



# KICK Child Protection Policy

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## Introduction

All organisations which make provision for children and young people must ensure that:

the welfare of the child is paramount

all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity 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 staff (paid/unpaid) working for the organisation have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred

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## Policy statement/aims

KICK has a duty of care to safeguard all children and young people involved in KICK projects. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. KICK will ensure the safety and protection of all children and young people involved in KICK through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by KICK.

**A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).**

## Policy aims

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

providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of KICK

allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

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## **Promoting good practice**

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 the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the community 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 children and young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

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## **Good practice guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

### **Good practice means:**

Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).

Treating all children and young people and with respect and dignity.

Always putting the welfare of each child or young person first, before winning or achieving goals.

Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children and young people (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child / young person or to share a room with them).

Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and young people to share in the decision-making process.

Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.

Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child or young person is constantly moving. Children and young people and their parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained.

Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance.



Ensuring that if mixed groups are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.

Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children or young people's rooms or invite children into their rooms.

Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children and young people.

Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children and young people

Securing parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis*, if the need arises to administer 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 KICK officials are required to transport children and young people in their cars.

### **Practices to be avoided**

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be 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 time alone with children and young people away from others

avoid taking or dropping off a child / young person to an event or activity unless this has been agreed in advance and is a barrier to a young person attending a group/activity

### **Practices 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 or young person

allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching

allow children and young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged



- make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun
- reduce a child / young person to tears as a form of control
- fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child or young person
- invite or allow children / young people to stay with you at your home unsupervised
- buy/offer to buy gifts for a young person (unless part of a project and agreed by more than one member of staff); all gifts in these cases should be bought using KICK funds

**N.B.** It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children / young people, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the child / young person involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child / young person to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

### **Incidents that must be reported/recorded**

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child or young person are informed:

- if you accidentally hurt a child or young person during a project session
- if he/she seems distressed in any manner
- if a child or young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- if a child or young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

### **Providing information to Police or Social Services**

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should be reported to the DCPO within 24 hours UNLESS you have immediate concerns about the wellbeing of a child and it should then be reported immediately to Children's Social Care who are available 24 hours a day.

Not all concerns will require a referral to Social Care but they should still be discussed with the DCPO who will help to decide what action should be taken. In these instances the information should still be recorded and any actions noted.



Decisions will be made on the evidence at hand and any previous reports that have been made with regards to the child.

It should include the following:

the child/Young Person's name, age and date of birth

the child/Young Person's home address and telephone number

whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else

the nature of the allegation/concerns. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information

make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay

a description of any visible bruising or other injuries – body maps can be useful in these circumstances and are available from the DCPO. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.

Details of witnesses to the incidents

the child/Young Person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred. Staff must be careful not to ask any leading questions.

Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?

Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

If the child/Young Person was not the person who reported the incident, has the child/young person been spoken to? If so what was said?

Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded. Confirmation of receipt, including names and date.

Name of member of staff/volunteer

Job role/representative of KICK

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## **Use of photographic/filming equipment at KICK events**

There is evidence that some people have used sports events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children and young people in vulnerable positions. All projects should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the KICK Designated Child Protection Officer.

Any child or young person being photographed by KICK must first have given consent via a signed statement from their parent / carer. The photographs remain the property of KICK and should not be held on personal devices of staff / volunteers.

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## **Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers**

KICK recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children or young people in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working for KICK. Pre selection checks must include the following:

All volunteers/staff should complete an application form or provide a CV. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.

Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service, if an applicant already has this from a recognised partner from within the last three years then it is acceptable to use this as long as it has been agreed by the DCPO and a KICK manager.

Two confidential references, these references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.

Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

**NB** For those staff/volunteers not directly working with children then it is acceptable to have an application, reference, confirmation of identity. Any supervised contact from staff without a recognised DBS would need to be accompanied by a member of staff if they were to have indirect contact with young people and a risk assessment would need to be completed by the DCPO.

## **Interview and induction**

All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive an induction, during which:



A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).

Their qualifications should be substantiated.

The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.

Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.

They should be given access to KICK's Child Protection policy.

## **Training**

In addition to pre selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.

Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.

Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.

Work safely and effectively with children and young people

KICK requires:

All frontline staff to attend a recognised basic child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection.

Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.

Relevant personnel to obtain relevant first aid training (where necessary).

Designated Child Protection Officer to undergo Designated Child Protection training every 2 years.

All staff and volunteers are required to have their child protection training at least every two years. Where staff have other roles that allows them to attend accredited child protection training this will be classed by KICK as a refresher if the member of staff / volunteer can provide dated evidence of the completion of the training.

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## **Responding to allegations or suspicions**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in KICK, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities.

KICK will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or young person.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

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## **Reporting concerns about poor practice from KICK staff**

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice the Designated Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the KICK Designated Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Chairperson who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

## **Reporting concerns about suspected abuse**

Any suspicion that a child or young person has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the KICK Designated Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child / young person in question and any others who may be at risk.

The KICK Designated Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social care department who may involve the police.



The parents or carers of the child / young person will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social care department.

The KICK Designated Child Protection Officer should also notify the Chairperson who will deal with any media enquiries related to the allegation.

If the KICK Designated Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Chairperson or in his/her absence the Vice Chairperson who will refer the allegation to Social Care.

If the DCPO is not available the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social care or the police immediately.

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## **Confidentiality and Information Sharing with regards to Child Protection Enquiries**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a **need to know** basis only. This includes the following people:

the KICK Designated Child Protection Officer  
the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused  
the person making the allegation  
social care/police  
the chairperson of KICK

The DCPO will seek social care advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

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## **Enquiries and further action**

### **Internal enquiries and possible suspension**

The KICK Designated Child Protection Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.



Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the KICK Trustees will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the KICK Trustees must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child or young person should remain of paramount importance throughout.

### **Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse**

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, young people, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.

The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, E-mail: [bac@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bac@bacp.co.uk), Internet: [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk).

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

### **Allegations of previous abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children or young people).

Where such an allegation is made, KICK will follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social care or the police. This is because other children and young people, either within or outside projects, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

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## **Bullying**

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

### **Action to help the victim and prevent bullying:**

Take all signs of bullying very seriously.



Encourage all children and young people to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately).

Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.

Create an open environment.

Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.

Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.

Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).

Report any concerns to the KICK Designated Child Protection Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

### **Action towards the bully(ies):**

Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).

Impose sanctions as necessary.

Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.

Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

Inform all organisation members of action taken.

Keep a written record of action taken.

Most 'low level' incidents will be dealt with at the time by staff and volunteers. However, if the bullying is severe (e.g. a serious assault), or if it persists despite efforts to deal with it, incidents should be referred to the KICK Designated Child Protection Officer as in "responding to suspicions or allegations" above.

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