



Safeguarding Policy

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Policy Review and Distribution

This policy will be reviewed annually and amended as appropriate to take account of any local or legislative changes.

The policy will be published on the Wymondham AC website and a copy will be available on request by members. The policy is specifically mentioned on the Wymondham AC website so that members/parents can read it.

The policy will be sent to all group coaches and they will be asked to sign a declaration that they have understood it and will abide by it.

1. Definition of terms used in this policy

Child Protection refers to the systems, procedures and cultures that are put in place to ensure WAC can act to protect children from harm and abuse, in order that they may feel safe, enjoy themselves, and fully receive the benefits of an involvement in our athletic club activities. This is also referred to as **safeguarding**.

In this policy the terms **child, children, young person and young people** are used interchangeably to represent anyone **under the age of 18**. With regard to the Children Act 1989, a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. In this document, the terms child/children refer to young people not yet 18.

The term **parent** is used throughout this document to represent parents, carers and guardians.

In this document **Wymondham AC or WAC** refers to any person acting in a specific capacity for **Wymondham Athletic Club** (e.g. coach, committee member). It does not include staff of any partner organisations.

This Policy specifically covers **children aged 16 – 18**, WAC does not allow children under 16 to participate in club activities.

The **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** will lead on child protection matters.

Disabled children may be more vulnerable and at great risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some common factors that can lead to increased vulnerability include social isolation, communication and learning difficulties or disability, lack of understanding of boundaries, need for assistance with personal care and more likely target for bullying and abuse. Children with disabilities have the same right to protection as any other child and those working with these children need to be especially alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and have strategies in place to ensure all children are able to raise concerns.

LADO = Local Authority Designated Officer

DSO = Designated Safeguarding Officer

LSCB = Local Safeguarding Children Board

DBS = Disclosure and barring service

2. Introduction

Everyone who takes part in athletics is entitled to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment. Wymondham AC is committed to devising, implementing and updating policies and procedures to promote best practice when working with children, and to ensure that everyone in the club understands and accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means acting to report any concerns about their welfare.

This policy will give clear direction to coaches, members, volunteers and parents about the expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at our club.

This policy has been adapted from the UKA “Safeguarding and protecting children in UK athletics”. Readers are also referred to this document for additional information (<https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/welfare-and-safeguarding/guidance-documents-and-policy/>).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

Defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Child protection

Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

3. Policy Statement

Wymondham AC fully accepts its legal and moral obligations to provide a duty of care, to protect all children and safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief, sex or gender and sexual orientation.

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All individuals involved in the club understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

In order to meet these obligations, Wymondham AC will:

- Provide and enforce procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants and protect them from abuse
- Ensure all children who take part in athletics are able to participate in a safe and fun environment
- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe
- Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of children
- Recruit, train and supervise their coaches/members/volunteers to adopt best practice, to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves from false allegations
- Require coaches/members/volunteers to adopt and abide by their Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Codes of Conduct, and the relevant grievance, investigatory and disciplinary procedures
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate complaints, child protection, disciplinary and appeals procedures
- Review policies regularly
- Appoint a Club Child Safeguarding Officer (Mark Banfield, 07866 055268) and a Deputy Club Safeguarding Officer (Karl Chapman, 07983 681251), to cover for absences and where an alternative safeguarding contact is required. The Club Safeguarding Officer sits on the Management Committee of the club.

4. Best Practice and Poor Practice

To provide everybody with the best possible experience and opportunities in athletics, it is important that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrates exemplary behaviour.

There is no endorsed training or coaching of juniors outside the club. Any coach that does this will be excluded immediately from the club.

Wymondham AC will establish and maintain an ethos where children feel safe and secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to. Children will be able to talk freely to any adult within the club if they are worried or concerned about something.

Best Practice includes:

- Being open and conducting all interactions with children in a public place and with appropriate consent
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with one child
- Never sharing a room on your own with a child
- Challenging bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language, or controlling behaviour that could upset individuals
- Never ignore bullying by parents, coaches or children. Listening to and supporting the person being bullied
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children; this means treating people fairly, with respect, and avoiding favouritism
- Being friendly and open, and ensuring that relationships are appropriate for someone in a position of power and trust
- Respecting all athletes and helping them to take responsibility for their own development and decision making
- Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances, physical contact is perfectly acceptable and appropriate, as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the athlete and that consent for contact has been given by the individual and appropriate parental consent
- Being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching, and ensuring that your licence remains valid and in date. Ensure that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each athlete

Adopting best practice not only ensures the individual's welfare, it also protects others from

possible wrongful allegations.

Poor Practice includes:

The following are examples of poor practice and should be avoided:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- A coach shouting comments at athletes when they are not perceived 'to be working hard enough'
- A coach using harassing and/or discriminatory language, such as 'you run like a girl'
- A coach engaging in an intimate relationship with one of his/her athletes
- A group of athletes ganging up on a any athlete and refusing to talk to him/her
- A coach taking a group of children away to a weekend event on his/her own

The list above is not exhaustive and many other examples exist.

If any of the following incidents occur you should report them immediately to another colleague, make a written note of the event and inform parents and/or appropriate adults of the incident, and inform the Club Safeguarding Officer, who will contact the appropriate agency.

- If you accidentally hurt a child athlete
- If a child appears distressed in any manner
- If a child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

5. Working Together to Safeguard Children

All reasonable steps will be taken, at all levels, to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working in athletics, especially with children. When recruiting, Wymondham AC will be clear about:

- The responsibility of the roles
- The level of experience or coaching qualification(s) required
- Obtaining and checking personal details of applicants
- Taking a positive stance on all aspects of welfare and safeguarding children

All adults who come into contact with children will be made aware of the steps that will be taken if an allegation is made. We will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours of a concern or allegation being made. The LADO can be contacted via the referral/consultation forms under 'how to raise a concern' at www.norfolklscb.org or a message left on **01603 223473** for ongoing cases.

Club members will not investigate these matters. We will seek and work with the advice that is provided. Should an allegation be made against the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy, this will be reported by the staff member or volunteer raising the concern directly to the LADO.

5.1 Commitments of Coaches and Volunteers

Any coaches/volunteers needing to work with children will have a discussion with the DSO, prior to coaching/volunteer activity.

All coaches/volunteers needing to work with children will complete a form that includes:

- Name and address
- Relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken
- A self-declaration form to establish whether they are known to any Children's Social Care (social services) as being an actual or potential risk to children or whether they have ever had action taken against them (criminal/civil/disciplinary) that might indicate that they are unsuitable to work with or have responsibility for children. This should be considered **the first step in safeguarding**
- Wymondham AC has a policy that only over 16s can join the club. We do not operate a "Juniors section" or group. Any children (16-18 years old) will join an appropriate training group suited to their ability. These groups always have multiple adults attending, but the lead coach for each group will have ultimate safeguarding

responsibilities for children training with them during organised activities

The DSO will maintain records of each coach/volunteer that works with children. The DSO will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary and make referrals to Children's Services using the procedure outlined below.

Any concern for a child's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSO who will be responsible for ensuring that all club members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow.

The DSO will ensure that all coaches, volunteers and regular/repeat visitors have received appropriate Safeguarding information during induction.

The DSO will ensure that our safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually. The content of our policy has been written following consultation with the Safer Programme.

At all times the DSO will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed.

We undertake to remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to our attention.

6. Training

The DSO and deputy DSO will undertake relevant training, on a three-yearly basis, in child safeguarding procedures, procedures for taking children away, and sources of education and training. This training will include attendance at a recognized direct delivery safeguarding workshop (e.g. SportsCoach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshop, LSCB Basic Awareness workshops). The DSO and Membership Secretary will keep a record of those attending training sessions.

When new coaches or volunteers join Wymondham AC, they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of this policy and asked to read and sign that they will adhere to it.

The private coaching of children is not allowed under any circumstances.

6.1 UKA Coaching Qualifications

As an affiliated club with UK Athletics (registration number 2658376), the club follows the coaching framework set out by UK Athletics. All information below is accurate as of 30th November 2018. Please consult UK Athletics' website, and www.ulearnathletics.com, for the latest information.

The club follows the UKA Coaching framework because:

- It is a requirement of our affiliation with UK Athletics, and ensures that all activities are completed within the requirements of UK Athletics
- It provides a standard level of training, which all our coaches will have completed
- It provides insurance cover to the club, the coach/leader, and the session participants
- It provides our coaches with a wealth of sessions, advice and techniques they can apply to their sessions
- It meets our legal and statutory safeguarding requirements (through DBS checks of coaches and leaders)

Wymondham AC follows 'the off-track pathway' for its coaching team, due to the type of activities undertaken within the club. There are two entry points: Coach and Leader.

The difference between the two is that a coach can plan sessions and provide tailored athletic development advice to individual runners. A leader can only deliver a set programme of exercise, approved by a coach, in a large group, and not provide tailored athletic development advice.

All coaches, as a minimum, must have attained a 'Leader in Running Fitness - LIRF'

qualification. This allows them to deliver coaching sessions to a group of participants. This session must be created and agreed with a coach (who holds a 'Coach in Running Fitness' - CiRF qualification)

For leaders, it is the responsibility of the Head Coach(es) to ensure a minimum qualification of the LiRF. The membership secretary will keep a record of coaches and their qualification, as this is held on the UKA Membership Secretary Portal. Any coaches or leaders who do not have a valid, in date licence, must not be allowed to coach during Wymondham AC sessions.

6.2 Monitoring and Appraisal

All coaches should be given the opportunity to receive regular feedback through observed practice, formal appraisal, or informal feedback, to identify training needs. Concerns about misconduct, poor practice or abuse will be acted upon as they arise. Appropriate support will be offered to those who report concerns, incidents or complaints.

6.3 Grievances, Complaints, Appeals and Disciplinary Procedure

Wymondham AC has a Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure, available at the club and on the website. This compliments, but does not supersede, UK Athletics own disciplinary and appeals procedure. Athletes, coaches and parents/guardians are advised to make themselves aware of the procedures put in place by Wymondham AC and UK Athletics.

UK Athletics also licence coaches and officials under a specific licencing scheme, with their own Terms and Conditions. The documents relevant to licence application, disciplinary and appeals procedures, are available as separate documents on the UK Athletics website.

7. Types and Definitions of Abuse

What is abuse and neglect?

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Child abuse can take many forms, but there are four main definitions:

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Other examples of emotional abuse include:

- Making their positive self-image entirely dependent on sporting achievement and success
- Not giving the child opportunities to express his/her views, deliberately silencing him/her or making fun of what he/she says or how he/she communicates
- Shouting at, threatening or taunting them

Emotional abuse may occur in sport if children are subjected to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or unrealistic pressure to consistently perform to high expectations. This may come from parents and coaches. The inappropriate use or availability of personal information or images can be distressing for a performer.

Bullying is deliberate, serious and hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can be verbal, written or physical and can include actions such as:

- Physical assaults
- Name calling, sarcasm or racist taunts
- Threats or gestures
- Unwanted physical contact
- Graffiti
- Stealing or hiding personal items
- Being ostracised or ignored

Bullying can also occur via the internet, through blogging and social medial sites, and by phone, through text messaging.

The competitive nature of sport makes it an ideal environment for a bully, who could be:

- A parent who pushes his/her child too far
- A coach who shouts at or humiliates a child
- A child who actively seeks to make sport a difficult or unhappy experience for others

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

There are situations where the potential for this form of abuse exists:

- Some individuals deliberately target sports activities to gain access to and abuse children
- Some individuals have ignored codes of practice and used physical contact within a

coaching situation to mask inappropriate touching of children

- Some coaches consider it an acceptable part of the sport's culture to have a sexual relationship with the children they teach
- Some people have used sporting events to take inappropriate photos or videos of children in vulnerable positions
- Some people have used involvement in sports clubs as a method of 'grooming' children

The term 'grooming' refers to the way in which sexual abusers (or potential abusers) manipulate targeted victims, professional carers, colleagues and their environment. Grooming behaviors may appear to be positive, providing a particular child or group with extra attention or the individual making him/herself highly thought of and indispensable within a club. The plausibility of the individuals concerned often makes it difficult for others to identify their real motivation. However, they will also ignore, undermine or resist the application of best practice and other safeguarding guidelines. Concerns about an adult's behavior should be reported to the Club Safeguarding Officer.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect in a sports situation could include a coach failing to ensure a pitch is suitable to train on, or exposing children to extreme temperature during a training session.

Disabled children are vulnerable to abuse and are at least three times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children. Those working with them must be aware of this and willing to acknowledge their concerns. There can be a tendency to make allowances for families with sick or disabled children. Practitioners may over-identify with the child's parents/carers and be reluctant to accept that abuse or neglect is taking or has taken place, or seeing it as being attributable to the stress and difficulties of caring for a disabled child. When suspecting abuse, practitioners should always ask: "Would this be acceptable if the child were not disabled?"

8. Procedures for Disclosures and Reports of Abuse

A child may decide to disclose information that may indicate they are suffering from abuse or neglect. A child chooses to speak to an adult because they feel that they will listen and that they can trust them. The adult needs to listen to what the child has to say, and be very careful not to 'lead' the child or influence in any way what they say. Concerns may arise in a number of ways and while it is not the responsibility of club members to decide whether a concern constitutes abuse, it is their responsibility to report the concerns.

These concerns may arise due to:

- A direct disclosure of abuse to you
- A conversation with an adult or another child
- Direct observation of a worrying incident
- Observation of signs or behaviour that suggest possible abuse
- Receipt of an anonymous allegation (by phone, text, email or letter)

It is important that the adult remembers to:

- Stay calm
- Listen and be supportive
- Not ask any leading questions, interrogate the child, or put ideas in the child's head, or jump to conclusions
- Not stop or interrupt a child who is recalling significant events
- Never promise the child confidentiality – it must be explained that information will need to be passed on to help keep them safe
- Avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator
- Tell the child what must be done next (the safeguarding process must be followed)
- Record what was said immediately as close to what was said as possible. Also record what was happening immediately before the child disclosed. Be sure to sign and date the record in ink.
- Contact the designated person immediately
- Seek support

If we have a concern about a child or children we will phone the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on **0344 800 8021** immediately. We will be put through to a Social Worker who will take the relevant details. We will be prepared to give the full details of the child and family, what the concerns are, details of any support already provided and what we expect to happen. We will ensure we have consent from the parent/carer unless to do so would place the child at further risk, or potentially undermine a criminal investigation. If we have not sought consent from the parent/carer we will inform the CADS worker of this and the reason for it.

The CADS worker will agree a way forward with us and keep us informed. They will send us written record of our conversation within 5 working days. The outcomes could include a full

referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further investigation, the Police, or for work with Early Help. We will not investigate, and will be led by the Local Authority and/or the Police.

We will make careful records of all conversation, in ink, including the dates and times of who we spoke to, the information shared and actions agreed. We do not need to send a written referral. Full details on the process can be found at www.norfolkscb.org under 'How to raise a concern'.

We understand if we are unhappy about a decision made by CADS or MASH we can use the Resolving Professional Disagreements policy on www.norfolkscb.org and contact the Safer Programme for more advice on this process.

We will contact CADS immediately if we have concerns, it is important we do not delay.

If the concerns relate to a coach/volunteer within the club, it will be necessary to take account of the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure. The first priority must be to ensure the immediate safety of the child and any other children affected and consider what supervision / risk assessments arrangements are required to safeguard the child.

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Should an allegation be made against the Club's Safeguarding Officer, or if the Safeguarding Officer is implicated then the Deputy Safeguarding Officer should take the lead. Non-action is not an option in the protection of children and all staff have a duty to act.

Whistle Blowing

It is the responsibility of everyone in the organisation to pass on any allegations or concerns about a child's welfare without delay. Any whistle blower disclosing information in good faith will be protected if s/he has a reasonable concern about a child. In the rare situations that anyone considers it inappropriate to report a concern to the DSO they should first refer to the Deputy DSO, or if they consider this is inappropriate they refer direct to the CADS team.

9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

If we are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child in our organisation we will record our concerns immediately on the agreed report form and give this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet and not with the child's file. These files will be the responsibility of the DSO and information will only be shared within the organisation on a need to know basis for the protection of the child.

Any safeguarding information will be kept in the file and will be added to. Copies of referrals will be stored in the file.

All information is confidential, however if there is a safeguarding or child protection concern about a child then information can be shared with other agencies, namely the Police or Children's Services.

Reports of a concern to the DSO must be made in writing and signed and dated by the person with the concern.

It should be noted that it is the Police and Children's Services that lead any investigation.

Useful Contact Numbers:

DSO: Mark Banfield (Tel: 07866 055268)

Deputy DSO: Karl Chapman (Tel: 07983 681251)

CADS Hotline: 0344 8008021

Children's Services 24 hours: 0344 8008020

Norfolk Police: 101 (in an emergency 999)

LADO team: 01603 223473

Safer Programme: 01603 228966

10. Guidance on Responding to a Child

Think about where you are – you might have to check on other children and make sure they are safe before you can respond. Although you will need a degree of privacy, do not listen to a child's disclosure in a completely private place – try to ensure other adults are present or at least nearby. Ensure that you protect yourself against misinterpretation or potential allegations.

- Do not panic – react calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Acknowledge that what the child is doing is difficult but they are right to confide in you
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame
- Make sure that, from the outset, you can understand what the child is saying
- Be honest straight away and tell the child that you cannot make promises that you will not be able to keep
- Do not promise that you will keep the conversation a secret. Explain that in order to help them, you will have to involve other people and that you will need to write things down
- Listen carefully to the child – take them seriously
- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show
- Keep any questions to a minimum required for you to clarify the facts or words that you do not understand – do not speculate or make assumptions
- Do not probe for any more information than is offered as this may affect any future investigations by statutory agencies
- Encourage the child to use their own words
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- At the end of the conversation, ensure that the child is either being collected or is capable of going home on their own
- Do not approach the alleged abuser

Policy agreed by Wymondham AC Committee March 5th 2019

References

UKA Safeguarding and protecting children in athletics, Policy and Procedures (2013)
Safeguarding and Protecting Children: A Guide for Sportspeople (2016)
The Children Act (1989)
The Children Act (2004)
Working Together (2018)
What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)
Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families

Changelog

Date	Change Made	Author	New version no.
25-3-2019	1 st version	Mark Banfield	1.0