) receives concerns, liaises with the College Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and ensures referrals to Children's Social Care, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), or the Police where required.
- Hirers/clubs/coaches are responsible for meeting the child-protection requirements set out in the STC Safeguarding Checklist & Declaration (including supervision, safer recruitment/DBS and activity-specific risk assessment).
- Safer recruitment, training, whistleblowing and codes of conduct are set out in the HRSFC Safeguarding Policy and College policies for College-led activity.

Recognising and responding to concerns

If a child is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress: call 999, then alert the Duty Officer/Centre Manager.

If a child discloses or you suspect abuse:

- Listen and remain calm; do not promise confidentiality; avoid leading questions; reassure that they have done the right thing.
- Record facts promptly (time/date, who was present, exact words where possible).
- Report immediately to the Duty Officer/Centre Manager (Welfare Officer), who will contact the College DSL and agree next steps, including statutory referrals.
- Do not investigate yourself.

Allegations about adults (including visiting coaches and hirers)

Any concern or allegation about the conduct of a member of staff, volunteer, coach, contractor or hirer must be reported without delay to the Centre Manager (Welfare Officer) and the College DSL. The College DSL will consult the LADO and statutory procedures will be followed, including consideration of harm threshold, immediate safety planning and support for children involved.

Supervision and our mixed-use environment

HRSTC does not act in loco parentis unless an activity is delivered by HRSTC/College staff. Supervision responsibilities and ratios depend on who leads the activity (College-led, hirer-led or private use). Risk assessments must address supervision levels, sign-in/out and late collection procedures for under-18s. Private student or public access does not remove the expectation that children are safeguarded and that concerns are reported via HRSTC routes.

Safer working practice with children

Adults working with children at HRSTC must: treat children with dignity and respect; keep interactions open, observable and justifiable; maintain professional boundaries; avoid 1-to-1 situations that cannot be made observable; and follow venue-specific instructions from Duty Officers regarding rooming, vantage points and visibility.

Changing rooms, privacy and devices

When under-18s are present, changing/toilet areas must be risk-assessed and supervised appropriately; no photography, filming or device use is permitted in changing areas; any necessary chaperoning must follow safer-working guidance; and reasonable adjustments should support dignity and inclusion. See the Changing Room Policy and Visitor Procedures for the full requirements.

Photography, filming and social media (children)

Event organisers must set out clear permissions and consent arrangements for images of children, communicate no-photo zones, control accredited photography, and manage image storage/sharing securely. Personal social media contact between staff/volunteers and children is discouraged and must follow organisational codes of conduct.

Online safety in the facility context

Where HRSTC provides Wi-Fi or devices, acceptable-use standards apply; concerns arising online (including harmful content or contact) are safeguarding issues and must be addressed through the same child protection routes. Education settings are expected to maintain appropriate filtering/monitoring standards; external providers should have proportionate controls for their sessions.

External organisations working with under-18s (hirers, clubs, coaches)

Before activities with children begin, hirers must provide child-protection documentation, confirm safer recruitment/DBS and safeguarding training, and submit an activity-specific risk assessment covering supervision, arrival/departure and first aid. HRSTC may suspend or terminate hire where safeguarding concerns arise or documentation is inadequate.

Registers, consent and unaccompanied children

Providers leading children's sessions must maintain registers and parental consent/emergency details, and have a clear position on unaccompanied children appropriate to the activity and venue. Front-of-house staff should know how to locate the session lead promptly if concerns arise.

Events and tournaments involving children

Event plans should name a welfare/safeguarding lead, identify a visible welfare point, define a lost child procedure, and ensure incident logging and escalation routes are in place throughout.

Information sharing and record-keeping

Child-protection records are handled securely, retained in line with data-protection and College schedules, and shared on a need-to-know basis to safeguard the child. Immediate protection and timely referrals take precedence over confidentiality where a child is at risk.

Training and competence

All HRSTC colleagues must complete safeguarding/child-protection training commensurate with their role and refresh it regularly. Hirers must ensure their staff and volunteers receive appropriate training and understand this policy and local reporting routes.

Review and learning

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier following changes to guidance, incidents, or learning from case reviews. HRSTC promotes a culture of continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

Key Contacts

Natalie Moss

Centre Manager & Welfare Officer

nmoss@hillsroad.ac.uk

Tim Lomas

Vice Principal – Student Progression and Support

Designated Safeguarding Lead

tlomas@hillsroad.ac.uk

Signed: 

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