

Kingston upon Hull Swimming Club



Child Protection Policy



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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BACKGROUND

Kingston Upon Hull Swimming Club recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way. Children are abused regardless of age, racial origin, ability or sexual identity. It is important; therefore, to have in place a policy that will ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Also, that staff whether paid or working in a voluntary capacity have a basic knowledge and understanding of child protection and how to respond to allegations of abuse.

POLICY STATEMENT

Kingston Upon Hull Swimming Club will:

- Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for children, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and themselves against potentially false allegations.
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- A child is defined as anyone under 18 years of age (The Children Act 1989).

The guidance given in the procedures is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- All children regardless of culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is the responsibility of Social Services to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.
- All reported incidents of poor practice and allegations should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

STAFF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

All staff working fully, part-time or in a voluntary capacity will be made aware of this policy.

MINIMUM OPERATING STANDARDS

As a minimum operating standard all staff and volunteers working with children will have the opportunity to be working towards achieving the following training:

- Child Protection awareness and training
- First Aid
- Sports Equality

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Management Committee, through the Welfare Officer, has overall responsibility for approving and revising the policy on an annual basis to ensure that it is being applied in practice.

The Welfare Officer is responsible for:

- Being well informed in child protection issues
- Advising and supporting staff and volunteers on all child protection issues
- Being the first point of contact for reporting any allegation or suspicion of child abuse
- Reporting any suspicions or allegations to Social Services or the Police

DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

“Child abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospects of a safe and healthy development into adulthood.”

(National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse 1996).

MAIN FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE

Physical Abuse

- Physically hurting or injuring children
- Administering alcohol, drugs or poison
- Suffocation or drowning
- Inappropriate use, or lack of use of medication
- Inappropriate physical restraint

In a situation where the nature and intensity of the training or activity exceeds the capacity of the child's body or the child is forced to take part in any activity against their will.

Emotional Abuse

- Persistent lack of love and affection
- There is constant overprotection
- Where the child is constantly being shouted at, taunted or threatened
- Bullying
- Racial abuse
- There is neglect, physical or sexual abuse

In a situation where a child is subjected to unrealistic pressure; where a child's self-esteem is undermined; where a child's right to privacy is ignored; denial of or access to facilities.

Neglect

- Where a child's basic needs like food, clothes are not met
- Where a child is left alone and unsupervised
- Being deprived of love, affection or attention

In a situation where a child's personal needs are ignored; where a child is left alone in a dangerous situation; where a child's basic needs are withdrawn as a form of punishment. Situations in which adults are in a position of trust, for instance a sports coach, can create an environment where this trust can be misused.

Sexual Abuse

- Where a child is used by others to meet their own sexual needs including full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal sex and fondling
- Showing pornographic books, photographs or videos, or taking pictures for pornographic purposes

In a situation where a child requires intimate or personal care which might be open to abuse; inappropriate videoing, photography etc.

Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.

The competitive nature of sport makes it an ideal environment for the bully.

The bully in sport can be:

- A parent who pushes too hard
- A coach who adopts a win at all costs philosophy
- A player who intimidates inappropriately
- An official who places unfair pressure on a person

Bullying takes many forms, the main types are:

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking and theft)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racist or homophobic taunts, threats, graffiti and gestures)
- Emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring)
- Sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments)

There are a number of signs that may indicate that a child or young person is being bullied:

- Behaviour changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, a reluctance to go to school, training or sports club
- A drop off in performance at school or standard of play
- Physical signs, such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bedwetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing, for example on food, cigarettes or alcohol
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE

Abused children can suffer long term damage that may follow them into adulthood e.g. prostitution, suicide or the abuse of other children

(taken from Safe from Harm: A Code of Practice for Safeguarding The Welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales. Published by the Home Office London 1993).

RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Indications that a child is being abused include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, such as bruising or cuts of different ages in the same place
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- A child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her
- A child or adult expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexual explicit behaviour
- Is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Has difficulty in making friends
- Is prevented from socialising with other children
- Displays variations in eating patterns, including overeating or loss of appetite
- Weight loss for no apparent reason
- Increasingly dirty or unkempt

THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE AND THE PRESENCE OF ONE OR MORE OF THE INDICATORS IS NOT PROOF THAT ABUSE IS ACTUALLY TAKING PLACE.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

Social Services have a statutory duty under Section 47 of The Children Act 1989, to ensure the welfare of children and to work with the local ACPC to comply with its guidelines and procedures.

All Police Forces have a dedicated Police Child Protection Team (CPT) to investigate allegations of child abuse within the family and also allegations of child abuse against people who are acting in 'loco parentis' e.g. club coaches and volunteers. The CPT has a responsibility to investigate when they are informed of a situation where a child is suffering, or may be at risk of suffering, abuse and to comply with the Area Child Protection Committee procedures.

False allegations do occur, however, if a child indicates to us that they are being abused, or we have suspicions, or receive allegations concerning abuse we must act immediately and take the allegation seriously. The child's safety is paramount.

We believe that:

Child Protection is everyone's responsibility

We will:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame and that they were right to tell
- Listen to what the child says and show that you take them seriously
- Recognise the difficulties of interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech impairment or where English is not their first language
- Keep questions to a minimum. Use open ended questions, e.g. those that require more than a 'yes' or 'no' response. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed if it appears that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested
- Ensure that you clearly understand and record what the child has said so that you can record and communicate information accurately.

We aim not to:

- Panic or allow our shock to be evident
- Promise the child that what they have said can be kept a secret and that we have a responsibility to tell someone else
- Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily
- Delay
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Approach the abuser
- Make comments about the alleged abuser
- Make comments about the accused person

Sharing concerns with parents

If we have noticed a significant change on a child's behaviour we will first of all talk to the parents.

When it is not appropriate to share concerns with parents

If we suspect a parent, guardian, or carer may be the abuser and speaking to them may place the child at greater risk.

When a child requires urgent medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse

The welfare of the child is paramount. Arrangements will be made for the child to be taken to a Hospital Accident and Emergency Department immediately. Social Services or the Police will be informed immediately of the referral to hospital. We will record our observations and notify the CPC.

WHERE THERE IS AN ALLEGATION AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF OR A VOLUNTEER

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a member of staff or volunteer is, or may have been, abusing a child will raise concerns amongst other staff or volunteers.

[Kingston Upon Hull Swimming Club](#) assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, without malicious intent, reports his or her concern about a colleague's poor practice or the possibility that a child may be being abused.

Notify the Welfare Officer

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Welfare Officer of the matter has been handled inadequately by the Welfare Officer and concerns remain; it will be dealt with by the Club's Management Committee.

PROCEDURES

If you suspect abuse:

1. Maintain surveillance
2. Notify the Welfare Officer
3. Observations to be recorded on an incident report form

The Welfare Officer will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other children who may be at risk.

The Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the Club Management Committee who will then advise the Welfare Officer with regard to contacting the Social Services, or the Police if out-of-hours.

The parents, carers or guardian of the child will be notified by the Welfare Officer as soon as possible following advice from Social Services or the Police.

If the Welfare Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation the report will be made directly to the Club Management Committee who are then responsible for taking the action outlined above.

When Bullying is suspected

The action to take will be to:

- Record your concerns on the incident report form
- Create an open environment and help the victim to speak out and tell someone in charge
- Notify the Welfare Officer who will:
 - Take all signs of bullying very seriously
 - Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns
 - Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure that the victim is safe
 - Speak to both the victim and bully(ies) separately with another member of the committee
 - Re-assure the victim and offer support
 - Seek an apology
 - Inform the bully's parents
 - Maintain confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times. Whenever an allegation of child abuse, poor practice or bullying is made information should be disseminated on a 'need to know' basis to:

- The Welfare Officer
- The Club Management Committee
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused (unless the parent/parents are suspected)
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services/Police
- The alleged abuser or parents if the alleged abuser is a child

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND INDUCTION OF PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people.

Checks

The pre-employment check procedure will consist of -

- Successful completion of the Criminal Records Bureau process for all adults that are required to lead or assist at the poolside

Induction

The induction will cover the individual's roles and responsibilities in respect of:

- Child protection and health and safety.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This procedure will be monitored and reviewed by the Welfare Officer and Management Committee on an annual basis or as necessary to ensure that it is being applied in practice. Evaluation will be an ongoing process of policy implementation and review.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Club will adhere to the Amateur Swimming Association Guidelines for use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Club Sessions.

Photograph permission forms will be collated and checked before photographs are taken.



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Kingston Upon Hull Swimming Club Child Protection Incident Record Form

Your Name:

Your Position:

Child's Name:

Child's Address:

Parents/Carers Names and Address:

Child's Date of Birth:

Child's Ethnic Origin:

Does the child have any disability or special educational needs:

Date and Time of Incident:

Your Observations:

Exactly what the child said and what you said:

(Remember, do not lead the child - record actual details. Continue on separate sheet (if necessary)).

Action taken so far:
External agencies contacted (date and time)

Police

Yes/No

If yes - which:

Name and Contact Number:

Details of advice received:

Social Services

Yes/No

If yes - which:

Name and Contact Number:

Details of advice received:

Other (e.g. NSPCC)

Which:

Name and Contact Number:

Details of advice received:

Signature:

Print Name:

Date: