



Child Protection Policy

Introduction

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 any 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 may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

Letchworth RHC will ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- All children, whatever their age, culture, 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;

Policy statement

Letchworth RHC has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in roller hockey from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of the particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Eastern Counties will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in roller hockey through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines.

A child is defined as under 18 The Children Act 1989.

Policy aims

The aim of the Letchworth RHC Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst participating in the sport of roller hockey.

Good Practice Guidelines

Being involved with children puts people in a position of trust, where they are contributing to the child's education. All Letchworth RHC members should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour. For their own protection, adults must not allow themselves to be drawn into any act or behaviour which is capable of being misunderstood, or which they may, on reflection, be ashamed. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within roller hockey.

Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets).
- treating all young people 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 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.
- involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children).
- 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 give permission for the administration of 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.
- Report any concerns you may have about a child.

Practice to be avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur 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 excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;
- Avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.

Practice 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;
- allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
- allow ridiculing or bullying by peers, team colleagues etc.
- jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.

Volunteers Personal Disclosure and References

Anybody may have the potential to abuse children in some way, and it is essential that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are not allowed to work with any children. It is therefore important that checks are made as to the suitability of those volunteering to become involved with children and Letchworth RHC will request that they should be asked to complete a Disclosure Form.

- NRHA have appointed Atlantic Data, an authorised umbrella body of Criminal Records Bureau, to carry out the Disclosures and act on their behalf. Both NRHA and Atlantic Data will abide by the Data Protection Act.

- LRHC will hold copies of valid CRB forms for all coaches working with children
- All volunteers will be required to agree to the organisation seeking a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure where there is a high degree of contact with vulnerable people.
- All individuals or organisations using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice. Amongst other things, this obliges them to have a written policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of Disclosure information. In the case of NRHA, Atlantic Data will retain all Disclosure information.

Guidelines for Photos and Web Site Images

Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the sport. An easy rule to remember is:

- If the athlete is named, avoid using their photograph.
- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the athlete.

Further Information

For further information you may find the following organisations useful:

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0800 800 500 is a free 24 hour service which provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. There is a website which is <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/html/information/childprotectioninsport.htm>

CCPR Child Protection in Sport <http://www.ccpr.org.uk/dyncat.cfm?catid=5463>

Contact Mary Holmes, Letchworth RHC Child Protection Officer. Tel: 07971 215151