



POOLE Athletic Club



(Founded 1897)

President:- Mayor of Poole Hon. Secretary:- John Gregory Hon. Treasurer :- Neil Williams

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

for

Poole Athletic Club

November 2015

Key Contact Details:-

Club Name	Poole Athletic Club
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Chairman	Mark Pauley 07711 939 285
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Honorary Secretary	John Gregory 01202 740684
Welfare Officer	Jayne Offer 07793 315 769
Local Authority Designated Officer(LADO)	Mrs Julie Murphy: 01202 633694 Mr John McLaughlin: 01202 714677 Mrs Jill Aiken: 01202 714747
Poole Police Station	01202 222222
DfE helpline & mailbox	020 7340 7264 counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
UK Athletics Club Welfare Officers	David Brown CBE - Designated Person/Lead Child Protection Officer - 0121 713 8450 Jane Fylan - Lead Officer 0121 713 8450
NSPCC	The NSPCC website is a very useful source of information on symptoms of abuse www.nspcc.org.uk

1	Introduction	Page 4
	1.1 Policy Statement	Page 4
	1.2 Monitor and review	Page 5
2	Promoting Good Practice	Page 5
	2.1 Introduction	Page 5
	2.2 Good Practice	Page 5
	2.3 Poor Practice	Page 6
3	Defining Child Abuse	Page 7
	3.1 Introduction	Page 7
	3.2 Types of Abuse	Page 7
	3.3 Indicators of Abuse	Page 9
	3.4 Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Events	Page 10
4	Responding to Suspicions & Allegations	Page 11
	4.1 Introduction	Page 11
	4.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse	Page 11
	4.3 Recording Information	Page 11
	4.4 Reporting the Concern	Page 12
	4.5 Concerns outside the Sporting Environment	Page 13
	4.6 Confidentiality	Page 13
	4.7 Internal Inquiries and Suspension	Page 14
5	Recruiting and Selecting Personnel with Children	Page 14
	5.1 Introduction	Page 14
	5.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse	Page 14
	5.3 Training	Page 15

1 Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

1.1 Introduction

Best practise in athletics benefits everyone- the sport's governing bodies, coaches and officials, teachers, parents, carers and athletes. Most importantly, it ensures that children who choose to participate in athletics have a safe and fun experience.

Poole Athletic Club is committed to ensuring that all coaches and volunteers with responsibility for children and young people, provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

In addition, Poole Athletic Club is committed to devising, implementing and updating policies and procedures to promote best practice when working with children and to ensure that everyone in the sport understands and accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means taking action to report any concerns about their welfare to the appropriate person. It is not the responsibility of athletics to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, this is the domain of the child protection professionals.

All children are entitled to a duty of care and to be protected from abuse. Abuse can occur anywhere. With over 250,000 children involved in athletics in the UK and 100,000 adults involved, the chances are very real that there are some individuals abusing their power over children in athletics.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of Poole Athletic Club and to allow coaches and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989)

1.2 Policy Statement

Poole Athletic Club is committed to providing a duty of care, to protect all children and safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief, sex or gender and sexual orientation:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Poole Athletic Club members who work with children will be selected with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures
- working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children

1.3 Monitor and review the policy and procedures

The implementation of procedures should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Welfare Officer should regularly liaise with the Club Chairman and report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements gaps and areas where changes are required to the management committee.

The policy should be reviewed every 3 years or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation.

2 Promoting Good Practice

2.1 Introduction

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in athletics everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework such as The Coaches Code of Conduct.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of employees or participants in athletics to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child, as explained in section 4.

This section will help you identify what is meant by good practice and poor practice.

2.2 Good Practice

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication)
- Make the experience of athletics fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, consideration of others
- Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity.
- Confront and deal with bullying behaviour.
- Always put the welfare of the young person first, before winning
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with athletes (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share accommodation).
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person or with the parent/carer present.
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible, e.g. where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents, coaches etc work in pairs

- Request written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays
- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff
- Ensure that at away events adults should not enter a young persons room or invite young people to their rooms
- Be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of the young person and do not risk sacrificing welfare in a desire for club or personal achievements. This means avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- Secure written parental consent for the club to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given and in line with Health & Safety guidelines (eg. RIDDOR)

2.3 Poor Practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others
- Taking young people alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you
- Sharing a room with a young person
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a young person to go unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature that the young person can do for themselves

When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situation e.g. transporting a young person on your car, the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/care and the young person involved.

If during the course of your care a child or young person becomes distressed by your actions or perhaps misunderstands or misinterprets a situation, you should report this as soon as possible to a colleague, or Welfare Officer and make a note for your record as this may be required at a later stage if the situation escalates. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

3 Defining Child Abuse

3.1 Introduction

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race or ability.

There are four main types of abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.** The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and leisure activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual into adulthood

Young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

3.2 Types of Abuse

- **Physical Abuse:** where adults physically hurt or injure a young person e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, and drowning. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse.

This category of abuse can also include when a parent/carer reports non-existent symptoms or illness deliberately causes ill health in a young person they are looking after. This is called Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

In a sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body

- **Emotional Abuse:** the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, and inadequate or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the young person frightened or withdrawn.

Ill treatment of children, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the young person is constant criticised, given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying.

- **Bullying** may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are three main types of bullying.

It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In sport bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the young person too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour.

- **Neglect** occurs when an adult fails to meet the young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in sport could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe, or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

Sexual Abuse occurs when adults (male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

In sport, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also the power of the coach over young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

Keeping children safe in education (2015) also acknowledges the following as specific safeguarding issues:

Child sexual exploitation: involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it also important to

recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

Female genital mutilation: professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 11-12 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines. Staff must activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Radicalisation: refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. School staff must use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral via the DSL to the Channel programme.

3.3 Indicators of 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. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour

- distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with others
- displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

Signs of bullying include:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go training or competitions
- an unexplained drop off in performance
- physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes
- a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working in Poole Athletic Club to decide that child abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.

3.4 Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Sporting Events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer.

All parents and performers should be made aware when coaches use video equipment as a coaching aid

4 Responding to Suspicions and Allegations

4.1 Introduction

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Poole Athletic Club in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies **BOTH** to allegations/suspicious of abuse occurring within Poole Athletic Club and to allegations/suspicious that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspicious.

4.2 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3 of this document, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

If the complainant is the child, write down what he or she says and do not ask any leading questions, which can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings. Social Services and the Police lead all investigations

With a child, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **stay calm** so as not to frighten the young person
- **reassure** the child that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- **listen** to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously
- **do not ask questions** of the child, this is the job of the local social services
- **inform** the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- **safety of the child** is paramount. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- **record** all information
- **report** the incident to the club welfare officer

4.3 Recording Information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

Information should include the following:

- the child's name, age and date of birth
- the child's home address and telephone number

- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- a description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- details of witnesses to the incidents
- the child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred
- have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- has anyone else been consulted? If so record details
- has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail

4.4 Reporting the Concern

All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

Poole Athletic Club expects its members and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the welfare officer and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

If the nominated club welfare officer is not available you should take responsibility and seek advice from the Local Area Designated Officer or the Police.

There are three possible routes to deal with serious complaints:

- **Criminal** in which case the police are immediately involved and any further action is determined by the police.
- **Child protection** in which case the LADO (and possibly) the police will be involved
- **Disciplinary or misconduct** in which case Poole Athletic Club may be advised to discipline or deal with a situation using the club's own procedures.

As mentioned previously in this document Poole Athletic Club are not child protection experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for child protection.

The LADO have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate), gathering information from other people who know the child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a club member, coach or a volunteer should be reported to the child welfare officer who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

This will include the following:

- A referral by the Welfare Officer to the LADO
- Contact with the parent/carer of the child following advice from the social services department
- The Chairman to be advised and responsible for deciding who would deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings
- The club welfare officer should also notify the relevant sport governing body
- Where the Club Welfare Officer or the Chairman is the subject of the suspicion/allegation the report must be made to an elected officer of Poole Athletic Club Committee who will refer the matter to the LADO.

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to the LADO. This is because other children in the sport or outside it may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse against children is automatically excluded from working with children.

The nominated person shall telephone and report the matter to the LADO (01202 633694) or in the case of an emergency speak to the Child Protection Investigation Unit at Dorset Police **01202 222222**.

If someone is concerned about a child protection matter and the nominated person is not happy to call Social Services, the individual has the responsibility to call the LADO or Police themselves, if they are concerned a child may be at risk of significant harm.

Anyone involved in Poole Athletic Club, including any child, can make a complaint about anyone else. Preference is for the complaint to be in writing. Where complaints are made verbally, it is better to have a witness in the room. Complaints should be addressed to the Welfare Officer or in the event the complaint concerns the Welfare Officer, then to an elected officer of the club committee should be informed.

4.5 Concerns outside the immediate Sporting Environment (e.g. a parent or carer)

- Report your concerns to the Club Welfare Officer
- If the Club welfare officer is not available, the person being told or discovering the abuse should contact the LADO or the police immediately
- The LADO and the Club Welfare Officer will decide how to inform the parents/carers
- The Club Welfare Officer should also report the incident to Poole Athletic Club Committee. The Committee should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in the organisation and act accordingly

- Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis

4.6 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Club Welfare Officer
- An officer of Poole Athletic Club Committee
- The parents of the child (where appropriate)
- The person making the allegation
- LADO/Police
- UK Athletics Governing Body Club welfare officer
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)

Seek LADO advice on how to proceed.

All information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws.

4.7 Internal Inquiries and Suspension

- Poole Athletic Club Welfare Officer/elected officers will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and LADO inquiries
- Poole Athletic Club elected officers will take account of any outcome of the police/social services enquiries and any advice given by the Welfare Officer to assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

5 Recruiting and Selecting Personnel to work with Children

5.1 Introduction

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to paid staff and regular volunteers, both full and part time. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children the following steps should be taken when recruiting.

5.2 Controlling Access to Children

- All coaches, officials and regular volunteers will be required to complete a DBS check.
- Evidence of identity (original documents – passport, driving licence with photo, utility bill etc) should be produced as required for the DBS check.
- Poole Athletic Club Welfare Officer will keep records of coaches, officials and regular volunteers such as coach/official registration number, DBS check number and expiry date.
- DBS checks will need to be re-done every three years.

5.3 Training

The safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help coaches, officials and regular volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and that they are not putting themselves in a position of risk or open to false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child
- Work safely and effectively with children

Poole Athletic Club requires:

- All staff and regular volunteers who have access to children to undergo a DBS check
- All employees, regular volunteers, coaches, welfare officers and team managers to undertake relevant child protection training or undertake a form of home study, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards good practice and child protection. (A Safeguarding Awareness training module is available on the UKAthletics website).

- All staff and regular volunteers to receive advisory information outlining good/bad practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person
- All coaches, trainee coaches should have a knowledge of first aid

Declaration

On behalf of Poole Athletic Club we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed:

(n.b. One of the signatories should be the Welfare Officer)

Name:

Name:

Position within Poole Athletic Club:

Position within Poole Athletic Club:

Date:

Date:
