



SPORT & RECREATION UNIT

***CHILD PROTECTION/CHILD SAFETY
POLICY***

Foreword

Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on people – especially young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement; it can also develop valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. These positive effects can only take place if sport is in the right hands – in the hands of those who place the welfare of all young people first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower them.

The reality is that abuse does take place in sport and in some cases coaches and other trusted adults in sport have been convicted. Every adult has a legal and moral responsibility to protect young people in sport from abuse.

The Council's Sport and Recreation Unit (SRU) is committed to working in partnership with all agencies to ensure that information and training opportunities are available for all SRU staff and coaches to guide them in best practice when working with all children, young people. Adopting best practice will help to safeguard young people from potential abuse as well as protecting coaches and other adults in positions of responsibility from potential allegations of abuse.

The Council's Sport and Recreation Unit are members of the Wakefield District Safeguarding Children Board (WDSCB) and these procedures have been approved by the WDSCB.

This document has been adapted from the West Yorkshire Sport Partnership child protection policy of which Wakefield Metropolitan District Council is a pro-active member.

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1.0 Policy Statement

1.1 Responsibilities

The Council will:

- accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse
- respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of young people
- recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations
- require staff/volunteers to adopt and abide by the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedure

Important

Please note that the term **parent** is used throughout this document as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians.

Please note that the term **young people** refers to all children.

1.2 Principles

This policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of all young people, (the children's act defines a young person as under 18 years of age) is the primary concern.
- All young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns regarding child abuse; however, it is the responsibility of child protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place.
- All incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

2 Recruitment, Employment and Deployment of Staff and Volunteers

2.1 Introduction

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people. The same procedures will be adopted whether staff are paid or unpaid, full or part time. This will follow the Council's procedures for employment of staff, Coaches and Relief's. The SRU will also encourage the adoption of this policy by the many voluntary sector organisations involved in sport across the District.

2.2 Pre -recruitment checks

The following pre-recruitment checks will be carried out:

2.2.1 Advertising

When advertising is used to recruit staff, it will reflect the:

- Aims of the Organisation and where appropriate, the particular programme involved.
- Responsibilities of the role.
- The level of experience or qualifications required (e.g. experience of working with children is an advantage).
- The Organisation's open and positive stance on child protection.

2.2.2 Pre-application Information

Pre-application information sent to interested or potential applicants will contain:

- A job description including roles and responsibilities.
- A person specification (e.g. stating qualifications or experience required).
- An application form.
- R01 and R02 disclosure forms.

2.2.3 Applications

All applicants whether for paid or voluntary employment, full or part time positions will complete an application form which must provide the following information:

- Name and address.
- Relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken.
- Listing of past career or involvement in sport (to confirm experience and identify any gaps).
- Any criminal record.
- The names of at least two people (not relatives) willing to supply written references that comment on the applicant's previous experience of, and suitability for, working with children and young people. At least one of these references must be a previous employer.

2.3 Checks and References

2.3.1 All successful applicants will be asked to complete a disclosure form, which will be forwarded to the Criminal Records Bureau for an "enhanced disclosure". Applicants will be unable to start work until a satisfactory clearance has been received from the Criminal Records Bureau.

2.3.2 Staff already employed by the SRU who do not have a current CRB clearance check will be asked to complete a disclosure form and this will be processed as stated in 2.3.1.

2.3.3 A minimum of two written references will be taken up and at least one will be associated with former work with children/young people where possible. Written references will always be followed up and confirmed by telephone.

2.3.4 Subsequent checks through the Criminal Records Bureau will be made every three years.

2.4 Interview and Induction

2.4.1 All coaches or other staff who have direct access to working with children will be subject to an interview process. The interviewer will have completed the appropriate training in recruitment and selection procedures. At the time of the interview all qualifications will also be substantiated.

2.4.2 All staff paid or voluntary, will undergo an induction process in which:

- They sign up to the Council's Code of Conduct and are encouraged to adopt the Sports Coach UK Code of Conduct.
- The roles, and responsibilities of the job are clarified (e.g. through a formal or informal work programme or goal setting exercise).
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are established.
- Staff working within sports facilities will receive additional induction at the site where they are working.

2.5 Training

Checks are only part of the process to protect children from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice/concerns of possible abuse.

2.5.1 All staff working with children must be up to date or receive training in Child Protection awareness (e.g. Sports Coach UK workshop "Good Practice and Child Protection" or similarly accredited course) within 6 months of their employment. All staff who have responsibility for coaching young people will be encouraged to undertake further training on how to work effectively with young children (e.g. Sports Coach UK workshops "Working with Children", "Coaching Children and Young People" and the "Responsible Sports Coach").

All staff will be required to retake the child protection training course every three years. In addition to this all staff working with children will be required to undertake training on the SRU child protection policy and procedures on an annual basis.

2.6 Monitoring and Appraisal

At regular intervals (or following a programme), all staff will be given the opportunity to receive formal (e.g. through an appraisal) or informal feedback, to identify training needs and set new goals. Managers will be sensitive to any concerns about poor practice or abuse and act on them at an early stage. They will also offer appropriate support to those who report concerns/complaints.

2.7 Complaints procedures

The Council's complaints and appeals procedures will be used to deal with any formal complaints and/or appeals. We will strive to ensure that parents and young people are aware of the existence of these procedures. The procedures for dealing with complaints are set out in the SRU Quality procedures.

3 Partnership Working Arrangements

3.1 Service Level Agreements

All staff employed by partner agencies in Sport & Recreation facilities must adhere to the rigorous recruitment process as detailed in the child protection policy section 2. The enhanced CRB check will be carried out by the partnership prior to employment. This will be written into the Service Level Agreement.