



POLICY STATEMENT

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Statement of Intent

The Vale of Aylesbury Athletics Club (VoAAC) has adopted the general principles of the UK Athletics (UKA) Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Athletics Policy.

The VoAAC recognises that it has a duty of care to safeguard all children and young people involved in the activities of the Club from harm. The VoAAC is committed to the belief that ALL children have a right to protection from neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse against young athletes will be responded to and followed up appropriately in accordance with this policy and those laid out in the UKA Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Athletics Policy and Procedures document.

Key Principles:

- 1) Anyone under the age of 18 is considered a child for the purpose of this policy.
- 2) A child's welfare is paramount and regardless of their gender, racial origin, culture, ability, religious belief and sexual orientation, they have the right to protection from abuse.
- 3) Whenever an individual at the VoAAC becomes concerned that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, they must immediately discuss their concerns with the Welfare Officer.
- 4) All suspicions and allegations of abuse against a child will be taken seriously and responded to by any officer of the Club, who through the VoAAC Welfare Officer will follow up appropriately and in accordance with this policy and the UKA Safeguarding and Protection Children in Athletics Policy and Procedures.
- 5) All coaches and officers who come into active contact with children at the Club will be subject to checks with the Disclosure Barring Service.

Definitions of Child Abuse:

- **Physical Abuse:** When adults or other children deliberately inflict injuries upon a child, or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. This could include the nature of the intensity of training or competition. Offering alcohol or drugs.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Where adults or other children fail to show due care or attention or threaten, use sarcasm, taunt or shout at a child causing them to lose confidence, self-esteem and become nervous or withdrawn.
- **Neglect:** Where adults fail to provide help and care to a child. This also includes leaving a child without proper supervision or placing the child at risk of injury.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Where adults or children use children to fulfil their sexual needs.

Code of Practice for People Working in Athletics with Children:

- Avoid when possible, situations when you and an individual child are alone.
- Avoid physical contact. Teach techniques by demonstrations.
- Coaches are expected to hold appropriate qualifications recognised by UKA. Volunteers must work under direct supervision of a qualified coach.
- Adults should never over-criticise young athletes, or use language or actions which may cause children to lose self-esteem or confidence.
- Coaches and adults should not take unrelated children to their (i.e. the coach or adult's) home. Permission must be obtained from the child's parent or guardian for car journeys. The presence of a further person should be sought. It is sensible to seat any child in the rear of the car.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in all conversations; coaches and adults must not give children any promise or expectation of confidentiality.
- Report to the child's parent or guardian if a child gets upset during a session, misunderstands or misinterprets something that you do.

Role of the VoAAC:

- 1) To appoint at least one Welfare Officer.
- 2) To accept that all officers, committee members, coaches and volunteers have responsibilities in this area and are prepared to respond to any indication of abuse.
- 3) To ensure that all officers, committee members, coaches and volunteers within the VoAAC hold appropriate qualifications and undertake the appropriate checks e.g. DBS, licences, qualifications and training.

Role of all VoAAC Officers, Committee, Volunteers and Coaches:

- 1) Advise the child that you will not be able to maintain confidentiality.
- 2) Listen to the child, rather than question him/her.
- 3) Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- 4) Immediately following the disclosure, make a note of what was said, taking care to record the time, date, setting and people present, complete a Referral Form.
- 5) Any person with a suspicion or allegation of child abuse shall report this to the Club's Welfare Officer or any other officer.
- 6) The person reporting the suspicions or making the allegations must be prepared to speak to Social Services to clarify their concerns.
- 7) Any person suspected of abusing a child should not be approached by another member of the VoAAC concerning the abuse.
- 8) Other VoAAC officials should deal with matters if the person who would otherwise deal with the matter is compromised by a relationship or friendship with the person against whom the suspicion has emerged.
- 9) To read briefing material provided by the Welfare Officer/committee and attend briefing sessions/training when requested to.

Role of the Welfare Officer:

- 1) To receive and advise the VoAAC committee of any reports of child abuse.
- 2) To keep records of such reports.
- 3) To initiate action and ensure all appropriate persons have been contacted.
- 4) To attend training courses.
- 5) To organise and issue briefing material on child protection policy and procedure to all VoAAC members and volunteers.
- 6) To report to the committee on a regular basis.

The VoAAC will implement any recommendations of the Home Country Governing Body and UKA relating to this area and revise the VoAAC Child Protection as and when necessary.