

DHEKELIA SERVICES SAILING CLUB

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR

SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL CLUBS AND

SOCIETIES

IN

BRITISH FORCES CYPRUS

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BFC SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOL FOR **SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL CLUBS AND SOCIETIES**

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INTRODUCTION

BY

COMMANDER MEDICAL

1. Each organisation has a duty of care to safeguard children involved in its activities from harm. All children have the right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Clubs and Organisations must ensure the safety and safeguarding of all children through adherence to this protocol.
2. The aim of the Safeguarding Policy for Sports and Recreational Clubs and Societies is to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety and safeguarding whilst in the care of the club. In addition the policy should allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child safeguarding issues.
3. Referenced document;
 - (a) JSP 834 Safeguarding Policy.
 - (b) JSP 893 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups.

INTRODUCTION

1. For the purpose of this document a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989). All sporting and recreational Clubs and Societies within British Forces Cyprus which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:
 - a. The welfare of the child is paramount.
 - b. All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to safeguard from abuse.
 - c. All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
 - d. All staff (paid and unpaid) working in sports and recreational clubs have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate safeguarding officer.

PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

2. Child abuse, in all of its forms, 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 judgment about the appropriate action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting and leisure environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.
3. 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 safeguarding. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.
4. When a child enters the club activity having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting or leisure environment, sport and leisure activity 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.

5. **Good Practice Guidelines** 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:

- a. Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- b. Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- c. Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- d. Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- e. Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- f. Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- g. Ensuring that if any form of physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to appropriate guidelines. 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.
- h. Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- i. Involving parents and carer 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.
- j. 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.
- k. Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- l. Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- m. Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- n. Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- o. Securing parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis*, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

p. Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

q. Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

6. **Practices to be avoided.** Unless in an emergency club staff and volunteers should avoid spending time alone with children away from others in the group, or taking or dropping off a child to an event or activity.

7. **Practices never to be Sanctioned.** The Following practices should never be sanctioned:

a. Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.

b. Share a room with a child.

c. Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.

d. Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

e. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.

f. Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.

g. Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child.

h. Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves.

i. Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

8. It may sometimes be necessary for staff 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 child involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk to him or her about what you are doing and give choices where possible.

9. 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.

10. **Incidents that must be reported or recorded.** If any of the following incidents 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:

a. If you accidentally hurt a child or young adult.

b. If he/she seems distressed in any manner.

c. If a Child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.

d. if a Child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

11. **Use of photographic or filming equipment at sporting or leisure events.** There is evidence that some people have used sporting and leisure 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 designated safeguarding person within the club.

12. **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.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

13. Clubs should recognise 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. Preselection checks must include the following:

- a. All staff and volunteers should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- b. Evidence of identity (passport or driving license with photo).
- c. Two confidential references, including one from the applicant's most recent employer. These references should be confirmed through telephone contact.
- d. Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau or Criminal Records Check by Cy Pol where appropriate.

14. **Interview and induction.** All employees and volunteers will be required to undergo an interview and should receive induction training, during which:

- a. A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).
- b. The applicant's qualifications should be substantiated where they are appropriate to their role within the club. A copy of relevant certificates should be kept on file.
- c. The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- d. Child Safeguarding procedures should be explained and training needs identified.
- e. Applicants should sign to confirm that they have read and understood the BFC Safeguarding Policy for Sports and Recreational Clubs.

15. **Training.** In addition to preselection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- a. Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
- b. Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.

- c. Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- d. Work safely and effectively with children.

16. **Club responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding Training.** Information about multi agency safeguarding children training can be obtained from the Administrator to the Team Manager, Personal Support & Social Work Service (PS&SWS), SSAFA Forces Help, E Block, Episkopi, BFPO 53. It is the responsibility of the club to ensure that the following groups of staff attend the appropriate safeguarding training and update training:

- a. Non-coaching staff and volunteers who do not work directly and specifically with children, young people and families but may become aware of abuse and neglect should complete a recognised Level 1 Safeguarding Children training.
- b. Staff, coaching staff or volunteers that work regularly and directly with children, young people and families or have a period of intense or irregular contact with children, young people and their families should complete a recognised Level 2 Safeguarding Children training.
- c. All Staff & volunteers should ensure that they attend update training at least every 3 years.
- d. Relevant personnel to gain a national first aid training (where necessary).

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS

17. It is not the responsibility of anyone working within the club 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 designated Safeguarding Person within the club. Annex A outlines instructions for external reporting of any safeguarding issue once identified. Clubs must also ensure all staff and volunteers are fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

18. Indicators of Abuse. The following is a non exhaustive list of some indicators of abuse:

PHYSICAL INDICATORS	BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas ▪ Repeated injuries ▪ Black eyes ▪ Injuries to the mouth ▪ Torn or bloodstained clothing ▪ Burns or scalds ▪ Bites ▪ Fractures ▪ Marks from implements ▪ Inconsistent stories/excuses relating to injuries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unexplained changes in behaviour - becoming withdrawn or aggressive ▪ Difficulty in making friends ▪ Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults ▪ Sudden drop in performance ▪ Changes in attendance pattern ▪ Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language ▪ Reluctance to remove clothing

19. **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 of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the same procedures as at Annex A and report the matter to the PS&SWS 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 Children Act 2004

20. **Responding to Disclosure.** Where there is an allegation of abuse or a disclosure has been made, this should be reported to the PS&SWS using the contact details at Para 31. The following are guidance points for the individual responding to a disclosure:

- a. Remain calm and record what has been said as soon as possible.
- b. Reassure child that they are:
 - (1) Safe.
 - (2) Were right to tell.
 - (3) Not to blame.
 - (4) Being taken seriously.
- c. Let child talk - don't interview. Listen & hear, give the person time to say what they want.
- d. Explain that you must tell, but that information given will be kept confidential.
- e. Tell the child what will happen next.
- f. Involve appropriate individuals immediately.

21. **Concerns outside the immediate club environment.** If there is concern that relates to abuse outside of the club then this should be reported in the same way to either the police or PS&SWS using the format at Annex A.

22. **Things to avoid when Responding to Disclosure.** The following actions should be avoided when responding to a disclosure:

- a. Question unless for clarification.
- b. Make promises you cannot keep.
- c. Rush into actions that may be inappropriate.
- d. Make or pass a judgment on alleged abuser.
- e. Take sole responsibility, consult the designated safeguarding person within the club so you can begin to protect the child and gain support.

23. **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. Information relating to allegations should be stored in a secure place with limited access by designated people, in accordance with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

24. **Internal enquiries and suspension.** The Club OIC in conjunction with the designated safeguarding person for the club should make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and PS&SWS inquiries. Irrespective of the findings of the PS&SWS or police inquiries the club should assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated within the club and how to handle this sensitively. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the club 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.

25. **Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse.** Information and support relating to this subject can be obtained from PS&SWS.

ACTION IF BULLYING IS SUSPECTED

26. If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to Suspicions or Allegations'. In addition the following action may be taken to help the victim and prevent bullying:

- a. Take all signs of bullying seriously.
- b. 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.
- c. Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- d. Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- e. Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom and when).
- f. Report any concerns to the designated safeguarding person within the club.

27. **Action towards the bully(ies).** The behaviour of the bully(ies) should be reported to the designated safeguarding person within the club. As a guide the following action should be taken when considering children and young adults:

- a. 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).
- b. Impose sanctions as necessary.
- c. Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- d. Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

- e. Inform all appropriate members within the club of action taken.
- f. Keep a written record of action taken.

INFORMATION REQUIRED BY PS&SWS OR THE POLICE ABOUT SUSPECTED ABUSE WHEN A REFERRAL IS MADE

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

- a. The child's name, age and date of birth.
- b. The child's home address and telephone number.
- c. Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- d. The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- e. Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- f. A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- g. Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- h. The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- i. Whether the parents have been contacted? If so what has been said? Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- j. If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- k. Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- l. Where possible referral to the Police or PS&SWS should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

29. If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact SSAFA Social Work Service on:

- a. Dhekelia/Ay Nik 2474 4453
- b. Akrotiri 2527 5840
- c. Episkopi 2596 3048

**Annex A to
BFC Safeguarding Policy for Sports
and Recreational Clubs and Societies
Dated Jun 2012**

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED

