

Huntingdonshire Athletics Club Child Protection Policy

The club has adopted the general principles of the UK Athletics child protection policy.

Huntingdonshire Athletics Club recognises that it has a duty of care to safeguard all children and young people involved in its programmes, activities and services from harm. The club is committed to the belief that all children have a right to protection and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Any information that Huntingdonshire Athletics Club becomes aware of that indicates a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, will be shared with the appropriate agency.

Aim

The aim is to create an environment in which the children and their parent(s), guardian, responsible adult, carer, or closest relative can feel confident that the club is providing a safe and secure setting for all participants in the sport of athletics.

All club members to be aware of the child protection both in the context of organised activities and within the home and community. All are supported and trained to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

The club can support and offer advice to every athlete, coach, official, manager, or assistant of the club in order to protect him or her from neglect, exploitation and abuse.

It is essential that whenever an individual working with the Huntingdonshire Athletics Club becomes concerned that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, they discuss their concerns with the Welfare Officer ***immediately***.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse against young athletes will be responded to and followed up appropriately in accordance with this policy and the Police Authority's guidelines and procedures.

All coaches and officers who come into substantive active contact with children will be subject to a criminal records bureau check.

Principles

1. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (as defined by The Children's Act 1989)
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 and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and will be responded to by any officer of the club, who through the club's child protection officer will refer the matter to the Huntingdonshire District Council's Social Services.

Code of practice for people working in athletics with children

- Avoid when possible, situations when you and an individual child are alone
- Avoid physical contact. Teach techniques by demonstration.
- Coaches are expected to hold appropriate qualifications recognised by UK: Athletics.
- Volunteers must work under the direct supervision of a qualified coach.
- Adults should never over-criticise young athletes, or use language or actions which may cause children to lose self-esteem or confidence.
- Coaches and adults should not take unrelated children to their (i.e. the coach or adults) home. Permission must be obtained from the child's parent or guardian for any journeys. The presence of a further person should be sought. It is sensible to seat any child in the rear of the car. Appropriate insurance should be obtained.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in all conversations; so coaches and adults must not give children a promise or expectation of confidentiality.
- Record incidents about child protection (such as someone shouting something, or being aggressive)
- Report to parents if child gets upset during the session, misunderstands or misinterprets something that you do.

Actions by Welfare Officer or (if absent) any officer of the club

The subsequent information follows the 'observe, record, report' theory when dealing with child protection issues.

1. Advise the child that you will not be able to maintain confidentiality.
2. Listen to the child rather than question him/her.

3. Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
4. As soon as is practicable following disclosure, make a note of what is 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 to the club's child protection officers.
6. The person reporting the suspicions or making the allegations must be prepared to speak to the Social Services to clarify their concerns.
7. Any person suspected of abusing a child should not be approached by another member of the club concerning the abuse issue.
8. Other club officials should deal with matters if the person who would otherwise deal with the matter is compromised by a relationship or friendship with the person against whom the suspicion has emerged.
9. Any child, parent or person is encouraged to contact the Social Services or the police local to them, directly, without referring the matter to the club's child protection officer.
10. Any coach or member of the club who has been accused of abusing a child will be suspended by the club without prejudice pending the investigation.
11. If the member under investigation is found guilty by law in any child related crime, the member would not be allowed to continue his/her activity in the club and not allowed to be member. If the member under investigation is not found guilty by law but gross neglect or serious unacceptable behaviour according to the club's constitution, the member would be suspended temporarily or permanently based on the club's management committee decision. The relevant governing bodies of athletics would be informed by the club if the member is found guilty by law of any child related crime.
12. When making a referral, the following information should be supplied
 - a) Factual information about the child and his/her family.
 - b) Be clear about what your involvement is with the child and their family
 - c) What is the source of your concern? Is it something you have seen, something the child has said? Is it based on the concern of others and if so, whom?
 - d) Why are you concerned? Is it based on the child's behaviour, an injury, what the child said? Has the concern developed over time or just today?

- e) What evidence, if any have you to support your concern? This may include what the child has said to you directly. If so – are you aware of anyone else the child has spoken to?
- f) Whom do you believe to be the source of harm/potential harm to the child?
- g) Are there other children in the family or other children about whom you have concerns?
- h) In your opinion does this child need protection and, if so, why?

Always record the reason for your concern and any action taken prior to your referral.

Always ensure your referral is followed up in writing.

Child abuse definition

- Physical abuse: Adults or other children deliberately inflict injuries upon a child, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. This could include the nature of the intensity of training or competition, offering alcohol or drugs.
- Emotional abuse: Adults or other children fail to show due care or attention or threaten, use sarcasm, taunt or shout at a child causing them to lose confidence, self-esteem and become nervous, or withdrawn.
- Neglect: Adults fail to provide help and care to the child. This also includes leaving a child without proper supervision or placing the child at risk of injury.
- Sexual abuse: Adults or children use children to fulfil their sexual needs.

21st January 2015
OL
Way Maurice.