

## **Kirkby-in-Furness Community Centre**

### **Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy**

*(Based on a policy by the NSPCC)*

**Name of Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult**

**Protection Officer: ....Fiona Roberts..... Telephone: ....01229 889282...**

**Introduction: Safeguarding is every member's responsibility.**

All sports and leisure organization's which make provision 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 beliefs and/or sexual identity 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 volunteers working in sports and leisure have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

Staff/volunteers are not specifically trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred. However we acknowledge that everyone has a duty of care.

#### **Policy statement**

**Kirkby Community Centre has a duty of care to safeguard all children using the Community Centre 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. Kirkby Community Centre will ensure the safety and protection of all children using the Community Centre through adherence to the Child Protection Good Practice Guidelines adopted by Kirkby Community Centre Committee.**

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

In this policy document statements referring to children and young people are intended to apply equally to vulnerable adults.

#### **Policy aims**

The aim of the **Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy** is to promote good practice in providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Kirkby Community Centre or its sports clubs.

#### **Promoting good practice**

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. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. **All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.**

#### **Good practice guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

### **Good practice means:**

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with 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 players (e.g. it is not appropriate for volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Ensuring no child travels alone in a car with an adult.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empower 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 and young people and their parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed sex teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by an adult male and female. However, remember that some 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 criticism.
- Recognizing 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 the need arises to administer 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, where appropriate, if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

### **Practices to be avoided**

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

- avoid spending time alone with the child away from others
- avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event or activity.

### **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. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer.

**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 made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and their consent obtained, and such films should be stored safely.

### **Induction interview**

All volunteers who might work with children should receive an induction interview, during which:

- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.
- They should sign up to the Community Centre's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.

*Kirkby Community Centre* requires:

- each sports club to maintain its own accident book, and to report all serious incidents to the Management Committee as soon as possible.
- relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behavior of an adult towards a young person.
- relevant personnel to gain national first aid training (where necessary), and
- attend update training when necessary. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from Sports Coach UK, the NSPCC, and the Sports Council.

### **Responding to allegations or suspicions**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Kirkby Community Centre, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

Kirkby Community Centre will assure all 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 volunteer 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 and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

## Action if there are concerns

### 1. Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult **Protection Officer** will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant **Sport Governing Body officer** who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

### 2. Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a volunteer should be reported to the Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult **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 Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the **Social Services** department, who may involve the police.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services department.
- The Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer should also notify the relevant **Sport Governing Body officer**, who in turn will inform the Sport Governing Body's Child Protection Officer, who will deal with any media enquiries.
- If the Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate **Committee Member** or in his/her absence to the **Sport Governing Body 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 Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult **Protection Officer**
  - the **parents** of the person who is alleged to have been abused
  - the **person making the allegation**
  - **Social Services/police**
  - the Kirkby **Community Centre Committee** and relevant **Sport Governing Body Child Protection Officer**

Seek Social Services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

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

- The Kirkby Community Centre Child and Vulnerable Adult 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, the Kirkby Community Centre Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a 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, the Kirkby Community Centre Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information, which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.
- Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse:
- Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and volunteers may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, E-mail: bac@bacp.co.uk, Internet: www.bacp.co.uk .
- Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.
- **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 volunteer who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the Social Services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, 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.

### 3. Concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. about a parent or carer):

Report your concerns to **Social Services or the police** as soon as possible.

### 4. Information for Social Services or the police about suspected abuse

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioral changes.

- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or Social Services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

(If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact Social Services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.)

### 5. Monitoring and review

- Kirkby Community Centre Committee will establish appropriate information and monitoring systems to assist the effective implementation of our Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.
- Our Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy will be reviewed annually and action taken as necessary.

Date: .....November 2020 ..... Next Review due: ....November 2020

Signature: .....Chair

Signature: ..... Treasurer

Signature: ..... Secretary

Signature: ..... Child Protection Officer

A copy of approved document to be sent to all Sports Clubs Secretary's