

## ***Child Protection Policy***

### **INTRODUCTION**

As volunteers or employees we will all come into contact with young people who are vulnerable to abuse. This abuse may occur within the sport or in other environments, and perpetrators could include parents, carers, professionals, fellow volunteers, or other young people.

The organisation has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in our activities from harm and will aim to fulfil this duty by the adherence of all clubs to the policies and procedures detailed within this document.

The abuse of young people will undoubtedly provoke strong emotions for many who find themselves involved in such a case. It is important to recognise and disclose these feelings. The organisation is committed to the protection of young people who take part in the sport and to supporting club personnel to protect young people at all times.

The organisation will support anyone who reports, in good faith, any concern for the welfare of a young person.

Where an allegation is made against a member of club personnel, it may be in the best interests of all parties to suspend that individual from involvement with the sport whilst investigations take place. Irrespective of the findings of any Police or Social Services investigation, the organisation Committee will consider all cases individually any may still decide that it is in the best interests of the sport that the individual is not reinstated.

Definitions: For the purposes of this document the term 'young person/people' will be used to refer to participants of our activities who are aged under 18. The term 'parent/carer' will be used to represent anyone who has caring responsibilities for the child. The term 'club personnel' will refer to volunteers, staff, and coaches working with young people.

### **CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE**

Abuse is typically described by the use of four categories: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect. It is important to remember, however, that these types of abuse are not mutually exclusive, and also that the examples given are not exhaustive.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a young person's physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the impairment of their health or development. It can include the failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect them from danger or harm, or failure to access appropriate medical care.

**Sexual harm:** Forcing, enticing or inciting a young person to take part in any sexual activity, whether or not this involves direct sexual contact. This could include direct sexual activity, but also acts such as showing pornographic material to children.

**Physical harm:** May include acts such as hitting, slapping, burning, shaking or suffocating the victim. It can also involve a parent fabricating or inducing illness in a young person. Forcing a young person in sport to train beyond their capabilities could also constitute physical harm.

**Emotional Harm:** Can include causing a young person to feel worthless, unloved, afraid or important only if they meet another person's needs. It can involve over-protection, prevention from normal social interaction, or exposure to the ill-treatment of others. Within sport emotional harm may occur where the expectations of parents or coaches are unrealistic and the young person is consistently unable to meet them.

## **INDICATORS OF ABUSE**

The indicators detailed here are to assist with the assessment of a child, and the decision as to whether to take further action arising from any concerns. The presence of one or more does not constitute proof that abuse is occurring and must be considered in the context of the child's social and medical background.

**Physical harm:**

Most children will suffer cuts and bruises are part of their normal life, and injuries must be viewed in the wider context of the child's medical and social history, stage of development, and the explanation given for the injury. Most accidental bruises will be seen on the 'bony' parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and will usually be on the front of the body. Injuries to the 'soft' parts of the body, such as cheeks, abdomen, buttocks, back and thighs are less likely to be accidental

Signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks, or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises in clusters, particularly on the upper arm or outside of the thigh
- Burns, including cigarette burns and scalds
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones.

Changes in behaviour which may indicate physical abuse include:

- Fear of parents being asked for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or temper outbursts
- Reluctance to be touched or approached
- Reluctance to get changed in sight of others
- Depression or withdrawn presentation
- Running away from home.

Changes in behaviour indicative of emotional abuse may include:

- Neurotic behaviour, e.g. hair twisting, rocking etc.
- Inability to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorder
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached about their behaviour.
- Developmental delay.

Sexual harm:

- Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:
- Pain, itching, bruising, bleeding, discharge or infection in genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy
- Discomfort when walking or sitting
- Stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which might be indicative of sexual abuse could include:

- Sudden and unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group.
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge inconsistent with age or developmental level
- Sexualised behaviour, language or drawings
- Self harm or eating disorders
- Bedwetting
- Substance misuse
- Unexplained source of money

Physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, theft of food from other children
- Always being dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being always underweight
- Weather / season/ activity inappropriate clothing

Changes in behaviour which might be indicative of neglect could include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Having few friends / reluctance to invite friends to the home
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Young people with disabilities can be at increased risk of becoming victims of abuse for a number of reasons, including; the potential for an increased number of people being involved in their personal care; that they may have communication difficulties which make it more difficult for them to disclose what is happening to them; that their disability might be used as an explanation for injuries, frequent absence through illness, changes in behaviour etc.

## **GOOD PRACTICE WITHIN SPORTING ACTIVITIES**

It is the responsibility of every club to ensure that all club personnel have been appropriately checked through the Criminal Records Bureau and that this is updated at relevant intervals. Each club should designate a Child Protection Officer who will take responsibility for records checks, induction and training of club personnel, and advice and recording of incidents, concerns and reports.

Whilst it is recognised that at some times players and club personnel may be alone or in close physical contact, adults are advised to take all possible steps to avoid situations which may give rise to suspicions or allegations. This will generally involve working in pairs wherever possible, and ensuring that parents/carers are present to undertake any personal care (such as dressing or going to the toilet) that the young person needs. Parents will ideally remain present throughout all activities. If parents are not to be present, full emergency contact details should be obtained, medical details of the young person should be on file, and the parent should have signed a consent form for a named, CRB-checked club official to be responsible for the child. All mixed gender activities should be attended by mixed gender club officials. At no time should adults and children share changing or showering facilities during organised activities.

Club personnel should ensure that their behaviour sets a good example to young people and that they treat all participants equally and with respect and dignity. The welfare of the young person should always be prioritised above sporting success. Feedback given to young people should always be constructive, rather than negative.

Photographing or filming of participants should be carried out in line with the policy operated by the home venue. Clubs should seek written consent of parents before any images of young people are published. It is known that some individuals will use sporting events or venues in order to take photographs or footage of young people and all personnel should be vigilant in this respect and report any concerns to venue staff.

## **YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN SENIOR TRAINING AND COMPETITION**

It is recognised by the organisation that in order to develop future GB players it will sometimes be appropriate for junior players to participate in senior training and competition. Where this takes place the following principles should be applied:

- Coaches should take steps to ensure that the young person has reached a level of skill and maturity which enables them to safely participate at senior level.
- Adult participants must set a positive example to younger team members, ensuring that they are not exposed to inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Young people must be accompanied by parents at all times or otherwise supervised at all times by a person who has a full CRB clearance.

The organisation will, in the future, develop an assessment process to guide selection which will become part of this guidance.

## **RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS**

All club personnel should be required to complete an application form which will include their current contact details, recent addresses, other identities and a self-disclosure about any criminal record. Arrangements should be made to obtain information from the Criminal Records Bureau.

New club personnel should receive induction in which they are made aware of the organisation and club Codes of Conduct and Child Protection Policies and Procedure and any training needs are identified.

## **HOW TO DEAL WITH SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

If a child is in immediate danger any disclosure should be reported to the Police and Social Services.

Any disclosure of abuse made by a young person should be reported to the club's Child Protection Officer and to the relevant Social Services Department either immediately in the event of any current danger, or within 24 hours if the disclosure is of something which has taken place in the past but is not ongoing.

Each club should have a designated Child Protection Officer who can be contacted to discuss any concerns which are not linked to a disclosure. A decision can then be taken on whether the suspicion should be further reported to Social Services or Police.

All reports made to Social Services or Police and any allegations concerning misconduct by club personnel should be reported to the organisation Child Protection Officer.

Club personnel may feel uncomfortable about reporting concerns, fearful of causing dispute with parents/carers, or concerned that the child may be taken into care. These concerns must always be recognised as reasonable but are not reasons to withhold information from the relevant authorities or for delay in reporting concerns.

If the suspicion arises from concerns about the young person's appearance or behaviour it may be appropriate to make enquiries with the parent or carer and then to make a further judgement based on any explanation which is offered.

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times, and information kept secure and disseminated only to those with a need to know.

## **WHAT TO DO IF ABUSE IS DISCLOSED**

- Remain calm
- Don't make promises to keep the information secret or in confidence. The young person must be aware that you will have to pass the information on.
- Reassure the young person that they have done the right thing in making the disclosure.
- Record what is said, but do not probe for further details. This could jeopardise any future investigation and/or prosecution of the perpetrator. Transfer the information to the organisation Incident Reporting Form as soon as possible, and pass this to the club's Child Protection Officer.
- Inform the young person of what you will do next and who else will be informed.
- Contact Police / Social Services immediately if the child is in ongoing danger. Contact the Child Protection Officer and make a report within 24 hours if there is no ongoing danger.
- Under no circumstances should the alleged abuser be challenged or informed of the disclosure. This could place the young person in further danger.

## ***Equity Statement***

The North West Winter Sports Club will endeavour to be accessible to all sections of the community. All people involved in the programmes should commit themselves to treat everyone with respect, irrespective of ability, gender, ethnicity, disability, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, social class or age. We will strive to identify and eliminate practices that prevent access to sport, or make anyone feel uncomfortable whilst participating. Discrimination or any behaviour against any individual will lead to exclusion from the programme.

As well as stimulating participation by under-represented groups, it is clearly understood that the organisation must continue to encourage increased participation by those parts of society which are already well represented. It will encourage all persons to take part in sport at the most appropriate level for them, and will ensure that no-one working for organisation takes any action which would discourage any individuals from achieving their maximum potential through sport and physical activity.

In order to ensure equality of access and adherence to the above statement the organisation will:

- Use facilities that are accessible to everyone.
- Provide information in ways that are accessible to everyone, including publications of all materials where practical or reasonable to do so. Where necessary provide advocates and support mechanisms to ensure effective communication and dissemination of information.
- Regularly consult representative organisations about the service we are, or should be offering.
- Promote understanding and adherence to the Statement by all persons involved in the programmes.
- Provide appropriate training for all necessary persons in order to implement policy.
- Ensure equipment provided for use is accessible and fit for purpose for all.
- Actively encourage the use of all relevant policies affecting equity, including host facilities, equal opportunities policies and Employment Equality Policy Statement with a particular focus on promoting and supporting the Equality Standard.
- Ensure that equity procedures of all the members of the organisation are shared/endorsed by key partner organisations.
- Actively encourage/promote disability guidelines (DDA 2004).
- Liase with Women's Sport Foundation (WSF), Sporting Equals (CRE&SE) and English Federation Disability Sport (EFDS) and Sports Coach UK (SCUK) to further encourage good practice relating to equity and to follow their guidelines.



## ***Code of practice for club officials and volunteers***

The essence of good ethical conduct and practice is summarised below.

All volunteers must:

- Consider the well-being and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part.
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play).
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- Follow all guidelines laid down by the National Governing Body and the club.
- Hold appropriate valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.
- Encourage participants to value their performances and not just results.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.





### ***Guidelines for dealing with an incident/accident***

- Stay calm but act swiftly and observe the situation. Is there danger of further injuries?
- Listen to what the injured person is saying.
- Alert the first-aider who should take appropriate action for minor injuries.
- In the event of an injury requiring specialist treatment, call the emergency services.
- Deal with the rest of the group and ensure that they are adequately supervised.
- Do not move someone with major injuries. Wait for the emergency medics.
- Contact the injured person's parent/carer.
- Complete an incident/accident report form



***North West Winter Sports Club: Incident/accident Report Form***

Name of person in charge of session/competition:

Site where incident/accident took place:

Date of incident/accident:

Name of injured person:

Address of injured person:

Nature of incident/injury and extent of injury:

Give details of how and precisely where the incident took place. Describe what activity was taking place, for example training/game/getting changed.



Give full details of action taken during any first aid treatment and the name(s) of first-aider(s).

Were any of the following contacted?

- ✓ Parents/carers      Yes       No
- ✓ Police              Yes       No
- ✓ Ambulance        Yes       No

What happened to the injured person following the incident/accident? E.g., carried on with session, went home, went to hospital etc.

All of the above facts are a true record of the accident/incident

Signed:

Date:

Name:

In the event of an accident occurring through insufficient training or faulty equipment/facilities, follow up action to include completion of risk assessment form



## **North West Winter Sports Club: Risk Assessment Form**

Venue:

Name and position of person doing check:

Date of check:

### **Playing/training area**

Check that the area and surroundings are safe and free from obstacles.

Is the area fit and appropriate for activity? (e.g. check floor, roof leaks, lighting, heating, security and welfare arrangements). Yes  No

(If no, please outline the hazard, who may be at risk and action taken, if any.)

### **Equipment**

Check that it is fit and sound for activity and suitable for age group/ability.

Is the equipment safe and appropriate for activity?

(e.g. check there is no equipment left from other activities or

obstructions left in the sporting area. Yes  No

(If no, please outline unsafe equipment, who may be at risk and action taken, if any.)

### **Participants**

Check that the attendance register is up-to-date with medical information and contact details.

Check that performers are appropriately attired for the activity. Is/are the register(s) in order? Yes  No

(If no, please outline current state and action taken, if any.)



Are performers appropriately attired and safe for activity? Yes  No  (If no, please outline unsafe equipment/attire and action taken, if any.)

## Emergency points

Check that emergency vehicles can access facilities, and that a working telephone is available with access to emergency numbers.

Are emergency access points checked and operational? Yes  No

(If no, please outline the issues and action taken, if any.)

Is a working telephone available? Yes  No

(If no, please outline the issues and action taken, if any.)

## Safety information

Check that evacuation procedures are published and posted somewhere for all to see. Ensure that volunteers and staff have access to information relating to health and safety.

Are emergency procedures published and accessible to those with responsibility for sessions in the club? Yes  No

(If no, please outline what information is missing and action taken, if any.)

Does the club need to take any further action? (If yes, please specify.)

Signed:

Date:

Name:





***North West Winter Sports Club:  
Code of practice for Parents/Carers***

As the parent/carer of a child participating in a North West Winter Sports Club Activity you agree to undertake the following;

- Encourage your child to learn the rules and play within them.
- Discourage unfair play and arguing with officials.
- Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results.
- Never force your child to take part in sport.
- Set a good example by recognising fair play and applauding good performances of all.
- Never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes.
- Publicly accept officials' judgements.
- Support your child's involvement and help them to enjoy their sport.
- Use correct and proper language at all times.
- Encourage and guide performers to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.



***North West Winter Sports Club:  
Volunteer Agreement Form***

NAME OF VOLUNTEER ..... (coach/team manager/official)

All coaches/team managers/officials working with NWWSC are encouraged to work to high standards and adopt recognised best practice where possible. In addition to their own standards of practice, all club coaches/team managers/officials should be aware of and adopt NWWSC club's own:

- Codes of practice for coaches/team managers/officials.
- Child protection policy and procedures.
- Equity and safety policy statement and guidelines.

The club will ensure that its club coaches/team managers/officials have a copy of each policy and guidance note that is relevant to their work. The club will listen to and respond to matters that its officials bring to its attention in relation to their work and will support, where possible, their training needs.

I, ....., am familiar with NWWSC standards of practice named above and will adopt these in my work. I accept the responsibilities outlined in the attached task description.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Name: .....