



Safeguarding Policy

Active Communities Experiences

As at 12th March 2021



SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

POLICY AIMS

Active Communities Experiences ("ACE") has a duty of care to safeguard all children or vulnerable persons involved in the club, 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. ACE will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in the club through adherence to:

- The Child Protection guidelines and code of practice adopted by the club.
- England Squash Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Squash Policy.

The aim of this Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children, young people and vulnerable persons with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of DSRC.
- Allow all members, visitors and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific issues.

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

A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or over, who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability, or unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation (Definition from the Department of Health 2002).

POLICY

ACE will ensure that:

- Everyone is treated with respect.
- All people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- Activities take place in a safe and secure environment.
- The welfare of a child or vulnerable person is paramount.
- The club has a named Safeguarding Lead who is appointed by the Committee.
- Adults who work with young people are checked and cleared through the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).
- Opportunities exist for young people and parents/primary carers to talk to us about any concerns they may have.
- Young people and parents/primary carers feel comfortable and confident enough to discuss attitudes and behaviours they do not like.
- Adults associated with ACE will take appropriate action when young people or parents/primary carers express concern about abuse.
- All members, visitors or volunteers working in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.



- The appropriate authorities or charities are advised about any allegation/suspicion or claims regarding poor practice (e.g. Social Services, Police, the NSPCC, Childline).
- It is not the responsibility of any member, visitor or volunteer at ACE 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.
- Information about an alleged abuse will be shared on a "need to know" basis and treated in the strictest confidence.
- The alleged abusers right to confidentiality will also be upheld.
- Through the adoption of good practice measures, the opportunity for abuse to occur within, or as a result of the clubs activities, is minimised.

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE AND LEGISLATION

This section gives an overview of U.K. and international legislation and government guidance.

- Every Child Matters 2003
- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Police Act 1997
- The Criminal Justices and Court Services Act 2000
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- "Caring for the young and vulnerable" – Home Office guidance for preventing the abuse of trust 1999
- The 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' – Department of Health 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children – HM Government 2013
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – 1990
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

CHILD PROTECTION – GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Promoting good practice

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 the appropriate 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. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will 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.

When a child enters the club activity 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 activity organiser 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 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 members and visitors or volunteers 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 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 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 and their parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained.
- 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 teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that 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 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.
- 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 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, 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 children away from others.
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event or activity.

Practices 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 a form of control.
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

It may sometimes be necessary for members, visitors 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 players involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent 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 tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are 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 misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

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 Club Safeguarding Officer.



Videoring 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.

Recruitment and training of members and visitors and volunteers

ACE 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.

Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All volunteers/members and visitors should register with ACE
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS).
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).
- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).
- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.
- They should sign up to and understand the clubs codes of conduct and Safeguarding Policy.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help members and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely effectively with children.

ACE requirements

- All club coaching staff over the age of 16 must have an up to date DBS check.
- A volunteer assisting with coaching must have had a valid DBS check within the last 3 years. A DBS check must be obtained if a valid certificate cannot be produced.
- All coaching staff to attend or complete an online recognised good practice and child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection.
- Non-coaching staff and volunteers over 16 years old to complete a recognised awareness training on child protection.
- Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- All coaching staff must hold a relevant First Aid certificate.



- A level 1 coach operating solo must be a minimum of 18 years old.
- Any volunteer under 16 years old, assisting with coaching, must have a club induction session with a level 2 coach before commencing on court activity.
- Attend update training when necessary. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from Sports Coach UK, the NSPCC, and the Sport Council.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of members, visitors or volunteers at ACE 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 Club Safeguarding Officer or the appropriate authorities.

ACE will assure all members, visitors and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that someone is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member, visitor or volunteer there may be two types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation.
- A child protection investigation.

Reporting concerns about suspected abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member, visitor or a volunteer should be reported to the Club Safeguarding 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 Safeguarding 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.

If the Club Safeguarding Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the club Chairman 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 Safeguarding Officer.
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- Social Services/Police.

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).

ENQUIRIES AND FURTHER ACTION

Internal enquiries and possible suspension

The Club Safeguarding Officer will make an immediate decision about whether the membership of 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 Club Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member 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 Club 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, members or visitors 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 at 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 member, visitor or 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 the club, 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.

Bullying

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying:



- 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 to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully 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 Safeguarding Officer.

Action towards the bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully, explain the situation, and try to get the bully to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents/carers.
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the victim's coach.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.
- Most 'low level' incidents will be dealt with at the time by coaches and volunteers. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault), or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, incidents should be referred to the Club Safeguarding Officer.

Reporting concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. a parent or carer)

Report your concerns to the Club Safeguarding Officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible.

If the Club Safeguarding 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 Club Safeguarding Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers. The Club Safeguarding Officer should also report the incident to the Club Committee. The Club Committee should ascertain whether or not the person(s) involved in the incident play a role in ACE and act accordingly.

Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only.

Providing information to police or social services

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. It should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- 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. Include 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 behavioural 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 have any concerns about a child or young person call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or visit www.nspcc.org.uk for immediate advice

Children and young people can call the NSPCC on 0808 1111

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO POLICY – JUNIOR MEMBERS_

ACE may wish, on occasion, to take or use images of its junior members for the following purposes:

- To promote the clubs activities or celebrate achievements to help increase participation.
- To take video footage of juniors playing squash as a coaching tool.

The club is aware that use of images on websites or social media, can have a potential to put a child at risk of abuse. However the club does not advocate the banning of photography or video coaching, but instead will ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place to prevent any images being used for inappropriate purposes.

Therefore the club adopts the following measures for use of photography or video at the club, or associated events, which may include junior members or visitors:

1. Photography for publication purposes is only permitted by the Club Committee.
2. If a parent wishes to take photos which will include children other than their own, at any club event, they must first request permission from a Committee member.
3. Photographs are used to promote the positive aspects of the club, or sport and therefore any images taken will be in this context.
4. No photographs will be taken unless the child is made aware at the time of this activity.
5. No photographs or video footage will be taken of children, where a parent has indicated that they do not want their child's image taken or used.
6. The club will not use the names of children next to photos on the website or other social media unless a specific request is made to the parent and permission given in writing.



7. Images will be only be taken of children in suitable dress / kit.
8. Before any image is put on the club website or social media, consideration will be given as to whether this image is appropriate, or if it could inadvertently put the child at any risk.
9. Videoing of children may be used for club promotion purposes and an aid to coaching by club coaches. At the end of a coaching session, any video footage of juniors will be erased by the coach.
10. Before any video footage is taken, the persons being videoed will be asked for permission and explained what the purpose of the video is and where it may be used.

The club adopts the good practice guidelines for photography and video, issued by the Child Protection in Sport Unit (www.thecpsu.org.uk).