**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

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**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT**

BSF will endeavour at all times through its provision of coaching to:

* promote the welfare, health and full development of children and protect them from harms of all kinds
* recognise that children have rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect
* raise awareness about what children are entitled to be protected from
* plan coaching sessions so as to minimise opportunities for the children to suffer harm
* develop effective procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse
* a child is defined as anyone who is under the age of 16 years

**What is child abuse?**

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Employment 1999)

1. **Physical 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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

1. **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

1. **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contract activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from different walks of life.

1. **Neglect**

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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

**Legislation and Guidance**

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards, which are designed to ensure that children are protected from harm.

**The Children Act 1989**

This Act legislates for children in England & Wales.

The intention of the Children Act 1989 is to ensure that the welfare and developmental needs of children are met, including their need to be protected from harm.

**Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000**

Part II of this Act relates to ‘public bodies’ responsibilities within child protection and is integral to child protection systems in the UK designed to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

It links to other laws including **Protection of Children Act 1999** and **The Police Act 1997**that together build a system that makes it a criminal offence if an employer does not take sufficient steps to check an employee working with children and/or knowingly gives someone a job who is inappropriate to work with children.

*Protection of Children Act 1999 and The Police Act 1997*

These Acts change the routes by which employers can check whether a potential or actual employee has criminal offences against children or whether there has been any reason for that person to be considered inappropriate to work with children.

The Police Act 1997 contains the provision to set up the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for England and Wales to improve access to criminal record checks for employment-related purposes. It is aimed at providing protection for children and other vulnerable people against those who might wish to do them harm.

*Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (NI Order) 1974 (UK wide)*

People who are involved in situations where they have prolonged or sustained access to children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation.

*Sexual Offenders Amendments Act 2000*

This Act reduces the age at which, or certain circumstances in which, sexual acts are lawful. It introduces a new offence of abuse of trust, which covers ostensibly consensual behaviour within certain relationships of trust. It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to engage in sexual intercourse or other sexual activity with someone under that age where they are in a ‘position of trust’ in relation to the younger person.

*Criminal Records Bureau*

This will give employers and voluntary organisations access to information about criminal records and other relevant information about people they intend to appoint in paid or unpaid posts working with children and young people under 18. It will provide a ‘one-stop-shop’ service across England & Wales.

**PROTECTING CHILDREN, COACHES AND HELPERS**

To reduce the likely situations for abuse of children and to help protect the coaches and helpers from false accusations of abuse, everyone should be aware of the following guidelines.

As a general rule it is not sensible to:

spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;

take children alone on a car journey, however short;

take children to their home.

*Where occasions arise when the above is unavoidable, such instances should occur with the full knowledge and consent of the child’s parent/guardian.*

Coaches and Helpers should:

**Be registered with the Criminal Records Bureaux on an Annual Basis.**

This will give employers and voluntary organisations access to

information about criminal records and other relevant information about

people they intend to appoint in paid or unpaid posts working with

children and young people under 18, It will provide a one stop shop

service across England and Wales

Always ensure that the parent/guardian collects the child.

For the older child who may wish to travel to the track, circuit training or race on their own, written permission from the parent/guardian must be obtained.

Coaches and Helpers should not:

Leave a child alone with someone else.

Be alone with a child in the changing room.

Treat a child for an injury alone and away from others.

Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded.

**ORGANISED TRIPS**

For trips such as a weekend competition, where a child will be travelling without a parent, additional steps should be taken to ensure the welfare and protection of the child.

The following guidelines for the trip should be observed:

* Parents/guardians must be given full information about a trip.
* Parents/guardians written permission must be given for a child to be included on the trip.
* The coach/team manager/helper must be aware of any special medical problems a child has and must be satisfied that they can be dealt with.
* Written permission must be given by the parent/guardian that in extreme circumstances, medical attention can be given to a child.
* Coaches, team managers and helpers are responsible for the welfare and safety of the children whilst they are on the trip.
* The children must be adequately supervised at all times.
* Parents should be informed of actions requiring discipline in writing. A report must be made and given to the child protection officer.
* There should be a minimum of two adults accompanying the children on a coach trip. If the group consists of both sexes then male and female supervision should be provided.
* If a coach/team manager/helper is providing a lift in a car to a coaching session or race meeting, permission must be obtained from the parent/guardian and any necessary insurance cover provided.

**RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

In all cases wherean allegation of abuse is made against a member of the club, a record of the incident must be made, using the Child Protection Report form. Copies of this form are available from either Child Protection Officer. Once completed it should be given to the club’s Child Protection Officer/s who will record it in the Incident Record Book. Further investigation will be the responsibility of the clubs Child Protection Officer/s.

**This report contains:**

Name of the child

The age of the child

The parent’s name

Home address and telephone number

Nature of the concern:

* Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or passing on those of someone else.
* What has prompted the concerns? Give dates and times of specific incidents. Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?
* Has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
* Have the parents/guardians been contacted? If so, what was said?
* Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so record details.
* Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

The Child Protection Officer/s will assess all allegations promptly and decide on appropriate action.

 If it is a concern by a coach, team manager or helper as to the possible abuse of a child then they will report the concerns to the Child Protection Officer/s, on the Child Protection Report form. The CPO will investigate and after consultation report the concerns to Social Services and other agencies.

 Full documentation will be kept. All information will be treated as confidential and held securely by the Child Protection Officer/s.

**CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER/S**

The Child Protection Officer/s for YJC/SMAC will be responsible for:

* Introduction and implementation of the Child Protection Policy within the Club.
* Undertake any training that may be needed, keep up to date with any new guidelines that may be issued by the Governing Body of the Sport,  NCF or Social Services.
* Ensure that all club coaches, helpers, officials complete a volunteer reference form and agreement to adhere to the clubs Child Protection Policy and keep these up to date.
* Keep up to date records of all qualifications of coaches, helpers and officials.
* Receive and advise on reports from coaches, helpers, and any other club member.
* Ensure that parents, children and young people know the Child Protection Officer/s are available to discuss any concerns.
* Initiate action where appropriate. Once identified, concerns must be reported to the appropriate services, i.e. Social Services, Police.
* Keep confidential any matter or information referred to them.
* Keep and record all information.
* Ensure the Chairperson is kept informed where appropriate.

**Child Protection Officers currently are:**

Martin Clarke

Alan Kontozi

**CODE   OF   BEHAVIOUR**

DOtreat everyone with respect.

DO provide an example you wish to follow.

DO run coaching sessions in sight or hearing of others.

DO respect a young person's right to privacy.

DO provide access for young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like and provide a caring atmosphere.

DO maintain a healthy adult lifestyle.

DO use common sense in selecting subjects to demonstrate skills on.

DO remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

DO recognise that caution is required especially in sensitive moments of counselling such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.

DO have separate sleeping accommodation for coaches and children.

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**DO NOT** permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. ridiculing, bullying).

**DO NOT** have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.

**DO NOT** jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.

**DO NOT** allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes but deal firmly and fairly with such behaviour at all times.

**DO NOT** exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.

**DO NOT** show favouritism to any individual.

**DO NOT** make any suggestive remarks or gestures or tell jokes or stories of a ‘smutty’ nature to children.

**DO NOT** rely on your good name to protect you - it may not be enough!

**DO NOT** believe "it can never happen to me" - it can!

**DO NOT** get close to or have physical contact with a young person without clearly explaining what you are doing (e.g. correcting position of a foot in a throw or a stretching routine etc.).

**POLICY**

All adults coaching, managing teams, helping or coming into contact with children or young people under the aegis of activities of  YJC must comply with the Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour of the Club.

As one such person you are required to sign a copy of this document. By signing you agree to comply with the Policy and to follow the Code of Behaviour. The signed formshould bereturned to a Child Protection Officer.accepts that in matters concerning child protection the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.

It is the policy of the YJC to safeguard the welfare of the children and all others involved in its activities by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

Everyone coaching, and helping with children and young people will be required to disclose all convictions, whether spent or not.

 Anyone involved with an offence involving abuse or causing harm to children will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include expulsion from the YJC and prohibition from participating in the activities of the Club and include notifying the appropriate authority.

Persons against whom allegations of such offences have been made, which appear well founded, will be denied access to children even though they may not have been convicted of a relevant offence. Any person so accused does have the right to appeal against this decision.

**If you suspect a child is being abused:**

1a. immediately tell a Child Protection Officer.

2a. record the facts as you know them on a CPR form and give a copy to your Child Protection Officer.

3a. ensure that the child has access to an independent adult.

4a. ensure that no other situation arises which could cause any further concern.

**If a child discloses to you abuse by someone else:**

1a. allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.

2b. alleviate feeling of guilt isolation, while passing no judgement.

3b. advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.

4b. same steps as 1a-4a as in suspecting a child is being abused.

**If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:**

1c. immediately tell your Child Protection Officer.2c. record the facts as you know them on a CPR form and give a copy to your Child Protection Officer.

3c. try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.

**You must report and refer any abuse; you must not investigate.**