



## Child safeguarding policy

### POLICY OBJECTIVES

Athletics is one of the most accessible and successful sports in the UK. All children who take part in athletics are entitled to participate in a fun and safe environment, and we believe that everyone involved in our sport can play a part to safeguard and protect children from harm.

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of our club to build a safer future in athletics for children, and our responsibility to:

- keep children and young people safe by valuing, listening to and respecting them
- promote the wellbeing of children through opportunities to take part in athletics safely
- put in place policies and procedures to promote the wellbeing and protection of children

**DEFINITION OF A CHILD** - For the purposes of this policy, a child means a person who has not attained the age of 18 years.

### KEY PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following key principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- The protection and wellbeing of all children in our care is everyone's responsibility
- A child, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- A child has the right to express views on all matters that affect them, should they wish to do so.
- A child's rights and opinions should be respected and promoted.
- The best way to promote the wellbeing, health and development of a child is to work in partnership with the child, parents/carers and other relevant organisations

### IMPLEMENTATION

To implement this policy and keep children safe we will:

- put in place procedures to promote the wellbeing and protection of children

- seek to prevent and address bullying through the development and implementation of effective anti-bullying policies and practices
  - require clubs, volunteers and staff to adopt and abide by this safeguarding policy and related procedures including the codes of conduct for working with children
- respect the rights of all children to express views on any matter which affect them, should they wish to do so
- respond to any child wellbeing or protection concerns in line with this policy and related procedures
- regularly monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of this policy and related procedures.

To implement this policy and keep children safe, clubs and organisations affiliated to the four HCAFs will:

- adopt this Child Safeguarding Policy
- implement the guidelines and procedures related to this policy
- appoint a Club Welfare Officer
- safely recruit volunteers/staff in accordance with the recruitment guidance
- promote best practice and establish and implement club guidelines
- ensure all volunteers, officials, coaches, athletes and parents agree to and sign the club's code of conduct
  - accept that all office bearers and committee members have a responsibility for safeguarding children's wellbeing and protecting them from harm, and are prepared to respond to any concerns of abuse or poor practice
  - challenge and change poor practice
  - implement any recommendations of UK Athletics or relevant HCAF relating to this policy area
  - promote an environment where all concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal

## EQUALITY UK

We endorse the principle of equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in athletics (in all its disciplines and forms):

- has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, socio-economic status or sexual orientation
- can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected and, in particular, that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

## SECTION 2: SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### PRACTICE CONCERNS

A practice concern is behaviour that falls short of abuse but which nevertheless harms or places someone at risk of harm, or has a negative and adverse effect on the safety and wellbeing of children. Practice concerns include any behaviour, act or omission by members

of staff, coaches, volunteers, officials, or a club and its members, that may contravene this policy, or any associated procedures and guidelines, in particular the codes of conduct.

This policy, along with the codes of conduct and disciplinary regulations, promotes and supports the maintenance of healthy and positive relationships between those in positions of trust, such as coaches, and the young people in their care. However, the inherent power imbalance in coach/ athlete relationships can be exploitative and where this happens it can impact on a child's wellbeing and/or lead to abuse. Therefore, this policy addresses any practice that may be considered an abuse of a position of trust.

In addition, it would be considered as an abuse of a position of trust if an athlete is coerced or indoctrinated with attitudes to training, drugs and cheating, or social, political and religious views (radicalisation) which go against societal norms or the rules of the sport.

Further examples of practice concerns may include but are not restricted to:

- coaches who continually break rules, ignore recognised good practice guidelines, breach the codes of conduct, or the terms and conditions of their UKA licence
- individuals engaging in behaviours and practices that are known to be risk factors in cases of abuse
- continuing with a session or activity when there is a heightened risk to the group or athlete's wellbeing and safety
- coaches leading activities for which they are not trained, insured or licensed
- a club not responding appropriately to a child wellbeing or protection concern.

## WELLBEING CONCERNS

Whilst most children's needs will be met by their parents and carers, it is acknowledged that participation in sports can support and promote a child's wellbeing. Government policy in all parts of the UK recognises that sports clubs and their staff and volunteers are often significant role models and trusted people in children's lives. They are therefore well placed to identify when a child's wellbeing and health is, or is at risk of, being adversely affected by any matter, and to act in the child's best interests.

A wellbeing concern can be identified in different circumstances. For example:

- A child may reveal that they are worried, anxious or upset about an incident or set of circumstances, either within or outside of athletics.
- You may have noticed a change in a child's behaviour, demeanour or developmental progress.
- You may have concerns about the impact on a child of an incident or set of circumstances, either within or outside of the sport.
- You may have concerns for a child's physical or mental health. There are of course other factors which can impact on a child's wellbeing. Government policy and guidance varies across the UK, so please refer to your HCAF's website for specific welfare and wellbeing guidance.

## CHILD ABUSE

There are four well established categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect.

Written by: Chloe Saunders

Date: November 2021

Reviewed by: TBN

Date: By October 2022