

# **Croft Ambrey Running Club Safeguarding Children Policy.**

Everyone who takes part in athletics is entitled to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.

Best practice ensures that children who choose to participate in athletics have a safe and fun experience.

Our objective is to build a safe environment for all children under the age of 18 years.

All children are entitled to a duty of care and to be protected from abuse. Abuse can occur anywhere.

Croft Ambrey Running Club 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 taking action to report any concerns about their welfare. It is not the responsibility of the club to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, this is the domain of child protection professionals.

## **Policy Statement**

Croft Ambrey Running Club fully accepts their 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 and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

All individuals involved in Croft Ambrey Running Club understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

In order to meet this obligation, Croft Ambrey Running Club will:-

Provide and enforce procedures to safeguard the well-being of all participants and protect them from abuse.

Ensure all children who take part in club activities are able to participate in a safe and fun environment.

Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of children.

Recruit, train and supervise their volunteers to adopt best practices to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves from false allegations.

Require members and volunteers to adopt and abide by their Safeguarding Policy.

Respond to any allegations appropriately.

Have an appointed two Club Welfare Officers.

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

#### Who does this policy apply to?

A Child is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means children and young people throughout. The fact a child has reached 16 years of age, living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody, does not change his or her status or entitlement to protection under the Children Act 1989.

Disabled children may be more vulnerable and at greater risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some of the 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 rights to protection as any other child and clubs 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.

### **Best Practice, Poor Practice and Abuse**

Croft Ambrey Running club aims 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. We aim to run our club within the principles of best practice while avoiding all elements of poor practice and at all times protecting children from abuse.

Best practice means: -

- 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
- If you have to meet or coach one child ensure it is conducted in an open environment, and where full consent and emergency contact details have been provided.
- If you are travelling alone with a child gain appropriate consent, avoid consistently having one child alone with you in the car and never sharing a room on your own with a child,
- Challenging bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language or controlling behaviour that could upset individuals or reduce them to tears.
- Never ignoring 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 ensure 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.

Adopting best practice not only ensures the individuals welfare, it also protects you from possible wrongful allegations. Children very rarely make false allegations. If they do it is usually because they are confused or covering up for someone else's behaviour and hoping their action might scare the real abuser into stopping.

### Poor Practice

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

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.
- A coach shouting comments at athletes when they are not working hard enough.
- A coach using harassing and 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 new 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 should 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 Welfare Officer.
- 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.

### Abuse

Abuse can occur wherever there are children. Croft Ambrey Running Club will strive at all times to protect children from abuse.

There are four main types of abuse:

- **Physical** abuse 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 is 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 children 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 his/her views, deliberately silencing him/her or 'making fun' of what he/she say or how he/she communicates. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as

overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, which especially applies when a child shares a protected characteristic e.g. racist, sexual or homophobic bullying 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.

- **Sexual** abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children
- **Neglect** is 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. 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
- 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?"

### **Recruitment, selection and training.**

- All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from having a supervisory role with children at Croft Ambrey Running Club.

All coaches and the club welfare officer will have a DBS check.

Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences relating to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

### **Recruitment**

In the event of the club recruiting coaches or volunteers, advertising will reflect:

- Safeguarding children and welfare policy
- The responsibility of the role
- The level of experience or qualifications required
- A positive stance on all aspects of welfare and safeguarding children

### **Application**

All applicants must complete an application form that includes:

- Name and address
- National Insurance number to confirm identity and right to work.

- Relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken.
- Listing of past career or involvement in sport (to confirm experience and identify any gaps)
- All applicants who have or are seeking to undertake a supervised role or responsibility in relation to children in Athletics must complete 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.
- All applicants who have or are seeking to undertake a role and responsibility in relation to children, ie coaching or volunteering where there is greater access to children, such as transporting them to sporting events must complete a criminal record check (enhanced level DBS).
- A minimum of two written references will be taken up. Where the applicant is to work with children at least one reference will be associated with former work with children and young people. Referees (not relatives) should provide written references that comment on the applicant's previous experience of, and suitability for, working with children and permission to clarify information with referees.

### Recruitment selection and induction of volunteers.

#### Interviews and induction.

Where formal interviews are used they will be conducted according to accepted good practice in human resource management. All staff will undergo a formal or informal induction process in which they complete a profile to identify training needs and aspirations.



## Training

All staff and volunteers who work with children will be expected to undertake relevant training on a three yearly basis in child / safeguarding procedures, procedures for taking children away and sources of education and training. For all coaches and volunteers with roles in relation to children this should include attendance at a recognised direct delivery safeguarding workshop (e.g. Spotscoach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children' workshop

## Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations

While it is not the responsibility of Croft Ambrey Running Club, volunteers or club members to decide whether a concern constitutes abuse, it is their responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare of a child. These concerns may arise due to:

- An individual disclosing that they are being abused.
- The behaviour of an adult towards a child.
- A number of indicators observed in a child over a period of time.

## How to respond to a disclosure

Don't:

- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Speculate or make assumptions.
- Show shock or distaste.
- Make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made.
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.
- Give a guarantee of confidentiality.

All suspicions and disclosures must be reported appropriately. It is acknowledged that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases of possible sexual abuse or where there is a misplaced loyalty to a colleague.

To ensure that appropriate action is taken if there is a disclosure, statutory referral from the police, children's services, adult services or suspicions, Croft Ambrey Running Club has a designated Club Welfare Officer.

### Reporting procedures

Any person witnessing an act they consider an immediate danger to a child should inform the police as soon as possible via 999.

Any person with information of a disclosure, allegation or concern about the welfare of a child must immediately report this in the following way:

As a member of Croft Ambrey Running Club, you should immediately inform one of the club's designated Club Welfare Officers, Samantha Harper or Howard Verran, who will then investigate if necessary and refer the matter to UKA's Child Protection lead Officer (CPLD) or Home Country lead welfare officer.

If the Club Welfare Officers are not available, if the concern is about the Club Welfare Officers or no action is taken, you should take responsibility and seek advice from either the NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000), the duty officer at the local children services department or the local police child protection unit:

Police: **999** if immediate risk of harm. **101** in non emergency situation. Email [contactus@westmercia.pnn.police.uk](mailto:contactus@westmercia.pnn.police.uk)

Herefordshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub **01432 260800**.

Out of hours emergency duty team **01905 768020**

You should also contact the UKA Child Protection Lead Officer as soon as possible.

Where there is a complaint of abuse against an employee or volunteer there may be three types of investigation:

1. Criminal: in which case the police are immediately involved
2. Safeguarding children: in which case the social care services (and possibly the police) will be involved
3. Disciplinary or misconduct: where it relates to coaches and officials UKA will be involved in other matters it will rest with the Home Countries.

Civil proceedings may also be initiated by the alleged victim of misconduct or abuse, or his/her family, or by persons wrongly accused.

Guidelines on the retention of records relating to possible future investigations may be found from local authority sources; however, records should be securely kept in an approved format for up to three years at least.

### Dealing with Concerns and Allegations

The Club Welfare Officers will have received training but they are not safeguarding children experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. If there is any doubt about whether or not the alleged behaviour constitutes abuse, the concern must be shared with professional agencies that will be responsible for subsequent action.

Any suspicion that an individual has been abused by a volunteer or employee within athletics should be reported to the UKA Child Protection Lead Officer who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the individual in question and any other individual who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- the UKA CPLO will refer the allegation to the appropriate social care services department who may involve the police or go directly to the police if out of hours.
- The parents of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social care services department.
- The UKA CPLO will investigate and will proceed as per the UKA safeguarding policies.

In circumstances where UKA does not have jurisdiction to deal with the individual, the UKA CPLO will act as the link person between the sport and the social care services and/or the police and pass on all the information to the relevant governing body/organisation with disciplinary jurisdiction.

To ensure that Croft Ambrey Running Club follows best practice procedures we have the following club rules which are appropriate to Children:

Children aged 7 to 17 can join the club as junior members. We do not accept members under the age of 7.

In order to do our best for juniors, there need to be extra measures in place to ensure their training is carried out safely within the club. Not all training sessions will be suitable for all Juniors.

Croft Ambrey Running Club follows the guidelines of the Trail Runners Association to ensure that children do not exceed the recommended distances for running. These are currently:

<u>Per Session</u>		<u>Per Week</u>
Age < 12	3km	6km
Age 12-13	5km	10km
Age 14-15	6km	12km
Age 16	10k	20k
Age 17	25km	50km
Age 18	45km	90km

Children should run no more than 3 sessions per week.

Certain club competitive events may be suitable for children. Risk assessments will be completed before each individual event and children will only be able to compete if they follow the guidelines laid out. These guidelines will be distributed at least one week before the event.

A Croft Ambrey Running Club Junior Membership form or a Croft Ambrey U.18 information form will need to be completed and handed to one of the coaches before a child can take part in a Croft Ambrey event. Alternatively, juniors can sign up for events by registering with Run together where information submitted will be shared with Croft Ambrey Running Club.

Forms can be found on the club website [croftambreyrunningclub.co.uk](http://croftambreyrunningclub.co.uk)

Club members will be reminded of their, and the club's, duty of care and protection to all, and particularly towards juniors and vulnerable adults, at all times during club activities.

Please see also: UKA Welfare policy.

<https://www.englandathletics.org/clubhub/resource/child-safeguarding-policy/?from=1>

Policy approved by Croft Ambrey Running Club Committee.

Signed .....

Name ..... Croft Ambrey Running Club Chairman

Named Club Welfare Officers : Samantha Harper, Howard Verran.