

Swindon Skater Hockey Club



Protecting Children and Young People From Abuse

INTRODUCTION

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 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 young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases or poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document. When a child 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 we must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure that the child receives the support needed.

POLICY (Please see annex 1 for Club Policy Statement)

Swindon Skater Hockey Club believes that the welfare of children and young people is everyone's responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting them from abuse. Everyone involved in Skater Hockey - officials, coaches, volunteers, parents/carers, other family members, friends and children themselves - can help. We believe that all of us have a part to play in looking after the children and young people who come to our club, and that this is both a moral and, arguably, **a legal obligation as the Children Act 1989 indicates that anyone who has the care of a child should:**

Do what is reasonable in all circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare.

This Policy stems from the following principles:

- ***the welfare of the child or young person is the first consideration.***
- ***all children and young people, regardless of age, any disability they may have, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from abuse.***

As an organisation, Swindon Skater Hockey Club is doing everything it can to make sure that there is no room in our sport for those who seek to abuse children and young people. This Guide is part of our efforts but, as we have just said, everyone involved in our sport has a part to play.

Everyone in the sport needs to see and discuss this Policy if it is to help children and young people, and we are asking you to make sure that this happens.

Please note – Swindon Skater Hockey Club will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concerns that a child or young person is at risk of, or may actually be, being abused.

Equally we adhere to the principle that an accused individual has the right to be presumed innocent until guilt is proven. It may be necessary in the interests of potential victims, and indeed our sport itself, to suspend an official or ban someone from any participation in Swindon Skater Hockey Club activities, on a temporary basis. That suspension or ban should not, however, be equated with guilt.

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following terms and abbreviations are used in this document:

Anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child/young person.

All policies and procedures described refer to vulnerable adults as children.

The term parent is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians.

SSHC – Swindon Skater Hockey Club

CPO: Child Protection Officer

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

It's generally acknowledged that there are four types of abuse - Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect.

Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to someone. 'Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy', in which a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health in a child, may also constitute physical abuse. It can occur if a child or young person is forced to train beyond his/her capabilities. Bullying is also likely to come into this category.

Emotional Abuse is treatment that causes severe and persistent adverse effects to someone's emotional development. It occurs when they are repeatedly made to feel that they are inadequate, worthless or unloved, or valued only insofar as they meet someone else's needs. It occurs when someone causes them to feel frightened or in danger. It may involve their exploitation or corruption. It is present in the unrealistic expectations of parents/carers and coaches about what can be achieved. Some degree of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abusive behaviour.

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not he or she is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children or young people in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet someone's basic physical and psychological needs, and is likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide a child or young person with adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect them from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure they have access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include failure to meet their basic emotional needs.

SOME INDICATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

Recognising abuse is not always easy - even for the experts. The examples given below are not a complete list and they are only indicators - not confirmation:

- the child or young person says that she or he is being abused
- someone else says they believe (or actually know) that abuse is occurring
- the child/young person has an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- behaviour changes, perhaps over time or perhaps quite suddenly, and he or she becomes quiet and withdrawn, or alternatively becomes aggressive
- the child/young person does not seem to trust adults, e.g. a parent or coach with whom she or he would be expected to have, or once had, a close relationship
- she or he does not seem to be able to sustain friendships
- he or she becomes increasingly neglected-looking in appearance, or loses or puts on weight for no apparent reason
- she or he shows age-inappropriate sexual awareness and sometimes behaves in a sexually explicit way

Remember that disabled children and young people, and those with learning difficulties, are particularly at risk from abuse and may also have problems in communicating what is happening to them.

GOOD PRACTICE WHICH CAN HELP TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

All SSHC Club Officials: Committee Members, Managers, Assistant Managers, Coaches and Assistant Coaches will be required to supply a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) Disclosure form for the retention by the Club Secretary, within a 3 month period of taking up the position. The cost of obtaining such a Disclosure Form will be met by SSHC.

SSHC Committee will decide at what intervals the CRB Disclosure process will be renewed. Such an interval may not be in excess of 5 years.

Club officials and coaches should take a close look at the way they operate and to take every possible precaution to avoid situations that might give rise to suspicion. Nevertheless, the nature of our sport is such that one to one contact is inevitable - coach and player may find themselves alone together.

SSHC strongly encourage officials to try to use areas that are in general view - not 'hidden away' in a rarely used part of the building.

SSHC also hope that everyone connected with children and young people will help in creating an environment in which they have the confidence to say that they do not want to spend time with a particular individual.

Avoid situations where coach/club official/club member/volunteer and child/young person are alone together without the consent of parents/carers. SSHC acknowledges that occasionally there may be no alternative - for example, someone may fall ill and have to be taken home. If it is unavoidable, however, make sure that it only happens with the knowledge and consent of other club officials, and do try to contact the parents/carers first.

If it's necessary to do things of a personal nature for those:

- **who are very young, or**
- **who have a disability, or**
- **who have been injured,**

make sure you have another adult with you. Let the child/young person concerned know what you are going to do and why. Get their consent if it's at all possible. Unless it's an emergency, always get prior consent from parents/carers by using the ***Parental Consent Form (see annex 3)***.

Ask coaches and/or nominated club officials/volunteers to be responsible for children and young people in changing rooms.

Get coaches/club officials/volunteers to work in pairs if groups have to be supervised in the changing room.

Try to ensure that mixed teams are always accompanied by male and female coaches/club officials/volunteers.

Don't allow any physically rough or sexually provocative games, or inappropriate talking or touching, by anyone in any group for which you have responsibility.

For guidance on the videoing or photographing of players, please refer to the Swindon Borough Council / Farnborough Leisure Centre - Use of Images Policy.

All club coaches and officials must familiarise themselves with the SSHC **Code of Conduct for Officials (see annex 5)**.

All club members must familiarise themselves with SSHC **Code of Conduct for Players (see annex 6)**

Ensure that this Guide on protecting children and young people from abuse is not just filed away but is available to everyone involved in our sport.

IF YOU THINK THAT A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON MAY BE BEING ABUSED

Please remember it's not your responsibility to decide whether a child or young person is being abused, but SSHC is asking you to act on your concerns. Make a detailed note of what you've seen or heard and keep it safe and contact the Child Protection Officer (CPO).

A copy of the formal form "**Reporting Concerns about Suspicious Behaviour**" (see annex 4) should be completed and returned with a copy of the original notes to the CPO.

We do understand that it may be very difficult for you to take this step, and if you really are uncertain whether your concerns are well-founded, or what to do for the best, you can get advice from the **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000** - the Helpline provides a 24 hour service, seven days a week, and your call is free.

If, however, you feel that your suspicions are probably true, please contact: **Swindon Social Services Emergency Duty Team 01793 436699, or Wiltshire Police 0845 408700 or in an emergency 999.**

Again we would remind you to make a detailed note of what you've seen or heard, but please don't delay in passing on the information.

IF A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON TELLS YOU THAT HE OR SHE IS BEING ABUSED

- Stay calm.
- Don't promise to keep it to yourself.
- Listen to what is being said and, please, take it seriously.
- Only ask questions if you need to clarify what is being said to you - don't ask about explicit details.
- Make a detailed note of what you have been told and contact the Club Child Protection Officer or Regional Child Protection Officer.

The Club Child Protection Officer will complete a form "**Reporting Concerns about Suspicious Behaviour**" (**Annex 4**). This will enable the SSHC to take any action that is required within our sport.

ALLEGATIONS OF PREVIOUS ABUSE

Allegations that they have been abused are sometimes made by people months or even years after the alleged incidents took place. They might come from an adult who was abused when they were younger by someone who is still working with children and/or young people. If such an allegation is made to you, please, as a matter of urgency, report it to your **local Social Services Department** or, in an emergency, **the Police**. We ask you to do this because there is a very real possibility that other children and young people may be at risk from this person.

For recording purposes, please complete the form **"Reporting Concerns about Suspicious Behaviour"** (see annex 4).

ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS RELATING TO PREVIOUS BEHAVIOUR BY OFFICIALS, COACHES OR VOLUNTEERS

You may hear of allegations or concerns about the previous behaviour towards children and young people of someone who is now an official, coach or volunteer with the SSHC. Please use the form **"Reporting Concerns about Suspicious Behaviour"** (see annex 4) and pass the form to the Club Child Protection Officer. This will allow the SSHC to deal with the matter fairly but quickly. Remember, as we said at the beginning of this Guide, the SSHC will support anyone who in good faith reports his or her concerns.

AND LASTLY

If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this Guide, or obtain further information about the guide, please refer to the list of **useful contacts** (see appendix 7).

Please remember if this Guide is used properly, it can offer safeguards to everyone involved in Skater Hockey, and so help to maintain its credibility and that of the SSHC. Most of all though, it can help to stop children and young people being abused.

List of Annexes

Annex 1: Club Policy Statement

Annex 2: Club Suspension Policy

Annex 3: Parental Consent Form

Annex 4: Incident Reporting Form

Annex 5: Officials Code of Conduct

Annex 6: Players Code of Conduct

Annex 7: Useful Contacts

Annex 8: Bullying



**Swindon Skater Hockey Club
The Croft Sports Centre, Marlborough Lane,
Old Town, Swindon, SN3 1RA**

CHILD PROTECTION CLUB POLICY STATEMENT

Swindon Skater Hockey Club is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people to play Roller Hockey.

We do this by:

- Recognising that all children have the right to freedom from abuse.
- Ensuring that all our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, appropriately trained and accepts responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, by providing parents and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
- Appointing a Child Protection Officer (SSHC Deputy Chairperson) who will take specific responsibility for child safety and act as the main point of contact for parents, children and outside agencies.
- Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted to the Club Child Protection Officer or the appropriate external authorities.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the Child Protection Policy and activities each year at the Annual General Meeting.

Our Club Child Protection Officer is:.....

Tel No:.....

Signed :Club Chairperson



Swindon Skater Hockey Club
The Croft Sports Centre, Marlborough Lane,
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CHILD PROTECTION

CLUB SUSPENSION POLICY/PROCEDURE

Where an allegation is made against a Club employee / volunteer, Swindon Skater Hockey Club will work on the principle that individuals are innocent until proven guilty.

However in order to protect both the individual and the Club, a period of suspension will normally follow an allegation, whilst an investigation is carried out into the circumstances surrounding it. The only time that a suspension will not apply is where the matter can be dealt with immediately, normally in the space of a few days, but no more than 7 days.

Where a suspension is necessary, the following procedure will apply:

Any allegation(s) will be dealt with and investigated by the Child Protection Officer of the Club, and where appropriate or deemed necessary, be referred to the appropriate external authority.

To ensure the utmost confidentiality, where possible, only three people in addition to the accused person/persons will be a party to the investigation. These will be the Chairperson, Secretary and the Child Protection Officer. Where one of these persons are the subject of the allegation involved, and cannot be party to the investigation, one further person may be confided in i.e. other Executive officer or Committee Member.

All relevant paperwork will be distributed to each member of the investigating panel and one separate copy will be kept on file.

When an allegation is made against a Club employee / volunteer, a meeting will take place with the individual, at which time the allegation will be made known to him/her and put in writing. The individual will be asked to comment on the allegation and hopefully provide information that will enable a swift outcome.

If the matter cannot be dealt within a few days, the Club employee / volunteer will be suspended from duty. Employees will be suspended on full salary. Full salary will last for 3 months, but should an investigation take longer then half of the normal salary will be paid after the initial 3 month period, up to a maximum of a further 3 months.

Whilst suspended, individuals will be advised not to have contact with any other Club Official, apart from those carrying out the investigation.

The CPO will do his/her utmost to keep the employee / volunteer up to date on the progress of the investigation.

Swindon Skater Hockey Club reserves the right to inform other clubs and other relevant bodies that a Club employee / volunteer is suspended from duty, pending the outcome of an investigation into his/her conduct.



Swindon Skater Hockey Club

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/CARER

Child's name:..... Date of birth:

Home address:.....

.....Tele

Emergency contact Name i.e. Friend / Relative

Address:

.....Tele:.....

NB: Please use the space below to advise the activity organisers whether your child:

- suffers from any illness, allergies or medical condition
- is receiving medication - give details and dosage
- has any specific dietary requirements
- will need help with dressing undressing, going to the toilet etc - please note that if such help is necessary and you will not be available to provide it, your signature below will indicate consent to the activity organiser making the necessary arrangements.

I consent to my child receiving any medical treatment deemed to be necessary by a qualified medical practitioner.

My child's NHS card no. is: GP's name:

GP's Surgery: Tel:

I consent to my child taking part in any activity associated with Skater Hockey, which includes matches, training and publicity/team building activities, and acknowledge that Swindon Skater Hockey Club will only be liable in the event of an accident, if they have failed to take reasonable steps in their duty of care to my child, during the activity and in any travel and/or accommodation arrangements for which they are responsible.

Signed:(parent/carer)

Please print name:.....

Date:



Swindon Skater Hockey Club

REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR

Name of complainant:

Age Gender:

Address.

Tel No:

Type of incident. (Physical, Emotional, Sexual, Neglect, Bullying or other) Please state:

Details of incident

Date: Time: Place: Other information:

Who is suggested as being the perpetrator? (Manager, Coach, Player, Official, Spectator, Staff member, Parent etc) Please state:

Was the incident reported to any of the following? (Police, Centre Management, Club Official, Parents, Social Services or other) Please state:

Signature:

Print name:

Position in club:

Date:

Date received by Club CP Officer.....



Swindon Skater Hockey Club

Officials Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all SSHC officials, which includes Committee Members, Managers, Coaches and their deputies/assistants.

Officials play a very influential part in the sporting development of a young person.

- Be courteous, sensitive and prompt when dealing with difficult decisions.
- Make sure you are consistent
- Never shout or ridicule children for making mistakes or losing a competition. (Making mistakes is a route to learning.)
- Officials will endeavour to ensure that all equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of the group.
- Recognise and respect the role of other club officials. They all give their time and resources to ensure the smooth running of the club
- Ensure you keep your qualifications, experience and knowledge as up to date as the club requires.
- An official's behaviour at all times should project a favourable image of the sport and the club.
- Don't discuss sensitive matters outside of the club and discourage others from doing the same.
- Treat every young person as an individual.
- Officials must always abide by the club rules and procedures. Ensure all members are treated fairly and uniformly.
- Where a dispute arises with another official, which cannot be resolved privately, another member of the Committee must be informed immediately. Do not air the dispute in public.
- When dealing with a young person, officials will comply with the published Child Protection Policy

Signed

Name(please print)

Date



Swindon Skater Hockey Club

Players Code of Conduct

Respect

- Treat other people the way you would expect to be treated yourself.
- Always remember that whilst engaged in any Club activity or identifiable as a member of SSHC, you are an ambassador for both your Club and your sport.
- Show respect for other players and officials.

Training and Playing Matches

- It is your responsibility to make sure you wear **ALL** your kit for **ALL** training sessions and matches, and that it is fully maintained and in good condition. This is for your safety and insurance purposes.
- If you can't come to training or to a game please inform your manager as soon as possible.
- Wearing of any jewelery is not permissible.
- Work hard for your team-mates and yourself.
- Make sure you understand the rules of the game and play by them. Accept decisions. Direct questions or concerns through your Coach. It is your captain's role to clarify decisions with the referee.
- Ensure you shake hands with the opposing team at the end of a game.
- Venues must be respected, ensure you leave facilities in the condition in which you would expect to find them.
- Do not wear your skates outside the designated areas.

Discipline

- The club rules and procedures have been developed to ensure your safety, set the standards of conduct and ensure all members are treated fairly and uniformly.
- Disruptive behaviour by players which brings the Club into disrepute, or which disrupts training sessions will not be tolerated. This may include:
 - Fighting or disruptive behaviour
 - Swearing at a Coach, Manager or a Committee member
 - Abusing equipment in a show of temper, or behaving in a dangerous manner
 - Bullying or racial abuse
 - Showing a lack of respect of, or failing to acknowledge the ability of other Team players.
- If there is a disciplinary hearing, you will only be told about it if you are involved. Players must respect the procedures of the club and not discuss or attempt to undermine the disciplinary process by trying to influence those that may be involved.

I accept and agree to abide by the SSHC Players Code of Conduct.
(may be signed by parent or guardian if under16)

Signed

Name(please print).....

Date



Swindon Skater Hockey Club

Useful Contacts

Sports Coach UK (National Coaching Foundation)

114 Cardigan Road

Headingley

Leeds LS6 3BJ

Email: coaching@sportscoachuk.org

Website: www.sportcoachuk.org

Tele 0113 2744802

Sportscoach UK run a basic 3 hr child protection training session – contact Mollie Myers as above.

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

Tele 0808 8005000 24hrs free phone number

Fax: 0207 8252790

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Website: www.nspcc.orh.uk

Childline UK

Freepost 1111

London N1 0BR

Tel 0800 1111 – free phone service

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Sport England (South West)

Tele 01460 73491

Swindon Social Services (Emergency Duty Team EDT)

Tele 01793 436699

Wiltshire Police

Tele 0845 4087000



Swindon Skater Hockey Club

Bullying

Action if Bullying is suspected.

If Bullying is suspected the same procedure should be followed as set out in this Child Protection Document.

Action to help the victims and prevent Bullying in Sport.

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns*. 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 not to tell anyone else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, where and when). Use the SSHC reporting form.
- Report any concerns to the Club Child Protection Officer.

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 bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Provide support for the coach of the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change their behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- Keep a written record of action taken.

***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.**