

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Cardiff City Community Table Tennis Club's Policy on
Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Sport

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CARDIFF CITY
COMMUNITY
TABLE TENNIS CLUB

Foreword

Cardiff City Community Table Tennis Club (CCCTTC) is committed to creating and maintaining an enjoyable and safe environment for all the children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in our activities. We accept a responsibility to help safeguard the welfare of young people and protect them from any poor practice, abuse or bullying, while providing them with the highest possible standard of care.

We are dedicated to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in CCCTTC accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from any form of harm. We expect our team to follow procedures that protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

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

NB: A young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989) The definition of a Vulnerable Adult, as stated by 'Who Decides – Lord Chancellors Department 1997', is: 'A Vulnerable Adult is someone who is aged 18 or over who; is or may be in need of community care services by reasons of mental health or other disability, age or illness and is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against harm or exploitation'

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Policy principles

CCCTTC is dedicated to the following:

1. the welfare of the young person is paramount and should be the first consideration
2. all children and young people, regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, race or sexual identity have a right to participate in a fun and safe environment with the maximum protection from abuse
3. the rights, wishes and feelings of young people should always be respected
4. all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment will be taken
5. all members of CCCTTC have a responsibility and failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action
6. all worries and allegations of poor practice will be taken seriously and the appropriate action will be made promptly
7. all CCCTTC employees who work with children will be recruited with careful consideration to their suitability, and will be provided with the proper guidance and training in child protection procedures and good practice
8. working in partnership with parents and carers is essential for the safeguarding and protection of young people
9. confidentiality should be upheld in line with legislation and government guidance.

Government guidance and legislation

CCCTTC's safeguarding policy and procedures are based upon principles within UK, international legislation and government guidance. Below is an overview of relevant legislation and guidance. We all have a legal and moral obligation and responsibility to contribute to making CCCTTC a safe and child-friendly place to be. Our policies and procedures take into account the following:

1. The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
2. The Protection of Children Act 1999
3. The Police Act 1997
4. The Criminal Justices and Court Services Act 2000
5. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
6. The Data Protection Act 1998
7. Every Child Matters 2003
8. "Caring for the young and vulnerable" - Home Office guidance for preventing the abuse of trust 1999

9. The 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' - 2006
10. Working Together to Safeguard Children - 2006
11. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - 1990
12. The Human Rights Act 1998
13. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Act 2006
14. Information sourced from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, 'Guidance on the protection of Vulnerable Adults', August 2005

Promoting good practice

CCCTTC acknowledges that good practice is essential when working with young people. To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities all of our staff must operate within an accepted ethical framework. Below is a list showing what is meant by good practice and poor practice, so that employees and volunteers are able to identify whether poor practice and possible abuse may be taking place.

Good practice:

All people at CCCTTC should adhere to the following actions:

1. always be publicly open when working with young people
2. avoid any unobserved situations and encourage open communication
3. treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity
4. promote fairness and confront and deal with bullying
5. always put the welfare of the young person first
6. keep an appropriate distance between yourself and the young person; any intimate relationship should not be allowed
7. avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any physical support is compulsory it should only be provided with the consent of the young person and done openly
8. involve parents or guardians wherever possible
9. ask for parental consent if employees are required to transport young people in their cars
10. request written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g. overnight stays
11. ensure that at residential activities adults do not enter a young person's room or invite young people into their rooms when not absolutely necessary
12. be a good role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
13. always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism

14. recognising the developmental needs and capacity of the young person and not risking giving up child wellbeing in order to gain other success
15. keep a record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given
16. ensure that you have consent to treat the young person, in case of any emergencies
17. to ensure that the correct ratio of adults to young people is maintained at all times – for the protection and welfare of the young people and the adults involved
18. to dress in appropriate clothing for the activity

Poor practice

These actions are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

1. unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with a young person away from others
2. reducing a young person to tears as a form of control
3. doing things of a personal nature that the young person is able to do for themselves
4. engaging in rough, highly physical or sexual activity
5. making sexually suggestive comments to a young person
6. taking young people alone in a car on journeys
7. sharing a room with a young person
8. taking a young person to your home where they will be alone with you
9. engaging in improper touching of any form
10. allowing young people to openly use unsuitable language
11. allowing allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

When a case arises where it is impossible to avoid certain situations, for example transporting a young person in your car, the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent or guardian and the young person involved.

If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions or if the young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents or guardians should also be informed of the incident.

Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events

Abuse doesn't just occur within the organisation; it has been found that in some cases people will use young people's sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or films of children.

CCCTC is very alert and if there any concerns that this sort of activity is taking place then it should be reported as soon as possible.

Defining child abuse

It is not always easy to recognise where abuse has occurred, however all adults working within CCCTC have a duty to be watchful and respond appropriately to suspicions of poor practice, abuse or bullying. This does not mean that it is our employee's or volunteer's responsibility to make a decision as to whether the situation is poor practice, but it does mean that it is our employee's or volunteer's duty to report absolutely any concerns.

Child abuse has many forms, but essentially it is a term which describes the way in which young people can be harmed by individuals, often those they trust and know well.

Child abuse tends to be categorized into four main forms; physical, emotional, sexual or neglect that leads to injury or harm. It is most common within a relationship of trust or responsibility, where an abuse of power or breach of trust occurs. Abuse in all of its forms can affect any young person. It is so critical that any child abuse is prevented as the effects can be so destructive that if not prevented they may follow the individual into later life.

Physical abuse

This occurs when individuals deliberately inflict injuries on a young person, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It includes harm caused by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or using excessive force. Giving young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse, along with the failure to supervise their access to these substances.

In relation to sporting activities, this kind of abuse can occur when young players are exposed to overplaying, overtraining or fatigue, or if they are provided with or encouraged to take prohibited performance enhancing drugs.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can be described as repetitive emotional ill treatment of a young person, which is likely to cause harsh and permanent unfavourable effects on the child's emotional development.

Examples can be telling a child that they are a waste of time, making them feel insignificant and unwelcome or calling them names and bullying them.

In sport it could also be classed as constantly criticising a child and expecting too much of them. As a result it may cause a young person to be anxious and scared of being continually shouted at, teased or threatened, which in turn can make the young person lose self-confidence and become much more reserved.

Sexual abuse

This can occur when adults, both male and female, use children to meet their own sexual needs. This includes any sexual contact, showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually overt manner. In sporting activities this can occur if there is any inappropriate physical contact with the young people, which in many cases may go unnoticed.

Neglect

Neglect occurs when adults fail to meet a young person's physical or mental needs, which then in turn results in serious harm to their growth or health. An example of neglect would be failing to provide a person's basic needs such as food, water, shelter, protection, medical care, etc. Or in sports this could be exposing the young person to unbearable heat or cold.

Signs of abuse

As mentioned previously 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 detection however it is important to remember that it is not the responsibility of those working in CCCTTC to decide that child abuse is occurring. It is their responsibility to act on any concerns. Some of the signs that a child is being abused, which should be looked out for, may include one or more of the following:

1. another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
2. difficulty in making friends
3. unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. bad tempered, upset, quiet, reserved, clingy, tearful and reluctance
4. unexplained or suspicious injuries
5. an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
6. mistrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected

7. the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
8. inappropriate sexual awareness
9. engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
10. being prevented from socialising with others
11. displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite
12. losing weight for no apparent reason
13. becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt
14. a shortage of money or frequent loss of belongings.

How to respond to any suspicions

There are many ways in which we may become aware of the possible occurrence of child abuse, mainly through some of the ways listed above, or even witnessing it occur. In some cases it may be reported to us or we may be directly informed by the young person affected. It is important to remember that no matter how you have been made aware, it is not the responsibility of any of CCCTTC's employees or volunteers to make the decision as to whether a child is actually being abused, it is simply your responsibility to act on any concerns by contacting the appropriate authorities so that the correct and necessary action can be taken to protect the young person.

If you are directly informed by the young person then it is important that you respond carefully. Do not act frightened as this will only make matters worse. Support the child and listen carefully to show that you are taking them seriously, however do try to avoid questioning them, as it can be argued that in some cases the child has been led by any words and ideas suggested during questioning.

The main priority is the safety of the young person. If any medical attention is needed you must call an ambulance immediately. Ensure that the child knows that you will need to tell other people in order to stop the abuse continuing.

Make certain that you record all information straight away and report the incident as soon as possible to CCCTTC's welfare officer. Information recorded should be very thorough and should be made at the time of the concern, detailing all the facts and not including your own opinions. The record should include the following:

1. child's details e.g. name, age, address, phone number, etc.
2. the nature of the allegation, including the dates, times, etc.
3. a description of the signs, for example any visible injuries or indirect signs
4. details of the witnesses

5. an account of what the child has said
6. who the alleged abuser is if known
7. who was consulted, give details.

CCCTTC expects its members to talk about any concerns they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with Welfare Officer Danielle de Jong. If this person is not available then you should seek advice from NSPCC, local social services department or the Police, whose telephone numbers can be found in your local directory.

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

Internal inquiries and suspension

Danielle de Jong (Welfare Officer) will make an instant decision, potentially after a conversation with Nathan Thomas (Chairperson) about whether the accused should be momentarily suspended until further police and social services inquiries. Irrespective of the Police or social services inquiries, CCCTTC will review all individual cases in order to make a decision as to whether the accused person can return and how it would carefully be handled. The welfare of the child will however remain of paramount importance throughout.

Recruiting people who will be working with children

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

1. all staff and volunteers should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about the applicants past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record
2. all staff and volunteers, where relevant, should undertake an enhanced level Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check/will provide their CRB which will be verified, should the CRB check not be completed before employment commences, a risk assessment will be undertaken and the necessary safeguards put in place. This information will be treated confidentially, sensitively and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
3. two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children should be obtained (These references must be confirmed through telephone contact)

4. evidence of identity, for example passport or driving licence with photo
5. a check should be made that the application form has been completed in full, including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures
6. their qualifications should be confirmed
7. the job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified
8. child protection procedures are explained and training needs identified e.g. basic child protection awareness.

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

1. analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
2. recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
3. respond to concerns expressed by a child
4. work safely and effectively with children.

CCCTC will comply with the new requirements of the Independent Safeguarding Authority and ensure that they are aware of the legal expectations of them:

On February 11 2011 the Coalition Government published the findings of its Review into the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

Key recommendations from the VBS Review include:

1. the merging of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to form a streamlined new body providing a proportionate barring and criminal records checking service
2. a large reduction of the number of positions requiring checks to just those working most closely and regularly with children and vulnerable adults
3. portability of criminal records checks between jobs to cut down on needless bureaucracy
4. an end to a requirement for those working or volunteering with vulnerable groups to register with the VBS, and
5. stopping employers who knowingly request criminal records checks on individuals who are not entitled to them.

The Coalition Government has confirmed that until all the appropriate legislation has been introduced and the new arrangements are established, the existing responsibilities of employers and the ISA will remain.

These include:

1. A person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults will be breaking the law if they work or volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with those groups.
2. An organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.
3. If your organisation works with children or vulnerable adults and you dismiss or remove a member of staff or a volunteer because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or you would have done so if they had not left, you must tell the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to make sure that confidentiality is maintained for everyone that is concerned in any allegations. Information should be handled on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

1. Welfare Officer – Danielle de Jong
2. the young person's parents or guardians
3. the person making the allegation
4. Social Services and the Police
5. the alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)

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