



SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN IN ATHLETICS

Don't keep it to yourself

Jersey Spartan Athletic Club (JSAC) acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We are committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and UK Athletics Limited (UKA) requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background, all children

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at JSAC in a safe and child centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in JSAC activities.

JSAC acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

A child is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

As part of our safeguarding policy JSAC will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people,
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in JSAC.

Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the Club.

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, UK Sport and/or Home Country Sports Councils and UKA
- As a result of any other significant change or event.

Objective

The objective of the Safeguarding & Protecting Children In Athletics policy is to build a safe future in athletics for all children under the age of 18 years. All children are entitled to a duty of care and to be protected from abuse.

It is not the responsibility of athletics to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, this is the domain of the child protection professionals.

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children 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 individuals involved in athletics understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

JSAC will:

- Provide and enforce procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants and protect them from abuse.
- Ensure all children who take part in athletics are able to participate in a safe and fun environment.
- Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Recruit, train and supervise their employees and volunteers to adopt best practise to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves from false allegations.
- Require staff/volunteers to adopt and abide by their Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Codes of Conduct and the relevant grievance, investigatory and disciplinary procedures.
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate complaints, child protection, disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Designate a person in the organisation who is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate DBS checks are completed
- Review policies regularly.

A **child** is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

Children' therefore means children and young people throughout.

The fact a child has reached 16 years of age, living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody, does not change his or her status or entitlement to protection.

Disabled children may be more vulnerable and at greater risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some of the common factors that can lead to increased vulnerability include social isolation, communication and learning difficulties or disability, lack of understanding of boundaries, need for assistance with personal care and more likely target for bullying and abuse.

Children with disabilities have the same rights to protection as any other child and clubs working with these children need to be especially alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse and have strategies in place to ensure all children are able to raise concerns.

Best practice:

- Being open and conducting all interactions with children in a public place and with appropriate consent.
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with one child
- If you have to meet or coach one child ensure it is conducted in an open environment, and where full consent and emergency contact details have been provided.
- If you are travelling alone with a child gain appropriate consent, avoid consistently having one child alone with you in the car and never share a room on your own with a child
- Challenging bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language or controlling behaviour that could upset individuals or reduce them to tears.
- Never ignoring bullying by parents, coaches or children. Listening to and supporting the person being bullied.
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children
- Treating children fairly, with respect and avoiding favouritism.
- Being friendly and open and ensuring that relationships are appropriate for someone in a position of power and trust.
- Respecting all athletes and helping them to take responsibility for their own development and decision making.
- Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances physical contact is perfectly acceptable and appropriate, as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the athlete and that consent for contact has been given by the individual and appropriate parental consent.

- Being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching and ensuring that your licence remains valid.
- Ensure that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each athlete.

Adopting best practice not only ensures the individuals welfare, it also protects you from possible wrongful allegations. Children very rarely make false allegations. If they do it is usually because they are confused or covering up for someone else's behaviour and hoping their action might scare the real abuser into stopping.

Poor Practice

The following are examples of poor practice and should be avoided:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.
- A coach shouting comments at athletes when they are not working hard enough.
- A coach using harassing and discriminatory language such as 'you run like a girl'
- A coach engaging in an intimate relationship with one of his/her athletes.
- A group of athletes ganging up on a new athlete and refusing to talk to him/her.
- A coach taking a group of children away to a weekend event on his/her own.

The list above is not exhaustive and many other examples exist.

If a child athlete:

- Is accidentally hurt;
- appears distressed in any manner;
- appears to be sexually aroused by the actions of another; or
- misunderstands or misinterprets the actions of another.

Then the incident should be reported immediately to another colleague/volunteer, a written note must be made of the incident and parents and/or appropriate adults informed. The Club Welfare Officer should also be informed. The attached UKA referral form should be used:

<https://www.uka.org.uk/rules/safeguarding-referral-form/>

Abuse

Abuse can occur wherever there are children.

There are four main types of abuse:

1. **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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
2. **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express his/her views, deliberately silencing him/her or 'making fun' of what he/she say or how he/she communicates. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, which especially applies to when a child shares a protected characteristic e.g. racist, sexual or homophobic bullying or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
3. **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as

masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

4. **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. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Disabled children are particularly vulnerable to abuse and are at least three times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children. Those working with them must be aware of this and willing to acknowledge their concerns. There can be a tendency to make allowances for families with sick or disabled children. Practitioners may over identify with the child's parents/carers and be reluctant to accept that abuse or neglect is taking or has taken place, or seeing it as being attributable to the stress and difficulties of caring for a disabled child.

When suspecting abuse, practitioners should always ask: **"Would this be acceptable if the child were not disabled?"**

Recruitment, Selection and Training.

All reasonable steps will be taken at all levels within JSAC to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working in athletics, especially with children.

Recruitment:

All applicants must complete an application form that includes:

- Name and address
- National Insurance number to confirm identity and right to work
- Relevant experience, qualifications and training undertaken
- Career history and/or involvement in sport (to confirm experience and identify any gaps)

All applicants who have or are seeking to undertake a role and responsibility in relation to children (regulated position) in Athletics must complete a criminal record check (enhanced level DBS).

This also applies to people who are already involved in the Club and subsequently take on a role which gives them greater access to children (for instance a parent taking on a volunteering role within the Club).

For all coaches and volunteers with roles in relation to children attendance at a recognised direct delivery safeguarding workshop.

Training

Clubs and organisations must ensure that all staff and volunteers who work with children undertake relevant training on a three-yearly basis in child / safeguarding procedures, procedures for taking children away and sources of education and training. For all coaches and volunteers with roles in relation to children this should include attendance at a recognised direct delivery safeguarding workshop (e.g. SportscoachUK Safeguarding and Protecting Children' workshop/ Local Safeguarding Childrens Board basic awareness workshops).

Monitoring and appraisal

All staff/ volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive regular feedback through observed practice, appraisal or informal feedback to identify training needs and to set goals. Concerns about misconduct, poor practice or abuse, however will be acted on as they arise. Appropriate support will be offered to those who report concerns/incidents or complaints.

Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations Introduction

While it is not the responsibility of JSAC, or governing bodies, volunteers or club members to decide whether a concern constitutes abuse, it is their responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare of a child. These concerns may arise due to:

- An individual disclosing that they are being abused.
- The behaviour of an adult towards a child.
- A number of indicators observed in a child over a period of time.

How to respond to a disclosure

Don't:

- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Speculate or make assumptions.
- Show shock or distaste.
- Make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made.
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.
- Give a guarantee of confidentiality.

All suspicions and disclosures must be reported appropriately. It is acknowledged that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases of possible sexual abuse or where there is a misplaced loyalty to a colleague.

Club Welfare Officers

To ensure that appropriate action is taken, JSAC has trained personnel to act as the designated Child Welfare Officers (CWO).

Reporting Procedures

Any person with information of a disclosure, allegation or concern about the welfare of a child must immediately report this in one of the following ways:

1. You should immediately inform the Club's designated CWO who will refer the matter as appropriate see Appendix 1.
2. Where there is no CWO, the reporting person should take responsibility and seek advice from either MASH of the Police and UKA (see Appendix 1)
3. Where there is a complaint of abuse against an employee or volunteer there may be three types of investigation:
 - a. **Criminal**: in which case the police are immediately involved
 - b. **Safeguarding children**: in which case the social care services (and possibly the police) will be involved
 - c. **Disciplinary or misconduct**: where it relates to coaches and officials UKA will be involved in other matters it will rest with the Home Countries. Civil proceedings may also be initiated by the alleged victim of misconduct or abuse, or his/her family, or by persons wrongly accused.

Records should be securely kept in an approved format for up to three years at least.

Dealing with Concerns and Allegations

While the CWOs will have received training, they are not safeguarding children experts and it is not their responsibility to determine whether or not abuse has taken place. If there is any doubt about whether or not the alleged behaviour constitutes abuse, the concern must be shared with professional agencies that will be responsible for subsequent action. Any suspicion that an individual has been abused by a volunteer or employee within athletics should be reported to the UKA Child Protection Lead Officer (CPLO) who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the individual in question and any other individual who may be at risk.

Dealing with Bullying

The same procedures should be adopted when dealing with allegations of bullying.

Records

Your reports should be factual and include where possible:

- The referrer's and/or the child's name, address and date of birth
- The date and time of the incident.
- The facts about the allegation or observation.
- Your factual observations e.g. describe the behaviour and emotional state of the alleged victim, and note any marks, bruising or other injuries.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what happened using the exact words if possible.
- Details of any witnesses
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- Any action that was taken as a result of the concerns.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A copy of this information must be sent to the UKA CPLO, (after discussions with them and if thought necessary).

Confidentiality should be maintained at all times.

Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

Information will be stored in a secure cabinet.

JSAC acknowledges the difficulty in reporting concerns and will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith (without malicious intent), reports.

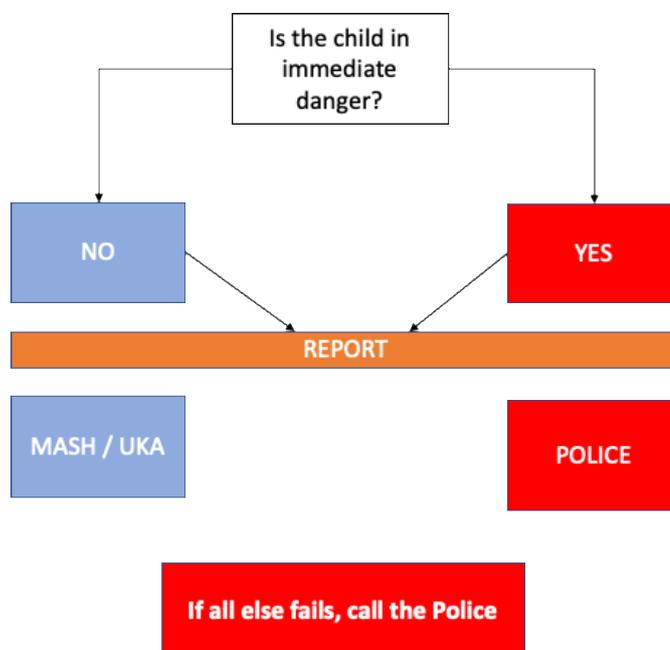
Please ensure that you complete an incident report form and keep complete records at every stage of your involvement.

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Appendix 1

Role	Name	Contact Details
Club Welfare Officer	Melanie Livingston	jsac-secretary@hotmail.co.uk
Local Contacts	MASH	51900 (612612) MASH@gov.je
Police & Child Protection	(ask for PPU)	612612 / 612300
Jersey Safeguarding Partnership Board		442752 safeguarding.je
UK Athletics	Jane Flynn – WO UKA	0121713 8450
National Contacts	NSPCC	01636 65590 www.thecpsu.org.uk 3 Gilmour Close Beaumont Leys Leicester, LE4 1EZ
Childline		0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Decision Tree



UKA and the home country National Governing bodies have disciplinary and appeals procedures, which are available as separate documents.

UKA also licence coaches and officials under a specific licensing scheme with their own Terms and Conditions.