

St Albans Hockey Club
Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy

St Albans Hockey Club adopts England Hockey's Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy and works in accordance with the following statement:

Introduction

St Albans Hockey Club is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for all young people (anyone under the age of 18) involved in hockey. It accepts its responsibility to help safeguard the welfare of all young people and protect them from poor practice, abuse and bullying.

Every individual and organisation associated with Hockey has a role and responsibility to help ensure the safety and welfare of young people.

St Albans Hockey Club as a provider of opportunities for young people in hockey accepts that we are required to fulfil our duty of care which means that we must do everything that can be reasonably expected of us to help safeguard and protect young people from any reasonably foreseeable harm.

Policy Summary

This policy is concerned with ways and means of minimising the risk of junior hockey club members being abused while taking part in hockey related activities. It also contains guidance to adult members about how to deal with observed breaches of good practice (which could lead to allegations of abuse) or a situation where a young player says or indicates that he or she is being abused.

Youth Hockey within St Albans Hockey Club.

St Albans Hockey Club wishes to encourage young hockey players and ensure that they are taught and coached under the overall supervision of experienced, qualified coaches. We encourage all youngsters to enjoy their participation in hockey and to be coached in ways which are appropriate for their age, degree of emotional and physical maturity, experience and ability. At all times well being and safety are paramount. The Club's aim in providing junior hockey is to teach skills and provide opportunities for youngsters to play a team sport at a level that suits their abilities and with which they are comfortable.

The recruitment of persons working with young people

St Albans Hockey Club recognises that Child Welfare should not be treated in and will address recruitment and selection of volunteers by doing the following.

- We accept that it is our responsibility as a group to ensure all adults with regular access to children complete a CRB disclosure
- All other volunteers should be asked to complete a self declaration form
- Any concerns regarding a coach will be addressed by the Child Welfare Officer or a member of the Management Committee

Minimising the risk of abuse in hockey

It is in the best interest of both young players and adults involved in their participation in hockey that situations where abuse might take place are kept to a minimum. It is important that coaches and members set an example that they would expect others to follow and

encourage children to respect and care for others. Coaches and other adult club members (players, umpires etc) should observe the guidelines.

- Encourage parents to attend matches and coaching sessions and to accept responsibility for ensuring their child's safety in travelling to and from hockey activities.
- Do not participate in one to one coaching other than during normal coaching sessions and always ensure other coaches, adults and players are within sight and hearing
- Do not meet children away from the hockey club situation or meeting place without a parent or other adult being present.
- Ensure that an appropriate first aid kit is on hand at all activities. Remember that coaches or adult players should not attempt to treat injuries to a child unless qualified to do so.
- Remember that actions might be misinterpreted by others even if they are well-intentioned
- Whilst at coaching/home fixtures and travelling to away fixtures etc, children should be kept under the closest supervision and, when appropriate a "stay behind" coach should be nominated
- Do not allow the use of camcorders and cameras in changing rooms and showers.
- Wherever possible encourage children to arrive at matches and training sessions in playing kit, making use of changing rooms unnecessary
- Always respect a child's right to personal privacy
- Do not do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves
- Do not allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in fun
- Do not engage in sexually provocative games or horseplay
- Do not refer to a child's ethnicity, religion, gender, disability or sexuality in a way that is derogatory
- Do not allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Remember that some issues are confidential and always consider the implication on the child

It is generally accepted that there are four main areas of abuse sports relevant examples of these are set out below.

Neglect

Neglect in a sport situation could include a teacher or coach not ensuring children were safe, exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk of injury.

Physical Abuse

In sports situations, physical abuse may also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse in sport might occur if children are subjected to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently

Sexual Abuse

Sports which involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

The first three of these examples are situations that can probably be investigated and resolved within the club. However, where signs of possible neglect or physical maltreatment seem to be present and appear to have their source outside hockey it is good practice to inform the club Child Welfare Officer citing what was seen, when and where. The Child Welfare Officer will seek the views and guidance of England Hockey.

Guidelines for coaches or other adult club members in dealing with disclosure or suspicion of abuse

Hockey club coaches and adult players are not persons who have professional knowledge of child abuse and how to investigate it. It is also the case that their contact with any given young player is limited to an hour or so each week so that their knowledge of the child is very limited compared with that of a child's teachers or neighbours.

Despite the caveats, should a young player confide in a coach or other adult club member the following advice should be adhered to:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Tell the child he/she is not to blame and that it was right to tell
- Take what the child says seriously
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Focus on questions about when?, where?, who?, and what? Do not ask leading questions or interrogate. Club members, including the Child Welfare Officer, refer, they do not investigate
- Reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality. It would be good practice to inform the child that the listener is duty bound to inform the relevant authorities.
- Make a full record of exactly what the child said and what you said, heard and/or saw as soon as possible and inform the Child Welfare Officer. The Child Welfare Officer will seek the views and guidance of England Hockey. Make sure that your record includes: facts and observations, not your opinion, the child's name, address, date of birth and the time of the incident. Date and sign the record; the Child Welfare Officer will witness the record. Refer to Incident Reporting form on the club internet.
- Maintain confidentiality having made your report; breaches of confidentiality can be very damaging to the child, family and any Child Welfare investigations that take place.

I understand the nature of my role and responsibilities at

St Albans Hockey Club

I confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy and understand the guidelines. I accept responsibility to care for the children and young people with whom I come into contact.

I understand if I am aware that anyone is helping with young people on a regular basis I will ensure the Child Welfare Officer is informed and assist as appropriate with the relevant paperwork.

Name:

Signature:

Date: