

DERWENTSIDE ATHLETIC CLUB

Child Protection Policy

Welfare Officer(s) –

Our aim is to create an environment in which the young athlete (child) and their parent(s), (responsible adult, carer, closest relative) can feel confident that the Athletic Club is providing a safe and wholesome setting for all participants in the sport of Athletics.

As a Club, we will provide support and advice to every athlete, coach, helper, official and officer of the Club, in order to protect them from neglect, exploitation and abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse against young athletes will be responded to and followed up appropriately, in accordance with local guidelines.

Key Principles

1. All people under the age of 18 years are children for the purpose of this policy which will also extend to cover vulnerable adults eg those with the mental age of a child.
2. All children, regardless of their gender, racial origin, culture, ability, religious belief and sexual orientation have the right to protection from abuse.
3. All suspicions or allegations of abuse shall be reported to the Club Welfare Officer or any Club officer. Who should, without delay, refer their concerns to the NSPCC in the first instance, who will then advise the Club Welfare Officer who to refer the issue to either the Local Social services department or UKA Welfare Officer.
4. All coaches and helpers who come into active contact with children will be subject to a Police reference.

Code of Practice for people working in Athletics with children

- A. Avoid, whenever possible, situations where you are alone with an individual child.
- B. Do not touch a child. If necessary, demonstrate a move or technique on another adult. Coaches in particular should be aware that parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about touching children and this needs to be taken into account.
- C. Volunteers and Coaches are expected to hold appropriate qualifications recognised by UK Athletics and the Club. Otherwise, they must work only under the direct supervision of an appropriately qualified person approved by the Club.
- D. Never over-criticise young athletes, or use language or actions which may cause children to lose self esteem or confidence.
- E. Do not take individual children, who are not related to you, home. On car journeys, permission must be obtained from the child's parents or guardian. The presence of a further person ought to be sought if at all possible. It is sensible to seat any child in the rear of the car.
- F. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in all conversations with children, so Coaches and other adults should not allow themselves to be so bound.

Action to be taken by the Club Welfare Officer (or in their absence by an officer or officers of Derwentside AC.)

It is important that when a child gives information which may lead to a child protection investigation, the Club Welfare Officer undertakes the following procedures, preferably with

the child's parents/guardian in attendance, unless there are good reasons not to do so, eg the parent/guardian is the suspected abuser.

1. Listen to the child rather than question him/her.
2. Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
3. Make it clear to the child that you may not be able to maintain confidentiality
4. Make a note of what was said, taking care to record the time, date, setting and people present.
5. Any person with a suspicion or allegation of child abuse shall report the matter to the Club Welfare Officer or any Club officer. Who should, without delay, refer their concerns to the NSPCC in the first instance, who will then advise the Club Welfare Officer who to refer the issue to either the Local Social services department or UKA Welfare Officer.
6. The person reporting the suspicions or making the allegations must be prepared to speak to the Social Services in order to clarify their concerns.
7. Any person suspected of abusing a child should not be approached on the matter by another Club member. The person suspected will be immediately suspended from the Club pending the outcome of any investigation.
8. Another Club officer should deal with the matter if a relationship or friendship with the suspected person compromises the person who would normally deal with it.
9. Any child, parent or other person is encouraged to contact their local Social Services Department directly without referring the matter to the Club's Welfare Officer.
10. Immediate action needs to be taken if it is not considered safe for a child to return home.

Definitions of Child Abuse

Physical abuse: Adults or other children deliberately inflict injury on a child, or knowingly do not prevent such injury, eg the nature and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature or growing body. Also includes giving a child alcohol or inappropriate drugs.

Emotional abuse: Adults or other children fail to show due care and attention or threaten, use sarcasm, taunt or shout at a child causing him or her to lose confidence or self esteem or become nervous or withdrawn. This may also occur when a child is placed under unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations constantly.

Neglect: Adults fail to provide help and care to the child (meet the need for food, clothing, warmth and medical attention). Also includes leaving a child without proper supervision or placing the child at risk of injury.

Sexual abuse: Adults use children to fulfill their own sexual needs, eg forcing a child to take part in a sexual activity, fondling or exposing the child to pornographic material.

This policy has been agreed by

Welfare Officer : **Date** :

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