



# SPENBOROUGH AND DISTRICT ATHLETICS CLUB SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This policy brings together two really important themes for our children/young people; being fit and active and keeping safe.

Sport has a lot to offer to our children. Sport organisations reach a broad audience of children/young people. Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on children/young people. It can provide valuable opportunities for success, enjoyment, achievement, personal and social development and development of positive life skills. It can help develop their self-esteem, leadership and teamwork skills. It contributes to a healthy lifestyle by encouraging children's/young people's physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

Sport can also provide children/young people with a role model, and a significant, trusted adult whom they can confide in. Having this trusted adult is very important to the welfare of many children. It helps promote their confidence, self-esteem, resilience and ability to manage difficult circumstances. It can promote positive outcomes for them. In all of these ways sport protects and safeguards our children.

We also want to ensure, as much as possible, that our club is fun, friendly, safe and a positive place for the children who attend the club.

This policy aims to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect the children/young people (all those under 18) who participate in athletics.

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND GUIDANCE

### 1. TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND THEIR RECOGNITION

The four main categories of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. Bullying can also be a category of abuse. The abuse, or possible abuse, of a child/young person may come to the attention in a variety of ways. There may be aspects of the child's/young person's behaviour or presentation that lead you to suspect that they may be at risk. These possible signs should be shared with your Named Child Protection Person. They may then decide to refer the child/young person to care agencies for further enquiries to be made.

#### The possible signs of abuse/neglect include:

- Information given by the child/young person
- Information reported by a concerned adult
- Changes in the child's/young person's behaviour e.g. the child/young person suddenly becomes quiet, tearful, withdrawn or aggressive
- Loss of weight
- Eating problems, for instance, overeating or loss of appetite

**Physical Abuse** 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. In sports this could mean forcing a child/young person to train beyond their capabilities.

**Some possible signs of physical abuse:**  
Unexplained injuries, for example, bruising, bite marks, burns and fractures, particularly if recurrent.  
Improbable explanations given for injuries.  
Several different explanations provided for an injury.  
Refusal to discuss injuries.  
Untreated injuries.

**Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. In sports this could involve inappropriate photography/videoing for the sexual gratification of the viewer.

**Some possible signs of sexual abuse:**  
Acting in a sexual way inappropriate to their age.  
Continual or excessive masturbation.  
Asking if you will keep a secret if they tell you.  
Unexplained sources of money, sweets or presents.  
Reluctance to changing for an activity.  
Chronic ailments such as stomach ache or headaches.  
Involving other children in sexual activity.  
Self harm

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. In sports this could involve constant criticism, name-calling, ridicule, sarcasm, bullying, or unrealistic expectations of parents/carers/coaches over what a child/young person can achieve.

**Some possible signs of emotional abuse:**

Withdrawal  
Nervousness  
Aggressive behaviour

Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. The manifestations of emotional abuse might also indicate the presence of other kinds of abuse

**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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: ●provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); ●protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ●ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ●ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. In sports this could be when a child's/young person's personal or intimate requirements are ignored, not ensuring children/young people are safe, or exposure to undue cold, heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

**Some possible signs of neglect:**

Constant hunger  
Poor personal hygiene  
Constant tiredness  
Poor state of clothing  
Untreated medical problems  
Compulsive eating  
Scavenging

**Bullying** is the abuse and/or intimidation by a person, people or an organisation against another or others. It may be a specific act or it may be institutional. It is an abuse of a perceived power relationship. The bully in sport can also be the parent/carer who pushes too hard or the coach who adopts a win at all costs philosophy. Children can also bully other children. Bullying may include verbal abuse and intimidation, acts of physical or sexual abuse and coercion, e-bullying, through texting, filming on mobiles and posting on social networks. Whatever its form it is unacceptable within any club. It must be challenged and appropriately addressed.

**Some possible signs of bullying:**

Reluctance to attend activities previously enjoyed.  
Tearfulness, depression, erratic emotions, loss of concentration.  
Stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, bruising, cuts, scratches, damaged clothing, bingeing on food, alcohol or cigarettes.  
Shortage of money, frequent loss of possessions.  
Asks for money or starts stealing (to pay bully/ies).  
Drop in performance.

**These signs do not necessarily mean that a child has been abused. However, if you are concerned about the welfare of a child you must report it. Do not assume that someone else will help the child. They might not.**

## 2. DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE – WHAT TO DO?

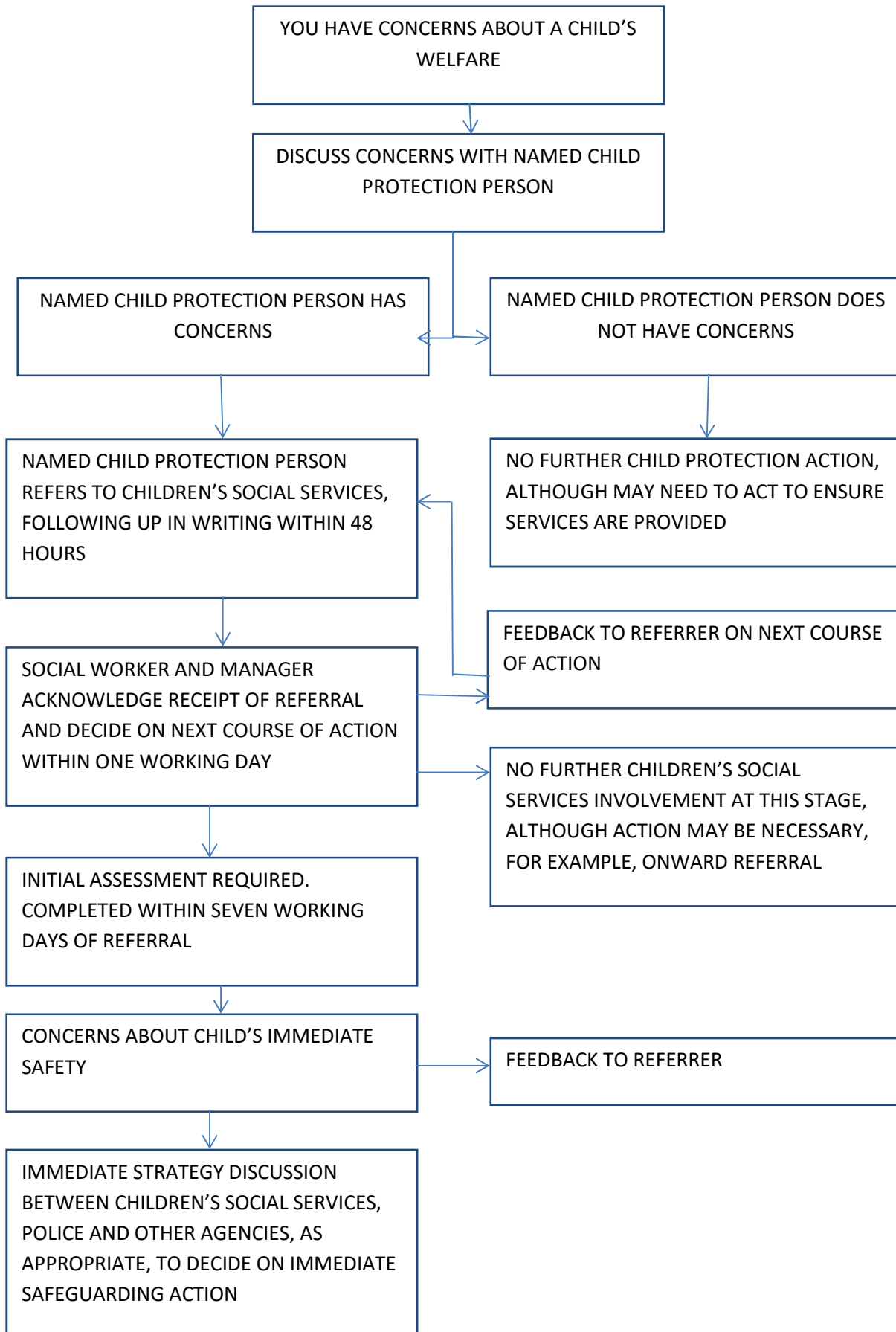
If a child makes a disclosure of abuse the following actions are to be taken:

- React calmly so as not to frighten or deter the child / young person
- Listen carefully to what the child / young person tells you without interrupting and take it seriously
- Ask questions for clarification only. Avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Do not stop a child / young person who is freely recalling significant events. Allow them to continue at their own pace.
- Acknowledge how difficult it might have been for them to share this with you
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling
- Tell the child / young person that they are not to blame
- Never promise a child / young person that what they told you can be kept a secret. Explain to the child / young person that you have a responsibility for their safety and therefore have to tell somebody in authority. Let them know that there are others who can help them and that they are not alone
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Ensure the safety of the child / young person
- As soon as possible take care to record in writing what was said using the child's own words. Record the date, time, setting, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and other people present. Sign and date the record
- Record any subsequent events and actions
- It is not your responsibility to decide if a child has been abused. Any disclosure must be raised with the Named Child Protection Person and followed through appropriately

A child may recall former abuse once in a safe situation. Although they may be under no current threat to their safety, any disclosure must be raised with the Named Child Protection Person and followed through appropriately.

You may also have concerns about a child's welfare where there has not been any disclosure or allegation. In the best interests of the child / young person, these concerns should be raised with the Named Child Protection Person and followed through appropriately.

### 3. FLOWCHART WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



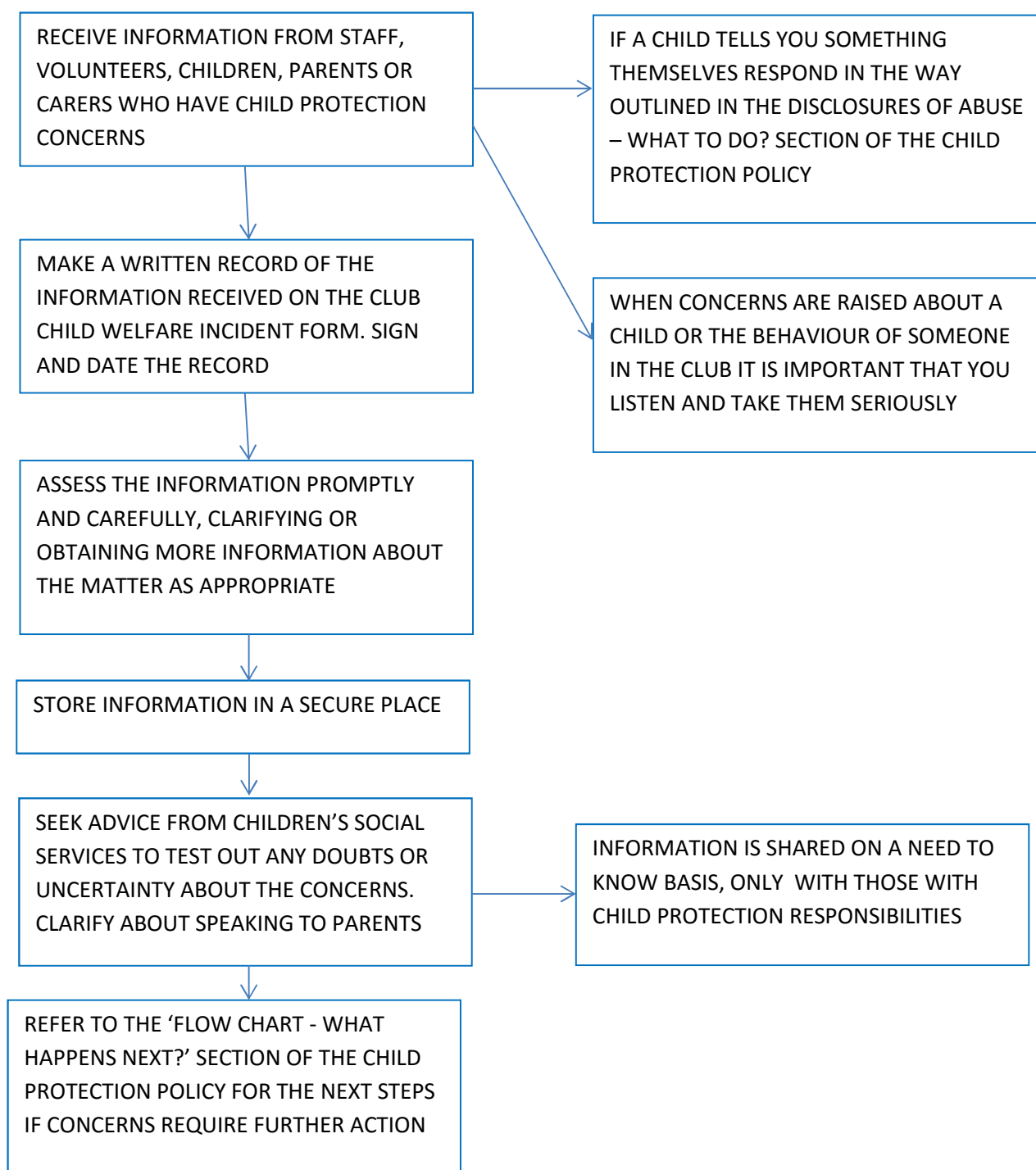


#### 4. NAMED CHILD PROTECTION PERSON

All organisations need to identify one person to be responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse. If your club is small this person can be shared with other clubs or governing bodies. Having a Named Child Protection Person will ensure that there is an informed point of contact in your club who can manage and advise on child protection issues. Everyone in the organisation should know who Named Child Protection Person is and how to contact them.

It is not the role of the Named Child Protection Person to decide whether a child has been abused or not. This is the task of Children's Social Services who have the legal responsibility. But it is the responsibility of the Named Child Protection Person to ensure that concerns are shared and appropriate action taken.

##### RESPONDING TO CONCERNS



## 5. VULNERABILITY OF SOME GROUPS OF CHILDREN - CARE OF DISABLED CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE

- Discuss and agree with parent / carer and child / young person the care they require and the physical contact that is necessary for them to participate in the activity
- Communicate with the child / young person about what you are doing and give choices where possible, particularly if you are involved in dressing / undressing outer clothing or if lifting / assisting a disabled child / young person
- Avoid taking on the responsibility of tasks for which you are not appropriately trained

## 6. BULLYING

Bullying is not always easy to define but includes: deliberate hurtful behaviour, hostility and aggression towards a victim

- a victim who will often be weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies → an outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victim
- physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, poking or any other form of physical contact which is harmful to the victim, theft
- verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, swearing
- emotional: including, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, isolation, sending hurtful text messages
- emotional and verbal bullying can be more difficult to cope with or prove than physical bullying
- racist: racial taunts, gestures, graffiti
- sexual: unwanted physical contact, abusive sexual comments, sexual innuendos, graffiti
- homophobic: taunts, teasing about the victim's sexuality, gestures, spreading rumours, sexual innuendos, unwanted physical contact, graffiti
- disability: taunts, gestures, graffiti, unwanted physical contact, teasing about the victim's disability
- e-bullying – texting, filming on mobiles, posting on social networks hurtful / humiliating content

Actions to prevent bullying:

- take all signs of bullying very seriously
- encourage children to speak and share their concerns
- have a clear anti-bullying policy to which staff, volunteers, parents / carers, children / young people sign up to
- improve supervision
- hold Club discussions on bullying

If bullying occurs the club will:

- take the problem seriously
- investigate it
- talk to the bullies and victims separately
- decide on appropriate action

Responding to suspected bullying:

- help the victim speak out
- take action to ensure the victim is safe
- inform parents / carers of victim → hold a follow-up meeting with the victim and their families to report progress
- talk to the bully to see if the allegation has any foundation, ideally not one-to-one
- try to get the bully/ies to see the consequences of their behaviour
- support / encourage bullies to change behaviour → obtain an apology from bully/ies to victim
- inform parents / carers of the bully/ies
- insist on the return or replacement of any items 'borrowed', stolen or destroyed
- impose appropriate sanctions against bully/ies in consultation with the parents / carers. These may result in the bully/ies being asked to leave the Club

- hold a follow-up meeting with the bully/ies and their families to report progress
- provide support to coaches of bullies and victim
- inform relevant members of the Club about the incident and any action taken
- keep a written record of incidents and action take
- report any concerns to the Named Child Protection Person

## **7. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A VOLUNTEER OR ANOTHER CHILD / YOUNG PERSON**

- As with any allegation of abuse this information must be passed on to the Named Child Protection Person. If the allegation is against the Named Child Protection Person concerns should be reported to a senior staff member and / or the relevant governing body for advice on how to proceed
- Fully support and protect any staff / volunteer who in good faith (without malicious intent) reports their concerns about a colleague's practice, or the possibility that a child / young person may be being abused. Staff / volunteers should be able to raise concerns confidentially if necessary
- Ensure the safety of the child / young person

As a preventative measure, procedures should be in place for the safer recruitment of volunteers.

## **8. USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC, VIDEO RECORDING, IMAGE RECORDING AND MOBILE PHONE CAMERA USE**

It is not the intention to prevent parents / carers from taking pictures, but to ensure that photographic practices are monitored and to reduce the risks of inappropriate photography / filming.

No one is permitted to photograph or record images in the following areas

- changing areas
- toilet areas
- First Aid room
- locker rooms
- Participants and parents / carers must be informed when a photographer will be attending an event
- Permission will only be granted after the Event Registration Form is completed
- Photographers will be required to have identification which must be worn at all times
- Children's / young people's images will not be used for promotional or press releases unless parents / carers have consented
- Unsupervised access to participants or one-to-one photo sessions are prohibited
- Photo sessions outside the event or at a participant's home are not allowed ☒ Personal details which might make a child / young person vulnerable, for example, address, email address, phone number, should never be revealed
- Any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography / filming reported to, or observed by, the event organiser must be followed up by them with the person in question. If concerns persist this person can be requested to leave the event.
- Use of video equipment is a legitimate coaching aid. Participants and parents / carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme. Care must be taken in the storing of these films

## **9. TRIPS, TOURS AND HOLIDAY CLUBS**

Travelling to away games and having trips away from home should be safe and fun for children. It should be a chance for them to grow in confidence, self-esteem and skills. Parents / carers will nearly always worry when their children are away but careful planning and preparation should help to ease their worries, and demonstrate that you have taken into account the various needs of their children and the potential dangers of a trip away.

- Adequate supervision must be provided if children / young people are taken on trips and tours. The children are over 8 years of age and thus there should always be 2 adults and a minimum of 1 adult to 10 children.

- A lead officer must be nominated on transported trips
- If parents and volunteers accompany any trip they will be under the direction of the lead officer
- The use of parents shall not compromise staff / child ratios
- Although parents / carers have a valuable and crucial role, they should not be left alone with children who are not their own
- The lead officer must have registration forms, a full and up to date first aid kit, medical notes, medicines and a mobile phone
- There should always be a qualified first aider
- Any hospital referrals must be relayed to parents / carers immediately
- A complete list of all children and adults must be drawn up and heads counted on departure and arrival
- All children should be seen to be picked up on return unless specifically told otherwise.
- At no time should a child be handed over without full confirmation by the parent / carer
- If a parent / carer fails to collect a child, two members of staff must be present and remain with the child / young person at all times. It is the duty of the lead officer to try and contact the parent / carer

### **Lost children**

- On suspicion of a lost child the lead officer will conduct a roll call without alarming the children
- The lead officer and one other staff member will conduct a thorough search of the premises and immediate vicinity
- Staff conducting the search and remaining staff must ensure a calm manner and normal routine will be conducted
- If the child is not found, the Police and the child's parent / carer will be contacted
- The Named Child Protection Person will be informed
- The relevant authorities will be informed
- Volunteers will work closely with the Police and parents / carers to ensure all relevant information is made available to aid the safe recovery of the child.
- The incident will be evaluated and fully discussed with all staff, Named Child Protection Person, Children's Social Services and the Police
- A full report will be produced
- Procedures and policies will be reviewed and amended if necessary

## **10. GOOD PRACTICE**

The following guidelines should be followed:

- Treat all children / young people equally, with respect and dignity
- Put the welfare of the child first, before winning or achieving goals
- Make the Club safe, fun, enjoyable and promote fair play
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback
- Use positive discipline, not humiliation
- All volunteers have access to training
- Avoid situations where you may be alone with a child or group of children and are completely unobserved
- Do not allow any physically rough or sexually provocative games or inappropriate talking or touching during any activity
- All physical interactions between adults and children must be appropriate to the situation. If physical contact needs to be made, for example, supporting a child/young person during a particular movement, the staff member should always explain what they are going to do and why beforehand. Physical contact should be minimised and ceased as soon as it is safe to do so.

## **11. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Spenborough and District AC takes whistleblowing seriously to promote a club culture of openness and accountability. We encourage all volunteers to raise concerns you may have about dangerous practice or serious risk as early as possible. We will respond appropriately to promote a safer club.

### **Raising a concern**

We hope you will raise your concern openly. However, we recognise that there may be circumstances when you would prefer to speak to someone in confidence first. You can access confidential advice from an independent body such as West Yorkshire Sport. If this is the case, please say so at the outset. If you ask us not to disclose your identity, we will not do so without your consent unless required by law. There may be times when we are unable to resolve a concern without revealing your identity, for example where your personal evidence is essential. In such cases, we will discuss with you whether and how the matter can best proceed.

### **How to raise a concern**

If you are unsure about raising a concern at any stage you can get independent advice from West Yorkshire Sport, England Athletics or UK Athletics or the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit. You do not need to have firm evidence before raising a concern. But we do ask that you explain as fully as you can the information or circumstances that gave rise to your concern.

#### **Step one**

If you have a concern about dangerous practice, serious risk or wrongdoing at work, raise it first with one of Spenborough and District AC's Senior Officers, for example, Welfare / Child Protection Officer, Chair or Secretary. This may be done verbally or in writing.

#### **Step two**

If you feel unable to raise the matter with one of the officers named above for whatever reason, or if there is a problem with the Club, raise the matter with the Club's National / Regional Governing Body responsible for your sport

#### **Step three**

If these channels have been followed and you still have concerns, or if you feel that the matter is so serious that you cannot discuss it with any of the above, please contact:

Child Protection in Sport Unit (England) NSPCC 0116 234 7278 [cpsu@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk)

### **How we will handle the matter**

Once you have told us of your concern, we will assess it and consider what action may be appropriate. This may involve an informal review, an internal inquiry or a more formal investigation. We will tell you who will be handling the matter, how you can contact them, and what further assistance we may need from you. If requested, we will write to you summarising your concern and setting out how we propose to handle it and provide a timeframe for feedback. If we have misunderstood the concern or there is any information missing let us know.

If you have any personal interest in the matter tell us at the outset.

It is a disciplinary matter to victimise a bona fide whistle blower and for someone to maliciously make a false allegation

Whenever possible, we will give you feedback on the outcome of any investigation.

## 12. PHOTOGRAPHY EVENT REGISTRATION FORM

**THIS FORM SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY ANYONE TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS OR RECORDING IMAGES AT AN EVENT**

I wish to take photographs or record images at this event. I agree to abide by the event organisers' guidelines and confirm that the photographs or recorded images will only be used for the purposes agreed with the event organiser.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel No: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this registration form to the event organiser