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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

All Organisations, which make provisions for children and young people, must ensure that;

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial
- origin religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded
- to swiftly and appropriately;
- All staff (paid/unpaid) working in All Souls Crompton Community Centre
- Group have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer
- A registration form for each child must be completed who attend any activities organised by the club

Staff/ Volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or not decide if abuse is occurred.

Policy Statement

All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved through attendance to the following child protection guidelines.

A child is defined as Under 18 – The Children’s Act 1989

Policy Aims

The aim of the All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group child protection policy is to improve good practice;

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group
- Allow all staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
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- **Promoting Good Practice with Young People**

Introduction

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 sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. 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 following the guidelines in this document. When a child enters the club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the Child's self esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good practice Guidelines

All personnel should be 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 All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group.

Good Practice Means;

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved
- situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. 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 and achieving goals
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- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in decision making processes.
- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be
 - provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the coach education programme. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. 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 insurance in sport
- Involving parent/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 parent/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. (NB however, same gender abuse can also occur)
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol
 - in the company of young people
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticisms
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if this need arises
 - to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars

Practice to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the Child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session;

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;
- Avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you;

Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned, you should never;

Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;

Share a room with a child

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 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;

Invent or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised

NB. 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 person's reactions. If a person is fully dependant on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for task for which you are not appropriately trained.

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record of the incident. You should always ensure that the parent of the child is informed.

- If you accidentally hurt a player
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a player misunderstand or misinterpret something you have done.

Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at Sporting Events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all clubs be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to the club chairman.

Videoing as a coaching aid; there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such films. All young people to complete photo/video consent form prior to activities to ensure parental consent. SEE APPENDIX

Recruitment and selecting staff and volunteers

All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. When undertaking preselection checks the following should be included:

- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form
- will elect information about applicants past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the
- criminal record bureau
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with

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- children these references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone
- contact
- Evidence of identity. (Passport or driving license with photo)

Responding to Suspicions or Allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group in a paid or unpaid capacity to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation

- A criminal investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessary.

Actions if there concerns

The following action should be taken if there are concerns (See Appendix A)

Poor Practice

If following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant officer who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings

Suspected Abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the club child protection officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The club child protection officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out of hours. The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department

The club child protection officer should also notify the relevant officer who in turn will inform the All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group child protection officer who will deal with any media enquiries

If the club child protection officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate manager or in his/her absence All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group child protection officer who will refer the allegation to social services.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people;

The club child protection officer;

The parents of the person who is alleged to have been accused

The person making the allegation

Social services/police;

The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child) *

*seek social services advice on who should approach alleged abuser.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure)

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

- All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group child protection officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely that not that the allegation is true. The welfare of children should always remain paramount.

Support to deal with the aftermath

- Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to
- children, parents and members of staff. Use help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British association of counselling directory may be useful resource.
- Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse

Allegations of Previous Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children) where such an allegation is made, the club should follow procedures as detailed as above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the protection of children act 1999.

Action if bullying is suspected

The same procedure should be followed as set out in section 6.3 if bullying is suspected. All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport;

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (it is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately) help the victim speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take actions to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully (ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when)
- Report any concerns to the club child protection officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring)

Action towards the Bully (ies);

- Talk with the bully (ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s)
- Inform the bullies parents
- Insist on the return of borrowed items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim
- Provide support for the leader of the victim
- Impose sanctions as necessary

- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress
- Inform all organisations members actions taken
- Keep a written record of action taken

**Appendix A:
A Quick Guide to Procedures**

This guide is designed to inform the most appropriate action in relation to concerns about either a parent or carer. (e.g. Outside the immediate sporting development).

Are you concerned about the behaviour of a parent or carer?

Yes

Report your concerns to the group child protection officer. If the group child protection officer is not available the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately. Social services and the person reporting concerns decide how to involve parents/carers.

Record what the child has said, or what has been seen. Include date and times and, if possible, send a copy to social services.

REMEMBER:

Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only.

Ensure the club child protection officer follows up with social services.

The group child protection officer should also report the incident to social services who would ascertain whether or not the person's involved in the incident play a role in and act accordingly.

This guide is designed to inform the most appropriate action in relation to concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within All Souls Crompton Community Centre Group

Are you concerned about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer?

Yes

Could it also be child abuse

Is it serious poor practice/ an alleged breach of the code of ethics and conduct

Yes

Yes

The club child protection officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue

Report concerns to the club child protection officer who must then ensure the safety of the child. This person will then refer concerns to the social services. The club child protection officer should also inform sport child protection officer.

If concerns remain refer to the club chairman who will decide how to handle the issue in conjunction with the protection officer

If an allegation/ concern refer to the club child protection officer, refer directly to the appropriate club chairman who in consultation with the child protection officer will facilitate referral of the concerns to social services who may involve the police.

Disciplinary Committee Investigation

In all cases ensure the appropriate Club chairman contacted who will then advise the child protection officer

Possible Outcomes of hearing:

- No cases to answer
- Warrants advice/ warning as to future misconduct/ sanctions

- Further training and support needed

Possible outcomes:

- Police Enquiry
- Criminal Proceedings
- Referral back to disciplinary Committee

Appeals Committee

- Possible Civil proceedings

What to do if there are concerns

Information passed to the social services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/ concern. Information should include the following;

- Name of child
- Age of child and date of birth
- Home address and telephone number
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, time, any special factors and other relevant information
- Make clear distinctions between what is fact, opinion and hearsay
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries, behaviour signs indirect signs?
- Witnesses to the incidents
- The Childs account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how many and bruising or other injuries occurred.
- If so what has been said
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details
- If it is not the child making the report has the child concerned been spoken to?
- If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details

All Souls Crompton Community Centre Child Protection Officer

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