



SANDYLANDS
SPORTS CENTRE

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This child protection policy is a written document showing the manner in which the centre provides a duty of care for young people and to safeguard their well being and protect them from abuse. The details are for reference of centre staff and also for people who hire the facility. They are regularly reviewed and when necessary revised.

Last Review : January 2023

INTRODUCTION

In order to safeguard and promote the interests and well-being of the children, Sandylands Sports Centre (S.S.C.) will through recruitment, support, training and supervision, work together with parents/carers and other organisations to make sure that the needs and welfare of the children remain paramount.

PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. Staff who work in sports centres as a coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported to the manager.

Good Practice Guidelines

All personnel at S.S.C. are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within S.S.C.

Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment (e.g. no secrets)
- treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity
- always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
- making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered
- keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and professional development
- involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure centre assistants, parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given

Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the children involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Children can be abused by adults or other children. There is growing evidence to suggest that peer abuse is an increasing concern for young people.

- **Neglect** - where adults fail 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 (e.g. failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.) It may also include refusal to give children love, affection and attention. Neglect in sport could include a member of staff or volunteer not ensuring children were safe, exposing them to undue cold, heat or to unnecessary risk of injury.
- **Physical abuse** - where someone physically hurts or injures children by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, or scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after e.g. factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy. Examples of physical abuse in sport may be when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body; where drugs are used to enhance performance or delay puberty.
- **Sexual abuse** - where girls and boys are abused by adults or other children (both male and female) who use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) is also a form of sexual abuse. In sport, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.
- **Emotional abuse** - is the persistent emotional ill-treatment 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child. Emotional abuse in sport may occur if children are subjected to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently.

There is a growing awareness that children who live in extreme poverty, are socially excluded, live with domestic violence or where alcoholism or mental health problems exist, may be at greater risk of long term emotional abuse.

The above definitions are taken from the ISRM Child Protection Policy and Implementation Procedures.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Indications that a child may be being abused include 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 the explanation seems inconsistent.
- Someone else (a child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Has difficulty in making friends.
- Is prevented from socialising with other children.
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Loses weight for no apparent reason.
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is not the responsibility of those working in sport to decide that child abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

BULLYING

It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse, it may not always be an adult abusing a young person. It can occur that the abuser may be a young person, for example in the case of bullying. Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft) Verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of the peer group).

IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A CHILD

Please remember, it's not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being abused but we are asking you to act on your concerns. Complete a child protection incident record form and notify the manager or chief leisure attendant in his absence who will decide what action is to be taken.

IF A CHILD TELLS YOU THAT HE OR SHE IS BEING ABUSED

- React calmly so as not to frighten or deter them.
- Reassure them that you are glad that they told you
- Don't promise to keep it to yourself.
- Explain that you need to make sure that they will be safe and may have to pass on the information to someone trusted to deal with it appropriately

- Listen to what the child says and, please, take it seriously.
- Only ask questions if you need to clarify what the child is telling you - don't ask the child about explicit details.
- Don't ask leading questions - a leading question is one that presupposes the answer e.g. "Did Jim hit you?"
- Make a detailed note of what the child has told you but please don't delay passing on the information.

It is never easy to respond to a young person who tells you that they are being abused and you may feel upset and worried yourself. You will be offered support and an opportunity for debriefing, bearing in mind confidentiality.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. It is essential that the same procedures are used consistently whether staff be paid, unpaid or in part or full time employment.

- Pre-application forms sent to potential applicants should contain: a job description, person specification and an application form
- Referees will be specifically asked whether they deem the applicant suitable to work with young children
- All volunteers and staff working with children should be CRB checked

PHOTOGRAPHY

No photographs are to be taken without the prior permission of the management. Approval may require proof of identity to be produced and registration of the photographers' details. Photography in changing rooms and associated areas is not allowed. Staff should be aware that recent developments in mobile phones may also include cameras and these should not be allowed past the reception area.

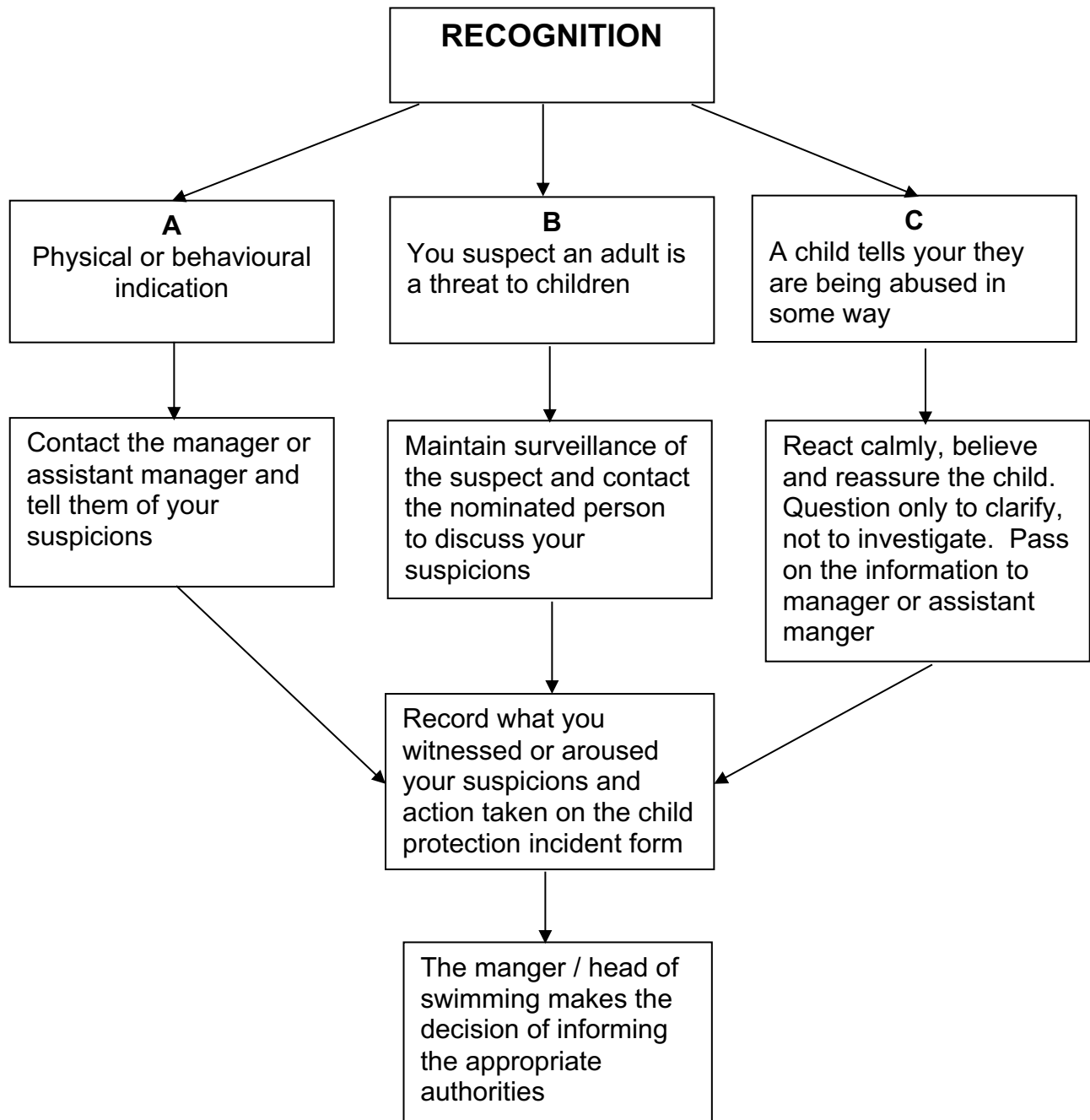
TRAINING

It should be clearly recognised that checks are part of the process to protect children from possible abuse. They must be operated in conjunction with appropriate training so that they are aware and sensitive to potentially abusive situations. All staff who work with young children should receive suitable and appropriate training to raise awareness of their role in recognising, understanding and the procedures for providing child protection.

REFERENCES

- Child Protection Policy and Implementation Procedures, ISRM 2006
- The F.A. Child Protection Policy, F.A. 2006

ACTION TO TAKE IF YOU SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE



Appendix A

CONTACTS

The NSPCC 42 Curtain Road London EC2A 3NH	National Centre	Tel: 0207 825 2500 Helpline: 0808 800 5000
Childline UK	Freepost 1111 London NI OBR	Tel: 0800 1111
Criminal Records Bureau Liverpool L69 2UH	P.O. Box 91	Tel: 0870 90 90 811
Child Protection in Sport Unit Beaumont Leys Leicester L4 IEZ	T3 Gilmour Close	Tel: 0116 2347273
The National Coaching Foundation Headingley Leeds LS6 3BJ	114 Cardigan Road	Tel: 01132744802
The Institute of Sport and Recreation Management	36/38 Sherrard Street Melton Mowbray Leicestershire LE 13 IXJ c-mail info@isrm.co.uk	Tel: 01664 565531
Local Social Services Contact including out of office hours		
Local police child protection team In an emergency use 999		
NSPCC Freephone 24 hour Helpline		0800 800 5000
The Royal Lifesaving Society UK	River House, High Street, Broom, Near Alcester, Warwickshire, B50 4HN	Tel: 01789 773994

CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT RECORD FORM

Your name:

Your position:

Child's name:

Child's address:

Parents/carers names and address:

Child's date of birth:

Date and Time of any incident:

Your Observations:

**Exactly what the child said and what you said:
(Remember, do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)**

Action taken so far:

External agencies contacted (date & time)

Police

If yes – which:

Yes/No

Name and Contact number

Details of advice received:

<p>Social Services</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of advice received:</p>
<p>NGB</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Local Authority</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>If Yes – which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of advice received:</p>
<p>Other (e.g. NSPCC)</p> <p>Yes/No</p>	<p>Which:</p> <p>Name and Contact number:</p> <p>Details of advice received:</p>

<p>Signature:</p> <p>Print Name:</p>	
<p>Date:</p>	

N.B. A copy of this form should be form should be sent to social services after the telephone report.

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis – only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.