Welfare and Protection

In Fencing

Procedures and Guidelines

As adapted for Huntingdonshire Fencing Club to run in conjunction with the policies of British fencing

Promoting the welfare of children within our sport

CLUB

Huntingdonshire

Fencing Club

2017

Foreword



Huntingdonshire Fencing Club follows the welfare policies as laid down and published by British Fencing, these are available on the British Fencing website, (http://www.britishfencing.com/governance/welfare/welfare\_documents\_and\_Resources/), the club has drawn up this document with some background information and additional guidelines to cover issues specific to the club and run alongside the British Fencing policies. Huntingdonshire Fencing Club believes that the welfare of children/vulnerable adults is everyone’s responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting children/vulnerable adults from abuse. Everyone in fencing - administrators, club officials, coaches, parents, friends, children/vulnerable adults themselves, everyone - can help.

Abuse can occur anywhere there are children/vulnerable adults e.g. - at home, at school, in the park, or even the fencing club. Sadly, there are some people who will seek to be where children are simply in order to abuse them. We believe that everyone at Huntingdonshire Fencing Club has a part to play in looking after the children/vulnerable adults with whom we are working. This is both a moral and arguably a legal obligation. The Children Act 1989 indicates that anyone who has the care of children/vulnerable adults should *“do what is reasonable in all circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child’s /vulnerable adult’s welfare.”*

**These child protection procedures stem from the following principles:**

**• the child’s/vulnerable adults welfare is the first consideration**

**• all children/vulnerable adults, regardless of age, any disability they have, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to be protected from abuse.**

We know that if the procedures are to help to protect children/vulnerable adult, everyone involved in fencing needs to see and discuss them. We are, therefore, asking all parents and officials to make sure that they are addressed and discussed at general meetings.

Finally, please remember Huntingdonshire Fencing Club will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concerns that a child/vulnerable adult is at risk of, or may actually be, being abused.



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### Some Indications

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

**• the child/vulnerable** **adult says that she or he is being abused, or another person says they believe (or actually know) that abuse is occurring**

**• the child has an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent**

**• the child’s behaviour changes, either over time or quite suddenly, and he or she becomes quiet and withdrawn, or alternatively becomes aggressive.**

**• the child/vulnerable adult appears not to trust adults, eg. a parent or coach with whom she or he would be expected to have, or once had, a close relationship, and does not seem to be able to make friends**

**• he or she becomes increasingly neglected-looking in appearance, or loses or puts on weight for no apparent reason**

**• the child/vulnerable adult shows inappropriate sexual awareness for his/her age and sometimes behaves in a sexually explicit way.**

Bear in mind that physically disabled children/vulnerable adults and children/vulnerable adults with learning difficulties are particularly vulnerable to abuse and may have added difficulties in communicating what is happening to them.

**If you have concerns about the welfare of a child/vulnerable adult.**

Please remember, it’s not your responsibility to decide whether a child/vulnerable adult is being abused but we are asking you to act on your concerns. Make a detailed note of what you’ve seen or heard but don’t delay passing on the information.

#### **Please remember**

- It’s not your responsibility to decide whether a child/vulnerable adult is being abused but we are asking you to **pass on your concerns ASAP.**



If you are a member, the parent/carer or friend of a member, of the fencing club you should:

* **tell a club official such as the club secretary, chairperson , coach or any committee member, or at an event a member of the Directoire Technique – unless, of course you suspect them of being involved.**
* **Contact the BF Child Protection Officer via British Fencing headquarters**

###### Or call one of the following:

* Ring **NSPCC Help Line (Tel: 0800 800 500)** – Telephone Help Line for adults who are concerned that a child has been abused, and counselling for adults and children who have been abused.
* Ring **ChildLine (Tel: 0800 1111)** – Confidential telephone advice for children/vulnerable adults who are being abused or are at risk.
* Ring your local Social Services tel. number available from local phone book including out of hours Duty Social Worker
* **In an emergency you should contact the Police directly so that immediate action can be taken**

As a **club officer** or **organiser** you can:

* Talk to the child’s/vulnerable adult parents/carers about the concerns if you think there may be an obvious explanation such as a bereavement or pressure from their studies/exams.
* Contact the BF Child Protection Officer via British Fencing headquaters
* Ring any of the above numbers
* Contact your local **Social Service** Department or, in an emergency, the **Police**.

If you’re working with fencers away from home, at a training camp, perhaps, or at a national/international competition – tell the **team manager** or the **chief coach**.

Again please remember to make a detailed note of what you’ve seen or heard but don’t delay passing on the information.

### If a child/vulnerable adult tells you that he or she is being abused



• Stay calm

• Don’t promise to keep it to yourself

• Listen to what the child/vulnerable adult say and, please, take it seriously.

• Only ask questions if you need to identify what the child/vulnerable adult is telling you don’t ask the child/vulnerable adult about explicit details.

• Make a detailed note of what the child/vulnerable adult has told you but, as advised in the previous section, please don’t delay passing on the information.

### Good practice which can help to prevent Child Abuse

Avoid situations where teacher/coach/club official and child are alone. Huntingdonshire Fencing Club acknowledges that occasionally there may be no alternative - for example, a child may fall ill and have to be taken home. We would stress, however, that one to one contact must never be allowed to occur on a regular basis. Further guidance on this issue is contained in the BRITISH FENCING *Code of Ethics.*

If it’s necessary to do things of a personal nature for children/vulnerable adults who are young or disabled, make sure you have another adult accompanying you. Get the child’s/vulnerable adults consent if at all possible and certainly get consent from the parent/carer. Let the child/vulnerable adult know what you are doing and why.

Access to the St. Neots Recreation centre

The St. Neots Recreation centre is a public building and as such we have no control over other users of the centre, in particular the centre changing rooms. The club area of the hall is open access; however fencers will observe who is in the area.

In general, junior and adult fencers are free to mix throughout the evening as the one room layout minimises the opportunity for inappropriate behaviour. There are several areas that require special attention as described below.

* 1. **Arrival**. Club responsibility for juniors starts when they enter the hall at or after 7 pm, all fencers are expected to sign in for fire regulations. If juniors are dropped off outside the centre, the club cannot take any responsibility for them until they have entered the hall after 7 pm and have signed in. It is the club’s preference that parents come in to the hall and sign their child in.
	2. **Getting equipment out of the store room.** Club equipment is stored in the centre store room, if juniors help get this out there must always be at least two adults in the store room at any one time.
	3. **Leaving the hall during the evening.** If juniors leave the hall during the evening the club will not take responsibility for them, however they can request that two adult fencers/responsible adults accompany them.
	4. **Leaving the centre at the end of the evening.** The fencers are required to sign out to signify that they have left the building. As for sections a) and c) the club does not take responsibility for juniors who have signed out and left the hall. Parents who do not agree with this clause are requested to come in to meet their children. It is the club’s preference that all parents come into the hall to collect their child and sign them out.

Teachers/coaches/club officials should work in pairs if classes or groups of children have to be supervised in the changing room.

Ensure that mixed groups are always accompanied by male and female teachers/coaches/club officials.

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.

In keeping with BFA and/or BAF regulations, all coaches who coach juniors are on the BFA and/or BAF current register of coaches and have a minimum of the Level 1 Coaching Award and have complied with BFA and/or BAF CRB requirements. All current coaches have attended a 'Good Practice and Child Protection' Sports Coach UK.

Although it is not a requirement of the BFA, all club officers are encouraged to go through a CRB check every 5 years and this is required of the Child Welfare Protection Officers. The club may accept CRB certificates from other organisations as long as they are less than 2 years old.

Fencers are not expected to be CRB checked, however they are expected to be familiar with this policy and abide by its requirements.

From time to time the club holds social events where the junior fencers may come into contact with people from outside the club. The club will always make it clear when this will occur and take all reasonable precautions to minimise risk. If parents have any specific concerns they should raise them with a club officer.

The club is not specifically equipped to deal with fencers who have special needs, however the club will work with parents and fencers to maximise opportunities for those with special needs. We will consider each case individually, with consideration to our resources and to safety and welfare.

**It is the responsibility of parents/carers to keep the club informed of changes to emergency contact details.**

At competitions, be aware of people who don’t appear to be relatives or friends of children who are fencing but, nevertheless, seem to spend a lot of time videoing or photographing them, particularly if they are not authorised. Report these incidents to the organisers or the Centre management/Organisers immediately.

For club events all parents/relatives and friends and bona fide press photographers are required to register with the organisers, the organisers are responsible for monitoring all photography to ensure compliance with British Fencings and Huntingdonshire District Council Leisure Centres Operating Procedure guidance.

Ensure Club Huntingdonshire adheres to the BRITISH FENCING law with particular reference to:

• the *Code of Ethics*

• the requirements for coaches and helpers to be registered with BRITISH FENCING

Publicise phone numbers for the NSPCC Helpline:

**0800 800 500**

and Childline

**0800 11111**

**FINALLY**

**It is assumed that all parents accept this policy and guidelines and if not they should notify club officers and if necessary stay with the junior throughout the evening.**

##### If the procedures and guidance contained here are implemented properly, they can offer safeguards to all Club officials and those who help at Huntingdonshire Fencing Club.

**Most of all though, they can help to prevent children being abused.**