



Introduction

North Shields Polytechnic Club (North Shields Poly) is committed to establishing and implementing policies and procedures which ensure a safe athletics environment for all. Our Safeguarding Policy aligns with that of our governing body, UK Athletics (UKA) which states that '*All children and young people have the right to be cared for, protected from harm and abuse, and to participate in a sporting environment which is safe, and in which their rights are respected, and their needs met*'. Safeguarding and protecting children and young people is everyone's responsibility therefore, this policy applies to all individuals associated with North Shields Poly in any capacity, whether or not members of UK Athletics. This policy and the associated procedures and guidelines establish our collective commitment to protect all children and young people from poor practice, abuse and exploitation

1. Definitions

A Child is anyone who has not attained the age of 18 years. The fact a child has reached 16 years of age and is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody, does not change his or her status or entitlement to protection under the Children Act 1989.

2. Policy Statement

North Shields Poly fully accepts our legal and moral obligations to provide a duty of care, to protect all children and adults at risk and to safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief, sex or gender and sexual orientation.

This policy is based on the following Key principles:

- The welfare of the child 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.

To embed these principles and implement this policy North Shields Poly will:

- Provide and enforce procedures to promote the health and wellbeing of all children and protect them from abuse through the provision of opportunities to take part in athletics in a safe and fun environment.
- Ensure all children who take part in athletics are able to participate in a safe and fun environment.
- Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Recruit, train and support our volunteers to prioritise and safeguard the wellbeing of children who take part in our activities and protect them from harm
- Require volunteers to adopt and abide by our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures including the codes of conduct for working with children
- Respond to any child wellbeing or protection concerns in line with this policy and the wider complaints procedures.
- Regularly monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of this policy and associated procedures annually in response to any changes to legislation or safeguarding best practice.
- Ensure two trained welfare officers (one female and one male) are in place to act as the clubs designated child protection lead officer (CPLO) and as a point of contact for any concerns.
- Promote best practice as set out in section 3 of this document and challenge and change poor practice
- Ensure all volunteers, officials, coaches, athletes and parents agree to and sign the club's code of conduct
- Promote an environment where all concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation or reprisal
- Ensure that everyone volunteering or working with children at the club attends a relevant child safeguarding training course every three years

3. Best Practice



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To provide everybody with the best possible experience and opportunities in North Shields Poly it is important that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework, demonstrating exemplary behaviour as per the best practice guidance set out below:

- Being open and conducting all interactions with children in a public place and with appropriate consent.
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with one child.
- If you have to meet or coach one child ensure it is conducted in an open environment, and where full consent and emergency contact details have been provided.
- If you are travelling alone with a child gain appropriate consent, avoid consistently having one child alone with you in the car and never sharing a room on your own with a child.
- Challenging bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language or controlling behaviour that could upset individuals or reduce them to tears.
- Never ignoring bullying by parents, coaches or children. Listening to and supporting the person being bullied.
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children; this means treating people fairly, with respect and avoiding favouritism.
- Being friendly and open and ensuring that relationships are appropriate for someone in a position of power and trust.
- Respecting all athletes and helping them to take responsibility for their own development and decision making.
- Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances physical contact is perfectly acceptable and appropriate, as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the athlete and that consent for contact has been given by the individual and appropriate parental consent.
- Being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching and ensuring that your licence remains valid. Ensure that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each athlete.

4. Policy Information

This policy and procedures seek to address the following forms of harm described in detail below:

- **Practice concerns**
- **Wellbeing concerns**
- **Child abuse.**

4.1 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



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- not responding appropriately to a child wellbeing or protection concern.

4.2 Wellbeing Concerns

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.

4.3 Abuse

There are four well established categories of abuse summarized below:

- **Physical** - this may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Sexual** – this involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Emotional** - is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- **Neglect** - is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Other circumstances and behaviours that can be considered as either forms of abuse, indicators that a child is at risk of abuse, or that a child's wellbeing is being compromised include:

- **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** is a type of sexual abuse in which children are placed in exploitative situations and relationships where they receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them.
- **Female genital mutilation (FGM)** is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done.
- **Peer on Peer Abuse** occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18.
- **Cyber bullying** is any form of bullying which takes place online or through smartphones and tablets. Social networking sites, messaging apps, gaming site and chat rooms such as Facebook, Xbox Live, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat Cyber bullying is rife on the internet and most young people will experience it or see it at some time.
- **Radicalisation.** Children from all kinds of backgrounds can become radicalised. In children can happen over a long period of time. In some cases it is triggered by a specific incident or news item and can happen much quicker. Sometimes there are clear warning signs of radicalisation, in other cases the changes are less obvious.



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Detailed descriptions of the categories of abuse, along with information about additional vulnerabilities faced by some children and young people, can be found in Appendix 3.

The signs of child abuse are not always obvious, and a child or young person might not feel able to tell anyone about what is happening to them. Sometimes, children may not realise that what is happening to them is abuse. Further guidance and advice on recognising child abuse is available in Appendix 3 but there are certain key indicators to look out for:

- A change in the child's behaviour – e.g. becoming disruptive or unreasonable during sessions.
- They become anxious, lack confidence or are withdrawn and stop communicating.
- They begin bullying other children.
- They display sexual behaviour or language inappropriate for their age.
- They are often hungry, may steal food, or are always tired.
- They have inadequate clothing or have poor personal hygiene.
- They have unexplained cuts and bruises or bite marks.
- They display signs of self-harming or of having an eating disorder.
- They are reluctant to change clothes for sport/activity or receive medical treatment such as physio.
- They seem afraid of parents or carers, or don't want to go home.
- They suddenly stop attending training without explanation

5. Safeguarding Procedure

The procedure is shown diagrammatically at Appendix 1

5.1 Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse or Practice Concerns

Whilst it is not the responsibility of North Shields Poly, our volunteers or members to decide what constitutes abuse, it is our responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare of a child. Club members, coaches, volunteers and staff may be informed in different ways about a concern regarding a child or young person through:

- a direct disclosure by the child or young person
- observation of a child or young person, or a change in their behaviour, appearance or demeanour
- information that is shared from another individual or organisation.

If a child tells you about a concern, or that they or someone else is being, or has been, abused or you witness or become concerned about a child, you should follow the guidance below:

- Take their concern seriously.
- React calmly and in a manner that does not alarm the child.
- Listen to what they say and don't show surprise or shock.
- Reassure them they are not to blame and were right to tell you.
- Allow them the space and time to talk.
- Keep questions to a minimum – only ask questions if you need to identify/clarify what the child is telling you.
- Explain that you will have to share the information with the Club Welfare Officer.
- Act swiftly to report and carry out any relevant actions

Don't:

- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Speculate or make assumptions.
- Give personal opinions or viewpoints
- Show shock or distaste.
- Make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made.
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.
- Give a guarantee of confidentiality.

5.2 Recording Concerns

Once a disclosure has been made:



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- Make a note of what the child or young person has said using his or her own words as soon as practicable.
- Complete the Child Safeguarding Report Form (Appendix 2) will assist in the recording of information.
- Ensure you describe the circumstances in which the concern was raised and what action you took.
- It is important to distinguish between things that are fact and things that have been observed or overheard, as this will ensure that information is as accurate as possible.
- If someone else has told you about a concern they have about a child or young person, or have witnessed harm or abuse, use the words the person used. If someone has written to you (including by email or social media), include a copy with the form. If you do not have access to a form, make notes and try to be accurate and factual, and write down the following detail:
 - The child's name and date of birth (if known)
 - How the disclosure was made (in person, second hand by someone else, observation)
 - Where the disclosure took place (date/time/location)
 - Use the child's own words – do not try to edit or make it sound polite or less concerning
 - What the concern is
 - Description of any visible injuries or behaviours (do not examine the child)
 - Details of any witnesses
 - What the child's view is – bear in mind the abuse may be something the child is not conscious of; it could be normal to them.

5.3 Reporting the Concern

- Immediately inform one of the club's designated welfare officers. For North Shields Poly they are:
Laura Hope – welfare@nspoly.org 07950405101
Graham Lewis-Dale – welfare@nspoly.org 07415 393960
In the event of both club welfare officers being unavailable, the contingency point of contact is North Shields Polytechnic Club Chair of trustees:
Patrick Houghton - patrickhoughton27@hotmail.com 07779000930
- Submit a copy of the Child Safeguarding Report Form (at Appendix 2) to the Club Welfare Officer without delay. This information is confidential and must only be shared with your Club Welfare Officer and others that have a need to know, in order to keep the child safe whilst waiting for action to be taken.
- In any other situation or if neither of the welfare officers or chair are available, if the concern is about that person or no action is taken, you should contact the UKA's CPLO (David Brown – UKA Lead Safeguarding Officer dbrown@uka.org.uk or 0121 713 8450). You can also access UK Athletics Online <https://www.uka.org.uk/submit-a-concern/> or email safeguarding@uka.org.uk or call 07920 532552
- If they are unavailable, you should take responsibility and seek advice from either the NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000), or North Tyneside Council Social Care Front Door service 0345 2000 109 (office hours) or 0330 333 7475 (evenings and weekends) or complete and online form at [Are you worried about a child? | North Tyneside Council](#) as appropriate.
- Alternatively, you can send the form directly to your HCAF Welfare Officer or you can complete and submit the Online Safeguarding Concern Form available on the England Athletics website. welfare@englandathletics.org. This will be sent directly to the UKA Safeguarding Team.
- A summary of the reporting procedures is provided in a flow chart format.

All club officers and committee members have responsibility to uphold our policies and procedures, to adhere to good practice and to support the club welfare officers to respond to any suspected breaches. This is NOT the sole responsibility of the welfare officers.

5.4 Dealing with Concerns and Allegations of Abuse



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The Role of the Club Welfare Officer

All suspicions and disclosures must be reported to the one of the club's welfare officers or Local Authority Designated Officer (appropriately dependent on the disclosure) following the reporting procedures in section 6. To ensure that appropriate action is taken if there is a disclosure, statutory referral from the police, children's services, adult services or suspicions are raised, North Shields Poly has two trained welfare officers (one female and one male) who will act as the designated child protection lead officer (CPLO).

On receipt of a referral the club welfare officers will:

- Ensure any immediate actions necessary to protect any child at risk have been taken. If the concern or risk is believed to be due to the behaviour of a club member then consider the relevant procedures (e.g. interim suspension from the club) to prevent that person having contact with the child being harmed and other children.
- Review the Child Safeguarding Report Form for completeness or if contacted directly by a club member, or a member of the public, ensure that they provide enough information for you to complete the Child Safeguarding Report Form.
- Reassure, and advise the person making the report. Explain what will happen next. Reinforce the need for confidentiality.
- Share concerns with parents/carers. Where there are concerns that the parents/carers may be responsible for or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing information with them may place the child at further risk. In such cases, advice must firstly be sought from the Police/Social Services/UKA Safeguarding Team as to who informs the parents/carers.
- In all situations, the Club Welfare Officer should ensure those in the club/organisation who can act (within their remit) to prevent further harm have the information to do so. Depending on the situation this may require information to be passed, and work together with, other organisations such as the Police or the Local Authority Child Safeguarding Team.
- Refer the matter to UKA's CPLO and take appropriate reporting action and to North Tyneside Children's Social Care Front Door service (0345 2000 109 and/or Police 111 service) or to North Tyneside Adult Social Care Gateway Team (0191 643 2777 and/or police 111 service) as appropriate.
- Refer the case to their Home Country Welfare Officer, or to the UKA Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

The Role of the HCAF and UK Athletics Safeguarding Team

While our welfare officers have received training, it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. If there is any doubt about whether or not the alleged behaviour constitutes abuse, the concern must be shared with professional agencies that will be responsible for subsequent action. Any suspicion that an individual has been abused by a volunteer or employee should be reported to the UKA CPLO who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the individual in question and any other individual who may be at risk.

On receipt of a concern about a child or young person from any source, the UKA Safeguarding Team or CPLO will take the following action:

- Consult and decide with the Home Country Welfare Officer and the Club Welfare Officer and will decide what initial actions need to be taken and by whom to protect the child.
- Identify immediate support needs for the child, the person raising the concern and the alleged perpetrator if they are within the sport
- Establish who needs to know about the referral, why they should know and what they need to be told, and record details of who was informed and when. For example, they may refer the case to
- if the case is a suspected crime and is not already under Police investigation, ensure it is reported without delay to the Police.
- Use policy and procedures to reduce risk/stop harm within the organisation. If the person who may be causing harm is a person involved in athletics in whatever capacity, the Safeguarding Team will:



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- decide what policy and procedures to follow (e.g. breach of code of conduct, relevant disciplinary procedures, breach of contract)
- agree what short-term arrangements can be put in place to enable the child to continue participating in their activity.
- Ongoing liaison with statutory agencies. If statutory agencies are involved, the UKA Safeguarding Team will ensure the relevant people are assigned to work together with them to coordinate and agree the next steps. The Lead Safeguarding Officer will decide who attends and contributes to any child safeguarding case meetings that are called by the Local Authority. This may be a club or Home Country representative.
- Ongoing liaison with the child and their parent/carer. The UKA Safeguarding Team will confirm who will maintain contact with the child, to consult with them, keep them informed, and make sure they are receiving the support they need. This may be a club or Home Country representative.
- When the statutory agencies conclude their investigations or decide to take no further action in relation to a referral, the UK Athletics Safeguarding Team in conjunction with the Safeguarding Case Management Group will decide which internal disciplinary proceedings are appropriate.
- The UKA Safeguarding Team will coordinate and oversee all case-related decisions and actions supported by the Safeguarding Case Management Group

In circumstances where UKA does not have jurisdiction to deal with the individual, the UKA CPLO will act as the link person between the sport and the social care services and/or the police and pass on all the information to the relevant governing body/organisation with disciplinary jurisdiction. Where the police or social care services make a statutory referral and invite a club official to a case conference or professional meeting then the UKA CPLO must be informed as soon as possible to determine whether to attend and represent the governing body at the meeting and support the individual and club.

5.4 Incidents

Similarly if any of the following incidents should occur you should report them immediately to another colleague, make a written note of the event and inform parents and/or appropriate adults of the incident and inform one of our club welfare officers:

- If a child appears distressed in any manner.
- If a child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.
- If you accidentally hurt a child.

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a volunteer there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal: in which case the police are immediately involved
- Safeguarding children: in which case the social care services (and possibly the police) will be involved
- Disciplinary or misconduct: where it relates to coaches and officials UKA will be involved in other matters it will rest with the Home Countries.

Civil proceedings may also be initiated by the alleged victim of misconduct or abuse, or his/her family, or by persons wrongly accused.

Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences relating to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. These decisions will be dealt with by the Independent Safeguarding Authority for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in Scotland this will be the role of the Central Barring Unit. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act (1999) and set out in Schedule 4 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act.

5.5 Dealing with Practice Concerns

If the allegations are against a volunteer and after consideration are clearly about poor practice, the allegation will be dealt with by North Shields Poly and the UKA under their disciplinary procedures as a misconduct issue.

Disciplinary and Appeal Procedures



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UKA has a general disciplinary policy and separate policies relating to coaches and officials. England Athletics have their own policy and procedures the other home countries have adopted the UKA policy and procedures as their own. All the documents are easily available on the UKA website (<http://www.uka.org.uk/governance/policies/>).

Records and Confidentiality

Always follow the reporting procedure set out above. Use of the referral form will assist you to collect and collate the required information. Your reports should be factual and include where possible:

- The referrer's and/or the child's name, address and date of birth.
- The date and time of the incident.
- The facts about the allegation or observation.
- Your factual observations e.g. behaviour and emotional state of the alleged victim, note any marks, bruising etc.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what happened using the exact words if possible.
- Details of any witnesses.
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- Any action that was taken as a result of the concerns.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A copy of this information must be sent to the UKA CPLO.

Confidentiality should be maintained at all times. Information should be handled and disseminated on a *need to know basis only*. Information will be stored securely by North Shields Poly in line with data protection laws.

Support for Victim, Accused and Reporter

North Shields Poly acknowledges the difficulty in reporting concerns and will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concern about a colleague's practice or concerns about the welfare of a child. They will take appropriate steps to ensure that the victim (and parents, appropriate adults) are provided with appropriate professional support (e.g. Help lines, support groups). They will also ensure through the appropriate allegation, disciplinary and appeals procedures that the accused is offered appropriate support.

Reminder of Important numbers:

Graham Lewis-Dale – welfare@nspoly.org 07415 393960

Laura Hope – welfare@nspoly.org 07950 405101

David Brown – UKA Lead Safeguarding Officer dbrown@uka.org.uk or 0121 713 8450

North Tyneside Council Front Door Service, 0345 2000 109

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call 999

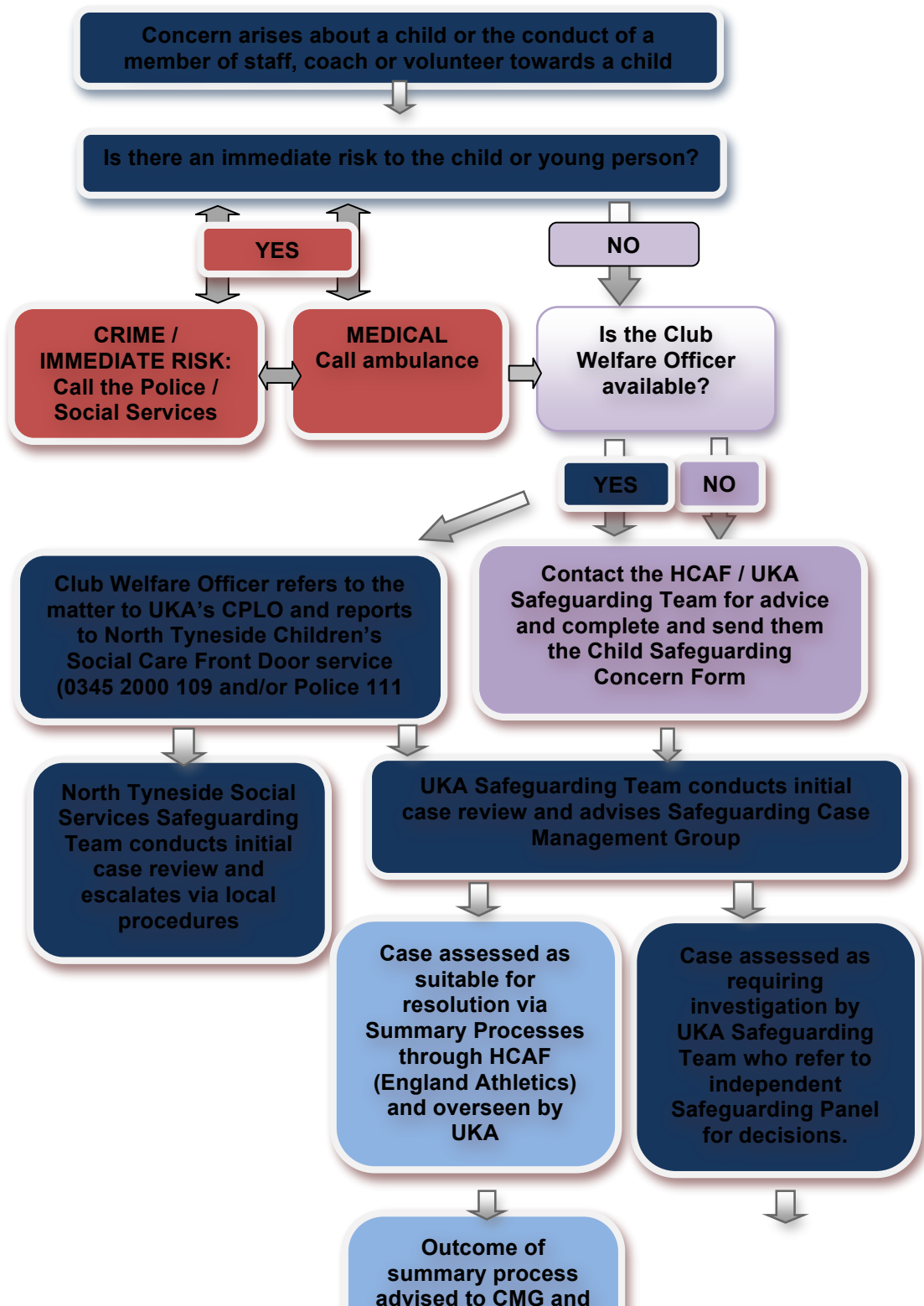
Policy Ratified by: North Shields Polytechnic Club Chair

Date: January 2023

Date for review: January 2024



Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Procedure





Outcome advised
and fed back to
HCAF and North
Shield Poly

Appendix 2 Referral Form

Your name and contact details:		Your position:	
Your knowledge of and relationship to the child:			
Child's name		Child's address:	
Child's date of birth:		Parent/Guardian Name/s and contact details:	
Date(s), time(s) and location(s) of incident(s):			
Nature of the concern/allegation:			
Observations made by you or to you (e.g. description of visible bruising, other injuries, child's emotional state etc):			
Exactly what the child said and what you said (Remember, do not lead the child– record actual details. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary):			



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Actions Taken so far:

Police contact Yes No

Date and time if contact made

Police reference number

Advice give

Children's social care contacted yes no

Date and time of contact

Discussion with –

Advice given

Local Authority Designated Officer contacted

UKA Contact Date and Time

Other agency contact if required

Name of person completing

form Signed

Date

Copy sent securely to UK Athletics



Appendix 3. Further Information on Abuse

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is defined as the causing of physical harm to a child or young person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child they are looking after.

Most children sustain accidental cuts and bruises throughout childhood. These are likely to occur in parts of the body like elbows, shins and knees.

An important indicator of physical abuse is when the bruises or injuries are unexplained, or the explanation does not fit the injury, or the injury appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely (e.g. on the cheeks or thighs). The age of the child must also be considered. It is possible that some injuries may have occurred for other reasons (e.g. certain skin conditions and diseases).

Physical harm can be caused by:

- overtraining or dangerous training of athletes (e.g. sudden increases in training workloads)
- allowing an athlete to compete too frequently over an extended period
- failure to do a risk assessment of physical limits or pre-existing medical conditions
- administering, condoning or failure to intervene in drug use.

Signs which may raise concerns about physical abuse include:

- refusal to discuss injuries
- improbable explanations for injuries
- reluctance to go home
- repeat injuries over time
- untreated injuries
- fear of parents being asked for an explanation
- avoiding certain activities due to injury
- avoiding the removal of warm-up clothing during sessions.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as any act that involves the child in any activity for the sexual gratification of another person, whether or not it is claimed that the child either consented or assented. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or in watching sexual activities, using sexual language towards a child or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Some children may never be able to tell someone they have been sexually abused. Changes in a child's behaviour may be a sign something has happened. In some instances, there may be no overt signs to suggest that a child has been sexually abused.

Examples of sexual abuse in sport include:



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- exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language or jokes
- showing a child pornographic material or using a child to produce such material
- inappropriate touching
- sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with a child under 16.

Signs which may raise concerns about sexual abuse include:

- lack of trust in adults, overfamiliarity with adults, or fear of a particular adult
- sleep disturbance (nightmares, bed-wetting, fear of sleeping alone)
- girls taking over the mothering role
- reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity, or to change clothes for games
- drug/alcohol abuse
- psychosomatic indicators such as recurrent abdominal pain or headaches
- eating disorders
- social isolation – being withdrawn or introverted, poor peer relationship
- running away from home
- school problems (e.g. falling standards, truancy)
- low self-esteem
- sexual knowledge beyond the child's age
- sexual promiscuity/over-sexualised behaviour
- anxiety/depression/self-harm/suicide attempts

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed and exploited online.

Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is defined as the persistent emotional neglect or ill treatment that has severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may involve the imposition of age or developmentally inappropriate expectations of a child. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger and includes exploiting or corrupting children. Some level of emotional abuse will be present in other types of ill treatment of children, but it can occur independently of other forms of abuse.

Examples of emotional abuse in sport include:

- a persistent failure to show any respect to a child (e.g. continually ignoring a child)
- humiliating a child by continuously criticising their performance
- continually being aggressive towards a child
- acting in a way which undermines a child's self-esteem.

Signs which may raise concerns about emotional abuse include:

- low self-esteem
- running away from home
- extremes of passivity and aggression
- significant decline in concentration
- indiscriminate friendliness and neediness
- self-harming

Neglect

Neglect is defined as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely



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to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or failure to respond to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect may also result in the child being diagnosed as suffering from 'non-organic failure to thrive', where they have significantly failed to reach normal weight and growth of development milestones, and where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated. In its extreme form, children can be at serious risk from the effects of malnutrition, lack of nurturing and stimulation. This can lead to serious long-term effects such as greater susceptibility to serious childhood illnesses and reduction in potential stature. With young children in particular, the consequences may be lifethreatening within a relatively short period of time.

Examples of physical neglect in sport include:

- exposing a child to extreme weather conditions (e.g. heat and cold)
- failing to seek medical attention for injuries
- exposing a child to risk of injury through the use of unsafe equipment
- exposing a child to a hazardous environment without a proper risk assessment of the activity
- failing to provide adequate nutrition and water.

Signs which may raise concerns about neglect include:

- constant hunger
- constant tiredness
- untreated medical problems or injuries
- poor relationships with peers
- poor personal hygiene/clothing in poor condition
- being frequently late or not attending sessions
- low self-esteem
- stealing.

There are other circumstances and behaviours that can be considered as either forms of abuse, indicators that a child is at risk of abuse, or that a child's wellbeing is being compromised. The following examples should not be considered as a definitive list.

Peer on peer abuse

This often involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. One of the greatest challenges, is distinguishing abuse from the banter and horseplay we associate with modern adolescent behaviour, however just because a young person can attribute a seemingly acceptable word to what they're saying or doing, it does not justify the behaviour. 'It was only banter/foreplay/messing around' is no excuse for what could constitute abusive behaviour.

Peer on peer abuse could involve perpetrators having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they abuse to defend themselves. This imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways. It may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), or social (e.g. isolating or excluding someone). It could also include issues such as revenge porn or what are often gender issues (e.g. girls being touched or boys being involved in initiation activities). Bullying (including cyber-bullying) can be involved in any type of abuse and is often motivated by prejudice or ignorance due to actual or perceived differences between people or groups or people. People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), those from minority ethnic groups, or those with disabilities and/or learning difficulties can be more vulnerable to this form of abuse. Peer on peer abuse should be addressed as a child or vulnerable adult protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Sexting involving those under the age of 18 must always be referred to the club's welfare officer.

The teenage years are a time of great change and young people often want to be on their own, easily become angry and often mistrust authority. This makes it hard to differentiate between normal teenage behaviour and attitude that indicates your child may have been exposed to radicalising influences.

Radicalisation

The following behaviours listed here are intended as a guide to help you identify possible radicalisation:

Outward appearance

- Ø Becoming increasingly argumentative



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- Ø Refusing to listen to different points of view
- Ø Unwilling to engage with children who are different
- Ø Becoming abusive to children who are different
- Ø Embracing conspiracy theories
- Ø Feeling persecuted
- Ø Changing friends and appearance
- Ø Distancing themselves from old friends
- Ø No longer doing things they used to enjoy
- Ø Converting to a new religion
- Ø Being secretive and reluctant to discuss their whereabouts
- Ø Sympathetic to extremist ideologies and groups

If you believe someone is in immediate danger, contact the Police immediately by dialling 999 otherwise report to either of the club's welfare officers.

Disabled children are vulnerable to abuse and are at least three times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children. Those working with them must be aware of this and willing to acknowledge their concerns. Practitioners may also over identify with the child's parents/carers and be reluctant to accept that abuse or neglect is taking or has taken place, or seeing it as being attributable to the stress and difficulties of caring for a disabled child. When suspecting abuse, practitioners should always ask: "Would this be acceptable if the child were not disabled?".

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

This is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's also known as "female circumcision" or "cutting", and by other terms such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others.

FGM is usually carried out on young girls between infancy and the age of 15, most commonly before puberty starts. It is illegal in the UK and is child abuse. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, contact the police immediately by dialling 999 otherwise report to the club's welfare officers.

Children and Young People Experiencing or Affected by Mental Health Problems

The emotional wellbeing of children and young people is just as important as their physical health. Most children grow up mentally healthy, but certain risk factors make some more likely to experience problems than others. Evidence suggests that more children and young people have problems with their mental health today than 30 years ago. Traumatic events in themselves will not usually lead to mental health problems, but they may trigger problems in those children and young people whose mental health is not robust.

Two separate but not necessarily unconnected issues relate to children affected by mental health problems:

- children and young people who are experiencing mental health problems themselves
- children and young people whose lives are affected by the mental illness or mental health problems of a parent/carer.

Financial Abuse

Children and young people can be subject to financial abuse and this may include:

- theft of money or possessions
- fraud/scamming
- being prevented from accessing their own money, benefits or assets
- undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the person in connection with financial matters. In a sport setting this could include being asked to pay a coach's expenses or being asked for a loan by a coach or volunteer
- misuse of personal allowance in a care home
- misuse of benefits by a parent/carer
- false representation, or using another person's bank account, cards or documents
- misuse of a power of attorney or other legal authority.

Parental Problematic Alcohol and Drug Misuse

Problematic parental substance use can involve alcohol and/or drug use (including prescription as well as illegal drugs). The risks to, and impacts on, children of parents and carers who use alcohol and drugs are known and well-researched.



Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse describes any behaviour that involves exerting control over a partner or ex-partner's life choices and that undermines their personal autonomy. Children and young people living with domestic abuse are at increased risk of significant harm, both as a result of witnessing the abuse and of being abused themselves. However, children can also be affected by abuse even when they are not witnessing it or being subjected to abuse themselves. Domestic abuse can profoundly disrupt a child's environment, undermining their stability and damaging their physical, mental and emotional health



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