

Hartshill Parish Council

Safeguarding Policy

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1. Introduction

Hartshill Parish Council supports all sporting organisations and services which make provision for children and young people and 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) and working in sport and associated with the Council have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

2. Policy Statement

Hartshill Parish Council and any Club/Organisation/Service using the facilities provided by the Council has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved from harm. 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.

Hartshill Parish Council will ensure that any Club/Organisation/Service using facilities provided by the Council will provide safety and protection of all children involved in their Club/Organisation/Service through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted.

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

The aim of Hartshill Parish Council Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of any Club/Organisation/Service using facilities provided by the Council
- Allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues

3. 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 judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with 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.

When a child enters the club/organisation activity 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, the club activity/organiser must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

4. 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 young people/disabled adults equally, and 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 (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Playing sports fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the Coach Education Programme. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people and their parents should always be consulted, and their agreement gained.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams 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's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - 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 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 club officials are required to transport 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 away from others
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event or 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
- 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
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, 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 players 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 if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child 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 are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a player
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

5. Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to their Club Child Protection Officer.

Photographing participants - Help and advice from the Child Protection in Sport Unit

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on sports websites and other publications.

Certain individuals will visit sporting events to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of young sports people. All clubs should be vigilant about this possibility. Any concerns during an event should be reported to a club official or other responsible person.

If you are commissioning a professional photographer or inviting the press to an event, it is important that they understand your expectations of them in relation to child protection. You should:

Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of their behaviour and the content of the photography, issue them with identification which they must display at all times

Inform athletes and parents that a photographer will be present at the event and ensure they consent to filming and/or photography and to its publication

Do not allow photographers unsupervised access to child athletes or one-to-one photo sessions during the event

Do not approve photo sessions outside the events or at a participant's home. You must obtain permission for the filming/photographs to be taken both from the subjects and their parents/carers.

Videoing as a coaching aid

Video can be a legitimate coaching aid for club coaches and teachers. However, if it is used make sure that children and their parents/carers understand that it is part of the coaching programme. Make sure that the films are then stored securely.

Hartshill Parish Council endorse the use of a written consent form to be read and signed by parents, children and guardians.

Sample consent form for the use of photographs or video (Parents/guardians and children).

(Club or organisation.....) recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all young people in sport. In accordance with our child protection policy we will not permit photographs, video or other images of young people to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and children.

The *(Club or organisation.....)* will follow the guidance for the use of photographs a copy of which is available from *(insert name.....)*

The *(Club or organisation.....)* will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform *(Club or organisation.....)* immediately.

I *(parent/carer.....)* consent to *(club/organisation.....)* photographing or videoing *(insert name.....)* Date:

I *(insert name of child)* consent to *(Club or organisation)* photographing or videoing my involvement in *(sport.....)* Date:

Using photographs of children on websites - Help & advice from the Child Protection in Sport Unit
Photographs of children and young people on websites can pose direct or indirect risks to their subjects.

For example, images accompanied by personal information - 'this is X who likes to collect stamps' - could be used by an individual to learn more about a child prior to 'grooming' them for abuse. Or the content of the photo could be used or adapted for inappropriate use.

Sporting organisations and clubs must develop a policy about the use of images of children on their websites. You need to make decisions about the type of images that represent your sport appropriately and to ensure parents support the policy.

Make sure that you take your audience and purpose into proper consideration when publishing any photographic/film material. When assessing risk, the most important factor is the potential for inappropriate use of the images. You should take the following steps to reduce the potential for misuse:

- Avoid using children's names (first name or surname) in photograph captions. If the child is named, avoid using his or her photograph. If a photograph is used, avoid naming the child.
- Use a Sample consent form for the use of photographs or video (parents and children- as above) to request and record parental permission to use an image of their child. This ensures that parents know that an image of their child is being used to represent the sport.

- Ask for children's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way their image is being used to represent the sport. An athlete's permission form is one way of achieving this.
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. It is difficult to specify exactly what content is appropriate given the wide diversity of sports. However, certain sports activities - swimming, gymnastics and athletics, for example - present a much greater risk of potential misuse. Images of these sports should focus on the overall activity, not on a particular child, and should avoid full face and body shots. This means, for example, that photographs of children in a pool would be appropriate if shot poolside from waist or shoulder up. The age of children is another factor to consider when deciding what is appropriate.
- Report the use of inappropriate images to help reduce the risks participants.
- Safety Gear. It is important that children are not featured wearing jewellery, body piercing or clothing that could cause safety issues. Also ensure that the photographer photographs the subject(s) in the appropriate safety equipment.

6. Safe Recruitment and training of staff/volunteers

Hartshill Parish Council recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Pre-selection checks must include the following:

- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. 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 Criminal Records Bureau.
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

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 sign up to the 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 effectively with children. Coaching staff to attend a recognised 3-hour good practice and 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.
- Non-coaching staff and volunteers to complete recognised awareness training on 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 gain national first aid training - where necessary.
- Attend update training when necessary. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from Sports Coach UK, the NSPCC, and the Sport Council.

7. Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working with or within Hartshill Parish Council 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.

Hartshill Parish Council 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.

8. Reporting concerns about poor practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice the designated/Club Child Protection Officer/Council will deal with it as a misconduct issue. If the allegation is about poor practice by the *Organisation/Club* Child Protection Officer/Council or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant (*Sport Governing Body*) officer who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

9. Reporting concerns about suspected abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the *Organisation/Club* Child Protection Officer/Council who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The *Organisation/Club* Child Protection Officer/Council will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police.

The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.

The *Organisation/Club* Child Protection Officer/Council should also notify the relevant (*Sport Governing Body*) officer who in turn will inform the (*Sport Governing Body*) Child Protection Officer who will deal with any media enquiries.

If the *Organisation/Club* Child Protection Officer/Council is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Manager or in his/her absence the (*Sport Governing Body*) Child Protection Officer who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

10. Confidentiality

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 Club Child Protection Officer of the Club/Organisation
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social services/police
- The *Council*

Seek social services 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).

11. Enquiries and further action

Internal enquiries

The *Organisation/Club/Council* 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 *Organisation/Club/Council* 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 *Organisation/Club/Council* 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 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, parents and members of staff may need. Use of help-lines, 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, Internet: 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 (for example, by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, the Club/Organisation/Council should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, 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.

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 in sport:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children 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 and when).

- Report any concerns to the Club/Organisation/Councillor 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).
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bullies (ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the victim's coach/mentor.
- 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 coaches 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 designated/Club Child Protection Officer as in "responding to suspicions or allegations" above.

Reporting concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. a parent or carer)

Report your concerns to the Club Child Protection Officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible.

If the Club/Organisation Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately. Social Services and the Club Child Protection Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers.

The Club Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to the Organisation/Club/Council or Governing Body. The Governing Body should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident plays a role in Organisation/Club/Council and act accordingly. Maintain confidentiality on a **need to know** basis only.

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. It should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child'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. 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. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?

- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child 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.

12. Codes of conduct for Parents/Guardians

Hartshill Parish Council endorse responsible behaviour by parents, who are expected to:

- Positively reinforce their child/young person and show an interest in their chosen activity.
- Do not place their young person under pressure or push them into activities they do not want to do.
- Complete and return the Health and Consent Form pertaining to their child's participation with "Name of Club" (see parental consent).
- Deliver and collect the child punctually to and from coaching sessions/matches.
- Ensure their child is properly and adequately attired for the weather conditions of the time, including shorts, shirt, socks, tracksuit, sweat-tops, hat, gloves etc...
- Ensure that proper footwear and protective equipment are worn at ALL times in accordance with Health and Safety Regulations. Any child not in possession of the fundamental requirements will not be permitted to participate.
- Detail any health concerns pertaining to the child on the consent form, in particular breathing or chest conditions. Any changes in the state of the child's health should be reported to the coach prior to coaching sessions.
- To inform the coach prior to departure from the field of play if child is to be collected early from a coaching session.
- Encourage their child to play by the rules and teach them that they can only do their best
- Behave responsibly on the side-lines; do not embarrass your child.
- Show appreciation and support the coach
- Ensure their child is punctual
- Be realistic and supportive.
- Provide their child with proper clothing and equipment.
- Ensure their child's hygiene and nutritional needs are met.
- Accept the official's judgement.
- Acknowledge the importance and role of the club coaches who provide their time ensure children's participation in the club.
- Promote their child's participation in playing sport for fun. Parents/Guardians have the right to:
- Know their child is safe
- Be informed of problems or concerns relating to their children
- Be informed if their child is injured
- Have their consent sought for issues such as trips
- Contribute to decisions within the club
- Complain if they have concerns about the standard of coaching

13. Codes of conduct for Coach/Volunteers

Hartshill Parish Council endorse responsible conduct by any coach or volunteer and the following is an example of a coach/volunteer Code of Conduct, but clubs should also contact their own governing body to ensure they incorporate their own specific guidelines.

NAME OF CLUB.....

Coaches and volunteers involved in sport for young people have a great opportunity to be a positive role model and help build an individual's confidence.

Coaches/Volunteers are required to:

- Ensure the safety of all children by careful supervision, proper pre-planning of coaching sessions, using safe methods at all times.
- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Treat all young people equally and ensure they feel valued. Have no favourites.
- Encourage all children not to discriminate on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes or lack of ability.
- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour.
- Appreciate the efforts of all young people and not over-train the young people. Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Be positive, approachable and offer praise to promote the objectives of the club at all times.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind to go unchallenged or unrecorded
- Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the club incident/accident book.
- Parents will be informed.
- Report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse or poor practice to the designated person.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the club "first aider".
- Have access to telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required.
- Foster team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care.
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced.
- Not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.
- Respect and listen to the opinions of young people.
- Take time to explain coaching techniques to ensure they are clearly understood.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Be a role model, displaying consistently high standard of behaviour and appearance (disciplined/committed/time keeping), remember children learn by example.
- Refrain from smoking and consumption of alcohol during club activities or coaching sessions.
- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.
- Protect themselves from false accusation:
 - By not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
 - Never taking children to their home
 - Not administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless in the presence of others.
- Hold appropriate valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- Make the sport/activity fun

Coaches/Volunteers have a right to:

- Access ongoing training and information on all aspects of leading/managing activities for youths, particularly on Safeguarding.

- Support in the reporting of suspected abuse.
- Access to professional support services.
- Fair and equitable treatment by the governing body/club.
- Be protected from abuse by children/youths, other adult members and parents.
- Not to be left vulnerable when working with children.

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the designated person.

Emergency Action/First Aid

All coaches, leaders and members should be prepared with an action plan in the event of an emergency and be aware of our First Aid Procedures.

This will include:

Access to First Aid equipment

Telephone contact if the participant is a minor

Telephone contact to the Emergency Services

14. Further Guidance

If you are concerned about a child and unable to contact the designated person in your organisation, please call the [NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) on 0808 800 5000.

Reviewed & Adopted:

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