

Spalding Cycling Club Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Spalding Cycling Club will make provisions for children and young people to 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 will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All volunteers working in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the clubs welfare officer

Policy Statement

Spalding Cycling Club has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in related club activities 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.

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

Policy Aims

The aim of the Spalding Cycling Club Safeguarding Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Spalding Cycling Club
- Allowing all volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding/child protection issues

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 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.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication)
- 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 riders (e.g. it is not appropriate for 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 is provided openly and according to guidelines.
- Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained before offering any form of manual/physical support. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about this and their views should always be carefully considered
- 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 (e.g. 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) it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club and / or the child's parents:

- Avoid spending time alone with children away from others
- Avoid taking a child to an event / session or taking them home afterwards

The following practices 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
- 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
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised

Incidents that Must be Reported/Recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the welfare officer and record the incident. The welfare officer, event organiser or a committee member will ensure the parent of the child is informed;

If you accidentally hurt another rider

If he/she seems distressed in any manner

If a rider appears to be sexually aroused by your actions

If a rider misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

Responding to Allegations or Suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone in Spalding Cycling Club 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.

Spalding Cycling Club 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 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 necessarily.

Action if there are Concerns

1. Concerns about Poor Practice:

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the Welfare Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Welfare Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the committee 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 Welfare 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 Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the Social Services department who may involve the Police, or will go directly to the Police in an emergency.

The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services department.

If the Welfare Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to a committee member 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 Welfare Officer
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services / Police
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child). Social Services will advise on who should approach the 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).

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 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.

Action if Bullying is Suspected

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

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
- 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(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 Welfare Officer

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 bully's / bullies' parents
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate 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 committee members of action taken
- Keep a written record of action taken

Concerns Outside the Immediate Sporting Environment (e.g. a Parent or Carer):

Report your concerns to the Welfare Officer, who should contact Social Services or the Police as soon as possible. See below for the information Social Services or the Police will need.

If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact Social Services or the police immediately.

Social Services and / or the Police will decide how to involve the parents/carers.

Maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis only.

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 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

Contact Details

SCC Welfare Officer – sccwelfare@outlook.com

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