



WOKING HOCKEY CLUB

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY POLICY, GUIDELINES, IMPLEMENTATION

Acknowledgements

This policy is based on the England Hockey Child Welfare Policy.

SECTION A

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

Woking Hockey Club Believes:

- It is important to protect and promote the safety and welfare of children.
- All children have a right to be protected from abuse.
- The rights, dignity and worth of a child should always be respected.
- That everyone with a role in working with children has a moral and legal responsibility to safeguard and promote a child's welfare particularly when it comes to protecting children from abuse.
- That special care is needed in dealing with children whose age, inexperience or ability makes them particularly vulnerable to abuse.

Woking Hockey Club:

- Has adopted this Child Protection Policy to protect the welfare and safety of children in the club's care or custody, and to raise awareness of the issues and promote good practice amongst members.
- Is committed to providing an environment where children can learn about, participate in and enjoy hockey free from harassment or abuse.

Who This Policy Applies To:

The Children Act 1989 states that anyone who is involved in the care of children should "do what is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare".

The England Hockey Child Protection Policy applies to any person or organisation involved in the care of children in hockey.

A 'Child' is defined as any person under the age of 18 years AND anyone over 18 years who may be vulnerable by nature of any impairment or disability.

Woking Hockey Club, (WHC), has therefore adopted this child welfare policy to complement that of England Hockey, to whom it is affiliated. **All club members are required to adhere to the policy**, as it relates not only to the club's junior section, but also to protect and promote child welfare throughout the club's activities.

SECTION B

CHILD WELFARE DEFINITIONS

The Difference between Poor Practice & Abuse

Poor Practice

Poor practice includes any behaviour that contravenes England Hockey Policy on Ethics, Conduct and Discipline as constituted around the following:

- Rights – for example of the player, the parent, the coach, the official etc.
- Responsibilities – for example responsibility for the welfare of the players, the sport, the profession of coaching/umpiring, their own development.
- Respect – for example of other players, officials and their decisions, coaches, the rules.

Abuse

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse.

- **Physical Abuse**
- **Emotional Abuse**
- **Sexual Abuse**
- **Neglect**

SECTION C

CHILD WELFARE PROCEDURES

Recognising Child Abuse

WHC will endeavour to ensure that coaches trained to at least Level 1 are present at all junior coaching sessions. Such coaches will have received some training in recognising symptoms of child abuse. More information is provided in the England Hockey Child Welfare Pack, and in various publications, such as the NSPCC's "Protecting Children - A Guide for Sportspeople".

Recognising child abuse is not easy, and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or a child is at significant risk. You do, however, have a responsibility to act if you have a concern.

The following information is not designed to turn you into an expert, but it will help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

1. Physical Abuse

Physical signs of abuse may include unexplained injuries.

Indicative changes in behaviour may include fear of parents being approached for an explanation.

2. Emotional Abuse

Physical signs of emotional abuse may include sudden speech disorders.

Indicative changes of behaviour may include fear of making mistakes.

Examples of emotional abuse in sport could include constant criticism, name-calling, and sarcasm, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently.

3. Sexual Abuse

Children who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. It is important therefore, that they are listened to and taken seriously.

Indicative behaviour may include saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about, or acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

4. Neglect

Physical signs may include inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Neglect in sport could include a coach not ensuring that children are safe, exposing them to undue cold or heat or to unnecessary risk of injury.

The above list is not meant to be definitive but as a guide to assist you. It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. **There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour.**

Responding To Poor Practice and Abuse

Responding To a Child

If a child says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or information is obtained that gives concern that a child is being abused, the person receiving this information should:

- Take what the child says seriously.
- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Tell the child that he / she is not to blame and were right to tell.
- Reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Keep any questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.

- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible and complete the EH referral form.
- Ask the child if immediate protection is needed.

Responding To Suspicions or Allegations

- If anyone has concerns that abuse may have taken place, these should be directed to the Club Welfare Officer, Sarah Hubbard (sez@mail.ie, 01483 829869 or 07946 486406), who shall report it to the England Hockey (EH) Child Welfare Officer who will report to Social Services, the Police or the NSPCC and provide further guidance.
- A full record of what has been said, heard and / or seen including dates and times should be completed and forwarded to the Club Welfare Officer.
- **In urgent cases when the Club Welfare Officer is not available the Colts Chairman, or in their absence the England Hockey Child Welfare Officer and/or local Social Services or the Police should be contacted.**
- Social Services will always be happy to discuss, even hypothetically, any concerns a person may have about child protection matters and advise on whether it is necessary to make an official referral.

Allegation against a Person Working Within Hockey - (Volunteer and professional)

- It is important that anyone dealing with children should be aware that not all child abuse occurs within the extended family setting.
- It is essential that all responsible adults must be vigilant and aware that any inappropriate actions may lead to putting themselves at risk.
- All responsible adults should be aware that any allegations made against them will be taken seriously and will be investigated according to the steps outlined in the EH Guidelines.
- An individual against whom allegations / suspicions have been raised will be treated fairly and with respect, and is presumed to be innocent until judged to be otherwise.
- All allegations, suspicion, comment or complaint will be treated in the utmost confidence – this applies equally to the child, the person making the allegation or the person against whom the allegation is made.
- Should the club be informed that an allegation of abuse has been made against an adult within the organisation the EH Child Welfare Officer must be notified immediately.
- Should any person find themselves accused of any form of abuse they should contact the EH Child Welfare Officer for advice.

Should any person involved with hockey suspect that a colleague is abusing a child this should be reported immediately to the Child Welfare Officer or a senior member of the organisation involved, and Social Services, the Police or the NSPCC.

SECTION D

RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and disabled adults.

Pre-Recruitment Checks

The following pre-recruitment checks should always be carried out:

• Advertising

If any form of advertising is used to recruit staff, it should reflect the:

- Aims of the Organisation and where appropriate, the particular programme involved.
- Responsibilities of the role.
- Level of experience or qualifications required (e.g. experience of working with children is an Advantage).
- The Club's positive stance on child protection.

• Pre-Application Information

Pre-application information sent to interested or potential applicants should contain:

- A job description including roles and responsibilities.

- A person specification (e.g., stating qualifications or experience required).
- An application form.

• Applications

All applicants for paid positions should complete an application and self declaration form which should elicit the following information:

- *Name, address and National Insurance Number (to confirm identity and right to work).*
- *Relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken.*
- *Listing of past career or involvement in sport (to confirm experience and identify any gaps).*
- *Any criminal record.*
- *Whether the applicants are known to any social services department as being an actual or potential risk to children or young people, a self-disclosure question to establish whether they have ever had action taken against them in relation to child abuse, sexual offences or violence.*
- *The names of at least two people (not relatives) willing to provide written references that comment on the applicant's previous experience of, and suitability for, working with children and young people (previous employer).*
- *Any former involvement with the sport.*
- *The applicant's consent to criminal record checks being undertaken if necessary.*

The forms should also state that failure to disclose information or subsequent failure to conform to the club's policies will result in disciplinary action and possible exclusion from the club. (Sample forms are provided by EH.)

Checks and References

- The Club is affiliated to England Hockey as a registered body and accesses the EH Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) service, which provides criminal record checks for volunteers, to employers or voluntary organisations.
- All coaches who regularly work with children will be asked to provide a recent CRB check (Within 3 years), or agree to a CRB check being carried out. Rechecks will be carried out every 3 years.
- For externally recruited posts, a minimum of two written references should be taken up and at least one should be associated with former work with children/young people. If an applicant has no experience of working with children, training is strongly recommended. Written references should always be followed up and confirmed by telephone.

Training

- Checks are only part of the process to protect children from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice/concerns of possible abuse.
- It is recommended that all staff working with children must be up to date, or receive training in the following areas:
 - Child protection awareness (e.g. **scUK** workshop on *Good Practice and Child Protection*).
 - First aid (e.g. **scUK/BRC** *Emergency First Aid for Sport*, Ambulance First Aid qualifications).
 - How to work effectively with children (e.g. **scUK** workshops on *Working with Children, Coaching Children and Young People, Responsible Sports Coach*).
 - Child-centred coaching styles (e.g. **scUK** workshop *Coaching Methods and Communication*).

Monitoring and Appraisal

- All staff or volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive formal (e.g., through an appraisal) or informal feedback, to identify training needs and set new goals. Managers should be sensitive to any concerns about poor practice or abuse and act on them at an early stage. They should also offer appropriate support to those who report concerns/complaints.

Complaints Procedures

- Concerns about possible child abuse should be immediately reported to the Child Welfare Officer.

The Club Captain, Team Captain, or Junior Manager as appropriate should be informed of any concerns or suggestions about the support given to young players.

SECTION E

CODE OF CONDUCT & GOOD PRACTICE

General Good Practice in the Care of Children

All People Caring For Children Are Expected To Adhere To The Following Guidelines When Dealing With Players.

- Always be publicly open when working with children. Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people or at least that you are in sight or hearing of others.
- Manual support is rarely required in the sport of hockey. If an adult feels that it is necessary the reasons should be clearly explained to the child, and if possible the parents/carers. Be aware that any physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted.
- Where possible, parents should be responsible for their own child in the changing rooms.
- Treat all children and young people with respect.
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour that they do not like.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicious of abuse.

All People Caring For Children Should Also Be Aware That As General Rule It **Does Not Make Sense To:**

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone on car journeys, however short.
- Take children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should occur only with the full knowledge and consent of the child's parents.

You Should Never

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Allow allegations of a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.
- Allow bullying or bad behaviour by children.
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- Show favouritism to any individual.
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'.
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice, dictate otherwise.

You Should Give Guidance And Support To Inexperienced Helpers.

If you accidentally hurt a child, the child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incident as soon as possible to another colleague and make a brief note of it. Parents or guardians should be informed of the incident.

It is strongly recommended that you do not work completely alone with groups of children, enlist the support of others – assistants, parents/carers.

All Planned Trips (including training, tournaments, and home and away matches)

General

Parents of young players will be required to provide relevant personal and medical information and emergency contact details, and asked to consent to travel and emergency first aid. Parents/carers are requested to provide this at the start of the season, or upon their child joining the club.

Relevant Club Officers, e.g., coaches and captains, will ensure that such information is available at coaching sessions and matches.

Relevant Club Officers as above will ensure that a fully charged mobile phone is available at pitch side in case of emergency.

A first aid kit will be at pitch side for coaching sessions and matches.

Team Captains/coaches/young players as appropriate should ensure that parents/carers have contact details of a responsible adult for coaching sessions matches etc.

Parents/carers should be given full information about a trip, including details of the programme of events, the activities in which the children will be engaged and the supervision ratios. Once a young player is mature enough to play in a senior team, they are deemed responsible for providing such information to their parents/carers. The club will provide adequate civil and third party liability insurance cover for volunteer coaches.

Junior Coaching Sessions

Parents/guardians of children aged up to 11 are requested to deliver and collect their children from pitch side promptly at coaching sessions. They are requested to inform the coach if somebody else will be collecting their child. The coach will take a register of attendance at the start of each junior coaching session.

During The Trip

- All children should have adequate breaks for the length of the day and the intensity of the practices/games.
- Children should not be put in physical danger through inappropriate grouping.
- Adults take care when participating in games with children.
- Children do not play more than is desirable for their age and/or ability.
- Opportunity should be given for children to eat and drink as may be appropriate.
- Contact/medical information should be available for any minor involved in an adult team.
- All children should be adequately supervised, preferably by two or more adults, and engaged in suitable activities at all times.
- In circumstances when planned activities are disrupted, e.g. due to weather conditions, then organisers should have a number of alternative activities planned.
- Do not conduct meetings with children while they are changing.
- Do not be alone in a changing room with children while they are changing or showering.
- Do not deal with children's injuries without having another adult present.
- Do not ask children to perform in training sessions or games whilst injured if by doing so they make the injury worse. Coaches should advise players to seek appropriate medical help or advice concerning injuries.
- Do not be alone with individual children in any situation particularly at the end of the sessions or in the dark.
- Do not offer to take children home or allow others to take them home without the specific permission of the parents/guardian.
- Do not supply or encourage under-age children to purchase/consume alcohol or banned substances of any sort or supply or encourage pornographic material. This is especially relevant to adult tours by clubs/organisations.

Further information and guidance regarding Child Welfare in hockey is available online at www.englishockey.org or by contacting the England Hockey Child Welfare Officer at England Hockey, Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, Near Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 1RR

Main Club Contacts

Child Welfare Officer: Sarah Hubbard, sez@mail.ie 01483 829869 or 07946 486406.

Colts Chairman: Chris Burton-Brown, burtonbrown@clara.co.uk 01483 770277 or 07715 496470

Club Chairman: John Hughes, chairman@wokinghc.com

Ladies Club Captain: Kirsty Rostren, LadiesPlaying@wokinghc.com

Men's Club Captain: Paul Bloomfield, MensPlaying@wokinghc.com

Appendices

1. Safety - Accident Report Form (14 c)
2. EH Safeguarding Reporting Procedures (9 c)
3. EH Safeguarding Referral Form (8 c)
4. Job Description – Club Child Welfare Officer (9 b)

Standard England Hockey templates 14 c, 9 c, 8 c, and 9 b, will be respectively used as attached.
(Hard copy only, or download from www.englishockey.com)