



# Child Protection Policy 2020-21

## Introduction

Child 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 judgment about any action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children and young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and may be an important link in identifying cases where a child/young person needs protection. All suspicious cases and/or poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document. When a child/young person enters a club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances, within reason, LRHC will work with the appropriate agencies to ensure that the child receives the appropriate support.

*This season, due to the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, this policy must be read alongside guidance set out within the Return to Play and Risk Assessment policy.*

## Policy Statement

Letchworth RHC has a duty of care to safeguard all children from harm. All children have a right to protection and the needs of the particularly vulnerable will be taken into account. Letchworth RHC will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in roller hockey through adherence to the guidelines within this policy and according to the 1989 Children Act.

## Policy Aims

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

## Good Practice Guidelines

Working with children puts people in a position of trust and influence. All Letchworth RHC members should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary pro-social behaviour. Adults must not allow themselves to be drawn into any act or behaviour which is capable of being misunderstood or misinterpreted. Adults will create a positive culture and climate within the roller hockey club that enables children to feel safe, valued and respected.

### **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.
- 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, 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 record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- requesting 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 the child's parents or someone on the club's committee. 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:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- share a room alone 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 and are subject to the requisite safeguarding checks in accordance with the NRHA's policies and process. The NRHA will abide by the GDRR guidance.

*LRHC will hold copies of valid DBS forms for all coaches working with children.*

## **E-Safety**

Our online presence via the club's website, social media platforms and any other method of social media or online communication will adhere to the following guidelines:

- all social media accounts will be password-protected and at least two members of the club's committee will have access to each account and password.
- the account will be monitored by at least two designated members of the committee.
- the designated person/s managing our online presence will seek advice from our safeguarding lead to obtain advice on any safeguarding requirements.
- any inappropriate content by children or staff will be removed immediately, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected.
- any posts or correspondence will be consistent with our aims.
- parents will be asked to give their approval for us to communicate with their children through social media, or by any other means of communication.
- parents will need to give permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on social media.
- parents will need to give permission for their child to participate in any remote meetings, training sessions or coaching seminars, including the use of video technology and/or webinars organised by the club or in conjunction with the clubs aims.
- remote sessions organised by external parties, related to the sport of rink hockey, should be organised in conjunction with the LRHC committee and adhere to the same principles and guidance set out within this policy.
- avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals when posting photographs to reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the sport.
- volunteers should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it when working online with LRHC.
- any disclosures of abuse reported through social media or other online communication should be dealt with in the same way as a face to face disclosure, according to our reporting procedures.

## **Reporting a Concern**

If you think a child is in immediate danger or requires medical attention, you should call the emergency services on 999. You can also ring the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 to report immediate risks.

It's important to remember that the welfare of the child is paramount. However, it's not up to you to decide whether or not a child has been abused, but to report concerns appropriately as outlined within the Record of Concern Form and Child Protection Flow Chart (Appendix A and B).

Support is available should you need it, through the NRHA, statutory social care services and the NSPCC as well as directly from the Child Protection in Sport Unit.

LRHC will ensure we keep a record of your concern and how you reported it.

**If you are not satisfied with the way the club has responded or wish to speak to the authorities independently, anyone can make a refer to Hertfordshire's Children's Services on 0300 123 4043.**

### **Further Information**

**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.

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk>

**You can also contact a member of the club's committee or coaching team.**

Ian Sabin, Letchworth RHC Safeguarding Officer. Tel: 07818450660



## Appendix A: Record of Concern Form

<b>Date of incident:</b>
<b>Name of child:</b>
<b>Age of child:</b>
<b>Concern:</b> describe as factually as possible. Include specific times, exactly what was said and or/seen, details of those involved (including witnesses) and any behavioural or physical signs. When asking a child about an incident, be careful with your questions - use T (tell me) E (explain to me) D (describe to me). Do not ask leading questions. LISTEN to what is being said and then make a note of it on this form as soon as possible.
<b>Action taken</b>
<b>Name of person recording concern:</b>  <b>Signature:</b>  <b>Date of report:</b>
<b>Name of person to whom the report is being referred:</b> Ian Sabin (Safeguarding Officer)  <b>Signature:</b>  <b>Date received:</b>

Appendix B: CHILD PROTECTION PROCESS AT LRHC

Overall responsibility: Andrew Allen

Safeguarding Officer: Ian Sabin

Suspicion that a child is  
harmed or neglected

Physical Evidence  
or Disclosure

Inform Safeguarding  
Officer Immediately

Commence CP file,  
complete Record of  
Concern form

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**Listen**  
**Reassure (Do not guarantee confidentiality)**  
**React**  
**Action (Protect yourself)**  
**Get Support**

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**Insufficient Concern/Evidence**

**Sufficient Concern/ Evidence**

Commence Child Protection / Record of Concern  
Chronology form.

Refer to Children's Information retained in  
Services if there are confidential files  
multiple concerns on file.

Risk of immediate serious  
harm - contact Police

Contact parents and notify  
Children's Services

**General Points:**

**The process must be adhered to at all times.**  
**All adults must be aware of and familiar with,**  
**procedures for disclosure. Adults must protect their**  
**own safety whilst following Child Protection Procedures.**  
**All referral notes will remain confidential.**