

## **Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**

### **1. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

Poole Runners (“the Club”), including its coaches, officials and volunteers, has a duty of care to safeguard children/young people under the age of 18 (“children”) when they are participating in athletics activities under its auspices.

The Club adheres to the best practice guidelines as maintained by the UK Athletics Steering Group with a view to promoting the adoption of good and consistent safeguarding practices to ensure that children have a safe experience.

### **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

The Club fully accepts that it has a moral obligation to meet its duty of care to all children and to safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief, sex or gender and sexual orientation.

Key principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All individuals involved in athletics understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

In order to meet its safeguarding obligations, the Club, its coaches, officials and volunteers must:

- Provide and enforce procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants and protect them from abuse. This will ensure that 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
- Train and supervise its coaches, officials, and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves from false allegations
- Require its coaches, officials, and volunteers to adopt and abide by its Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Code of Conduct and the relevant grievance, investigatory and disciplinary procedures
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate complaints, child protection, disciplinary and appeals procedures
- Designate a person in the organisation who is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate DBS checks are completed
- Review policies regularly.

### **3. BEST PRACTICE PROCEDURES**

The Club, including its coaches, officials and volunteers, adopts a best practice policy towards child safeguarding. This means:

- 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, officials, volunteers or children.
- Listening to and supporting the person being bullied
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children
- Treating children 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
- 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 child/athlete and that consent for contact has been given by the individual and appropriate parental/carer consent obtained
- Being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching and ensuring that your licence remains valid
- Ensuring that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each athlete.

If a child athlete:

- is accidentally hurt;
- appears distressed in any manner;
- appears to be sexually aroused by the actions of another; or
- misunderstands or misinterprets the actions of another,

then the incident should be reported immediately to another colleague/volunteer, a written note must be made of the incident and parents/carers and/or appropriate adults informed. The Club Welfare Officer should also be informed.

The Club Welfare Officer is a designated and trained Club member who is the lead on all welfare issues. They are the first point of contact for Club staff, volunteers, children and parents/carers in respect of child welfare issues, poor practice or potential or alleged abuse.

#### 4. DUTY OF CARE AND THE SCREENING OF COACHES, OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS

'Duty of care' is a common law duty that applies to all individuals and organisations. Clubs have a duty of care towards their members and are responsible for ensuring all club activity is safe. Everyone has a role to play in keeping others safe and all club members should know what to do if they have any concerns.

The Club adheres to UK Athletics' recommended practice:

- Adopts the UK Athletics Safeguarding Policy and ensures the Club is welfare-compliant with England Athletics guidance. The Club works through the England Athletics Club Welfare Framework and ensures it is compliant with all areas

- Appoints a minimum of two Club Welfare Officers that are appropriately trained. England Athletics provides an online safeguarding course through Educare and a face-to-face workshop (Time to Listen) that must be completed by Club Welfare Officers
- Only uses appropriately licensed UK Athletics coaches or leaders (therefore DBS checked) at a level relevant to their membership base and activities. The Club checks this through the UK Athletics myAthletics web portal
- Implements a Health & Safety policy that is relevant to its activities and carries out the required risk assessments. Both the Policy and Risk Assessment are written down, accepted by the Committee and then communicated to all members in a simple and easy-to-understand way.

Coaches, officials and volunteers should familiarise themselves with England Athletics and Club guidelines.

The Club ensures that all coaches and officials who have contact with children under the Club's duty of care hold a DBS certificate as well as a UK Athletics licence. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) is a government department which performs criminal record checks on people for certain roles, either paid or volunteering. Coaches and officials are required to apply for a new DBS certificate every three years through UK Athletics.

Volunteers are people who help but are not qualified to coach or officiate and are required to complete a Self-Declaration and Disclosure form which has been devised by UK Athletics.

The Club maintains a record of DBS certificates and licences for coaches and officials, and Self-Declaration and Disclosure forms for volunteers. All data is held in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules.

## 5. RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES, SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

It is the responsibility of coaches, officials and volunteers to report any concerns about the welfare of a child. These concerns may arise due to:

- a child disclosing that they are being abused;
- the behaviour of an adult towards a child;
- a number of indicators observed in a child over a period of time.

Any person with information of a disclosure, allegation, or concern about the welfare of a child must immediately report this to Club Welfare Officer who will refer the matter to UK Athletics' Child Protection Lead Officer.

## 6. A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO CHILD PROTECTION

The Club urges children under its duty of care to read "A Young Person's Guide to Child Protection" as devised by UK Athletics. This guide outlines how a child should know when they are being bullied or abused, what to do if that happens and who they should speak to. The guide is available on the Club's website and by following this link:

<http://www.uka.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/A-young-persons-guide-to-child-protection-2020.pdf>

## 7. USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC & VIDEO IMAGES OF CHILDREN

Poole Runners is committed to providing a safe environment for children to participate in athletics. Essential to this commitment is to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect children from the inappropriate use of photographic images. The Club has adopted the following good practice guidelines issued by UK Athletics:

Publishing images:

- Through the use of a Consent Form, the Club will ask for the permission of young athletes and their carers to take and use their image. If an athlete is named, the Club will avoid using their photograph
- If a photograph is used, the Club will avoid naming the athlete.
- The Club will NEVER publish personal details (email addresses, telephone numbers, addresses etc) of a child
- The Club will only authorise the use of images of children in suitable dress (tracksuit, athletics clothing, i.e. T-shirt/vest top/shorts/skirt).

Use of photographic filming equipment at athletic events:

Poole Runners will:

- Inform athletes and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs
- Not allow unsupervised access to athletes or one-to-one photo sessions at events
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at an athlete's home
- Act on the concerns of any athletes and parents regarding the inappropriate use of photographic equipment
- Inform children and their parents/carers if video equipment is to be used as a coaching aid and gain their consent
- Ensure that any photographic images taken and used will be stored safely.