



Stratford upon Avon AC Junior Safeguarding & Welfare Policy

Revised February 2022

Introduction

Joining the Junior section of the Stratford-upon-Avon Athletic Club is an important step in a young person's Athletic career, therefore, when becoming a Junior member, the athlete and parent/guardians should be aware of the Club's objectives and the obligations for the person joining.

The club is run by volunteers and prides itself on promoting a supportive, family environment where young people feel welcomed and are encouraged to enjoy athletics. The club will help athletes improve their skills to meet their potential, irrespective of their ability level.

Safeguarding & Welfare Policy

The Club's Safeguarding & Welfare Policy is built upon the current England Athletics 'Safeguarding & Welfare Policy for Athletics'.

As an athletic club we are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for young people to practice athletics whilst at the club.

We will do this by:

- Recognising that all young people have the right to freedom from abuse and distress.
- Ensuring that all our coaches, officials and volunteers are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse or distress of young people in their care.
- The club coaches acting as 'in loco parentis' when they are left to care for a child and will not put a child in danger or be negligent in the way that they will care for someone else's child.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions and allegations of abuse or distress, providing parents and young people with the opportunity to voice any concern they may have.
- Appointing a Safeguarding & Welfare Officer who will take specific responsibility for child safety and act as the main point of contact for parents, young people and outside agencies.
- Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted to the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer or appropriate external authorities.
- **Having a robust Anti Bullying Policy (see separate document)**
- Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the policy annually.
- Our Safeguarding & Welfare Officers are:
 - Alison Gravelsons : Alison.Gravelsons@stratfordac.co.uk**
 - Nikki Hilliard : Nikki.Hilliard@stratfordac.co.uk**

Responsibilities

Executive

- It is the collective responsibility of the Executive to be involved in approving and monitoring the effectiveness of the Safeguarding & Welfare Policy Finance policy
- The Club Welfare Officer is responsible to continually review the effectiveness of the Safeguarding & Welfare Policy and it will be formally reviewed annually
- Any amendments to the Safeguarding & Welfare Policy will be referred to the Club Committee and any actions recorded and communicated to the members.

Club Officials & Volunteers

- The Club will appoint a Welfare Officer with the specific responsibility of implementing this Policy.

Safeguarding & Welfare Training

- The Welfare Officer and all coaches and officials of the Club shall be given support by the Club to attend a Safeguarding & Welfare Awareness Course.
- Coaches will be required to attend a course in Safeguarding & Welfare Awareness and helpers and volunteers with access to young people may also be required to attend a course but this will be at the discretion of the Committee.

Coaches, Officials and Volunteers

- All coaches, officials or volunteers with access to young people must be cleared through the police check self-vetting system i.e. Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) to see if they have any convictions that would make them inappropriate to have as coaches, officials or helpers. This vetting system is instigated by the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer but completed by the individual.
- When the police check form has been returned to the coach, official or helper it must be passed on to the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer who will inform the Committee whether or not that person is appropriate to be involved with young people within the Club.
- The individuals going through this process will be given 90 days from instigation to respond to the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer with this information.
- The cost of the CRB will be covered by UKA. The Safeguarding & Welfare Officer will give confidentiality to all those who are vetted through this process and not disclose details of the police checks.
- Any persons who are vetted through the police check system and are found to have previous convictions that make them inappropriate people to be involved with young people, or while they are associated with the Club they are convicted or cautioned by the police of crimes or inappropriate behaviour against young people, will be asked to leave the Club with no right of appeal.
- New coaches or officials to the Club may be asked to provide a character reference to check their suitability to coach. References will be provided from their previous Club or other suitable organisation as deemed by the Committee.

Safeguarding & Welfare Officer

Misconduct against a child in the club's care can include abuse or poor athletics practice. When a report of possible misconduct is brought to the attention of the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer, an investigation will commence as soon as possible. It is unlikely that an immediate decision will be made, in which case an investigation will be carried out by the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer, who will include all relevant parties

If the allegation is of abuse -

- The Safeguarding & Welfare Officer will inform the club's Secretary and Junior section's head coach, unless the matter concerns those individuals.
- Parents/carers will be contacted to clarify initial concerns. However, in circumstances where a child may be placed at a greater risk by contacting the parents/carers, then they will not be informed.
- England Athletics Welfare will be contacted immediately for advice on the appropriate action to be taken. If it is appropriate Social Services and Police will also be contacted. The contact details are defined in Appendix A.
- At the conclusion of the case the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer will take appropriate action with regard to the individual and inform the Club Committee and England Athletics of the outcome.

If the allegation relates to poor athletics practice

- The Safeguarding & Welfare Officer will refer the matter immediately to a special meeting of the Club Committee.
- If the matter cannot be resolved within the Club, the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer will refer the issue to England Athletics.

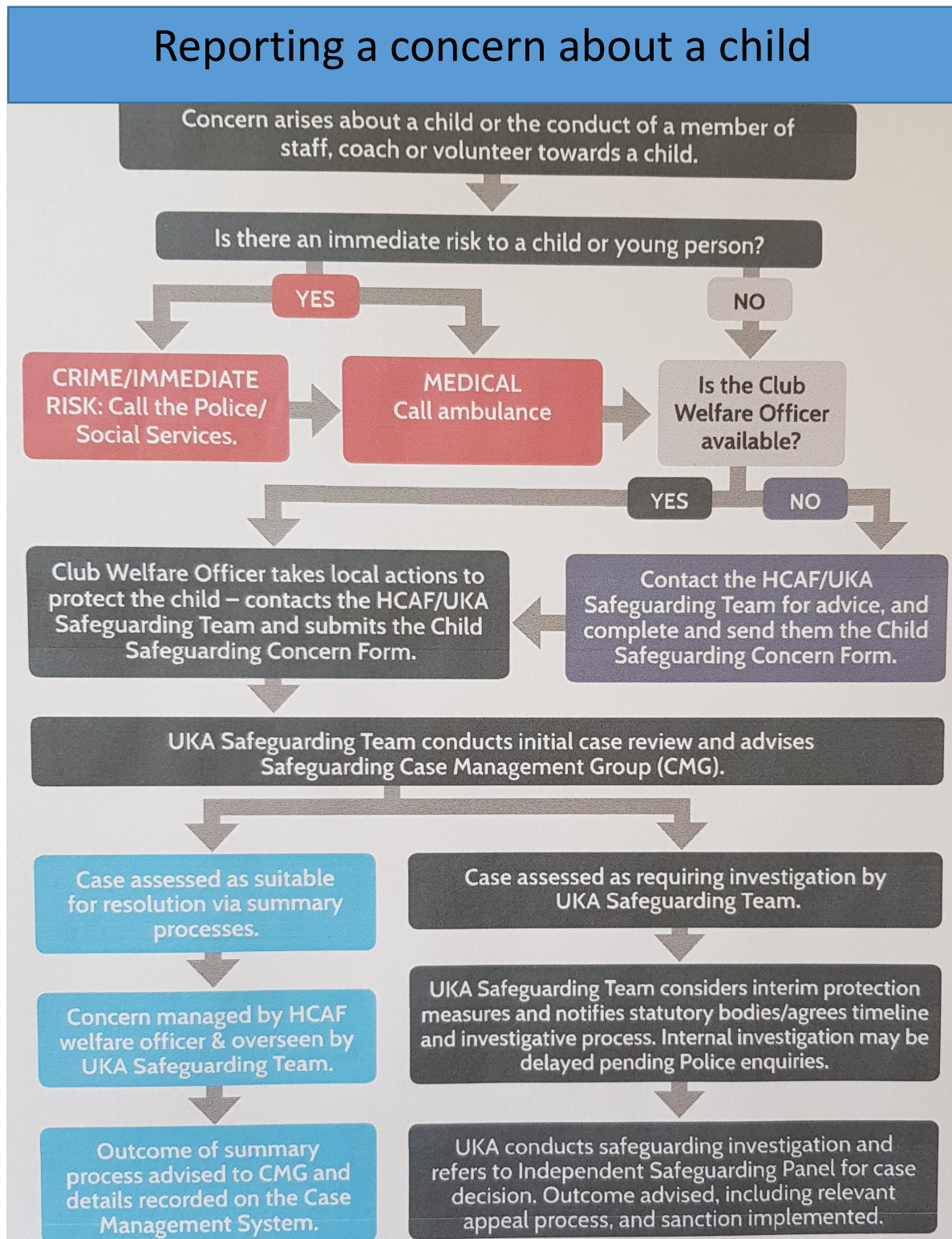
Incident/accident Reports

- Any coach, official or helper at the Club who receives a complaint shall complete an incident/accident report as soon as possible and pass a copy of the report to the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer to determine the most appropriate action.
- **A copy of the incident/accident report form is shown in Appendix D.**

Club Codes of Conduct

- Codes of Conduct for athletes, coaches and parents/guardians have been produced and sets out the expected behaviour of everyone associated with the Club with access to young people.
- All coaches, officials and volunteers who have access to young people are required to sign a declaration confirming that they have received and read the relevant Club Code of Practice and agree to abide by the guidelines in it. The Safeguarding & Welfare Officer will hold these declarations on file.
- The coaches' document is issued at the time a coach commences coaching and signed. It is a requirement for the coach to read and sign the document every 2 years thereafter The Codes of conduct for athletes and parents/guardians are issued in the Welcome Pack when an athlete joins the club
- **A copy of the coaches Code of Practice is defined in Appendix B.**

Appendix A



Appendix B

Coaches Codes of Practice

This code of practice has been written to inform and remind coaches, officials and helpers of responsibilities and standards of behaviour expected from them. By adopting this Code of Practice a coach can:-

- Prevent and avoid abuse or distress
- Recognise and act if you come across abuse or distress
- Assure parents that their young people are safe with us
- Protect yourself

Coaches Code of Conduct - working with young people

Good Practice means:

- Ensuring that Athletics is fun, enjoyable and fair play is promoted.
- Treating all young people equally, with respect and dignity.
- Being an excellent role model; this includes not smoking, using inappropriate language, swearing or drinking alcohol, using a mobile (unless necessary) whilst coaching.
- Always putting the welfare of young people first, before winning or achieving goals by encouraging a constructive environment where healthy competition, skill development, fun and achievement are promoted in equal measures.
- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding being alone with a child, and encouraging open communication within no secrets).
- Building balanced relationships based on trust which enable young people to take part in the decision making process.
- As you are in a position of trust and authority not having inappropriate including sexual relationships with minors i.e. 16/17 year olds or below in your care.
- Not tolerating acts of aggression/bullying whether physical or verbal.
- Recognising the needs and abilities of young people, avoiding too much training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Giving positive and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- No physical contact.....see below.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Finding out if any young people you are coaching have medical conditions that could be aggravated whilst training or competing.
- Keeping a record any time a child is injured in your care, along with the details of any treatment provided.
- Promoting good sportsmanship by encouraging young people to be considerate of other athletes, officials and County / Club volunteers and by being modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- Always conduct coaching sessions with at least one other adult present and adults
- Dressing appropriately and being professional when operating in an Athletics environment with young people.
- Highlighting to the Club Welfare Officer concerns relating to harassment and abuse of young people.

Poor practice means you must never:

- Spend time alone with young people away from others
- Take or drop off a child at an event/training unless accompanied by a parent/carer or appropriate adult
- Take young people to your home or transport them by car, where they will be alone with you
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Share a room with a child
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate verbal, touching or physical abuse
- Take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises an Athlete or that affects their self esteem
- Allow young people to use inappropriate language or behaviour unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Make a child cry as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or ignored by reporting them to the club's Welfare Officer
- Do things of a personal nature for young people or vulnerable adults that they cannot do for themselves

Physical contact

SUAAC has adopted the following as best practice:

The Club understands that physical contact between a child and an adult may be required to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort. However, it is important to remember that in Athletics today there is a multicultural mix of young people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, young people who may be on the Child Protection Register or have previously been or are currently being abused at home.

Not all young people are used to or are comfortable with any type of touching, be it friendly or otherwise and so quite simply SUAAC's policy is **don't** unless a specific activity requires it and the athlete is aware of what is happening and gives their permission.

In many cultures, girls in particular, are uncomfortable about any kind of touching by a stranger. SUAAC therefore assumes **all** young people are not comfortable with physical contact and all adults must understand that touching not only involves touching young people when showing them Athletics postures etc, but can also include responsive or pleasant actions, e.g. when asking the child to carry out a task, or celebrating a win with say a high 5 or a pat on the back.

However, physically or visually impaired young people may need to be touched in order to help them understand, acquire or visualise a specific Athletics posture but it must be remembered that the guidance detailed below still applies.

If for specific reasons touching is required you should only use minimal, light touch physical contact if its aim is to:

- Develop skills or techniques
- Treat an injury
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring
- Meet the requirements of a specific activity

In addition:

- Never find yourself in a situation where you are the only adult present around young people.
- You should never make any physical contact on a one to one basis and seek to explain the reason for the physical contact to the child i.e. reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission to allow the demonstration. Physical contact should always be intended to meet the child's needs NOT the adult's.
- If a child becomes injured during a coaching session and the injury requires the child to be carried to a place of treatment, always seek support from another adult before moving the child. Any first aid administered should be in the presence of another adult or in open view of others.
- Explain what you are intending to do and if the child seems uncomfortable in any way with physical contact, STOP immediately and seek the support of another adult.
- If the child you are working with is visually impaired, you should tell them who you are and ask their permission before you come into physical contact with them
- Where physical contact is for motivational or celebratory reasons, agree with the athlete to praise good performance, with a "High Five" or similar action. No hugging.

Never take on one to one coaching with a child unless another adult or parent/carer is present.

Communication

If you need to communicate with a child for the purposes of for example organising training or passing on Athletics information such as competitions, always include a parent's mobile telephone number or email as well. If you have agreed with the parents in advance to use the child's own mobile phone or email for communication with them, under no circumstances make the number available for general circulation.

If any of the following incidents take place or are observed, you MUST in the first instance report them to the respective Age Group Leader or Head Coach (and if necessary to the SUAAC's Welfare Officer) and make a written note of the event using SUAAC's Accident/Incident Reporting Form (see below) and inform parents where appropriate if :

- You accidentally hurt a child
- A child seems distressed in any manner
- A child acts in a sexually inappropriate manner
- A child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said and/or done
- In response to something a child has said
- In response to signs or suspicions of abuse
- In response to allegations made against a coach or volunteer
- In response to allegations made about a parent, carer or someone not working within Athletics
- In response to bullying
- In response to a breach of code of conduct/poor practice
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour

If a child tells you about abuse you need to:

- Listen carefully to what is said and take the child seriously without comment or examination or make assumptions or judgements.
- Do not dismiss the concern and let the child know that if what they tell you leads you to believe they are in danger, you will have to pass the information on to someone who can protect them
- Stay calm; do not show disgust or disbelief and keep an open mind
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
 - Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared i.e. SUAAC's Welfare Officer.
 - Record in writing what was said using the child's own words. Do this as soon as possible, using The Club's Incident Reporting Formsee below.
- Do not approach any alleged abuser to discuss the concern

If appropriate SUAAC's Welfare Officer will discuss the incident with the Head Coach and respective AGL unless they are involved and decide on the appropriate course of action.

Any of the above can leave you open to allegations and the following guidance is about safeguarding young people whilst they are involved in Athletics. It will also help to protect coaches from unnecessary or malicious allegations when working with young people.

Appendix C

Related SUAAC Policies and Procedures

Child Safeguarding Policy	Adult Safeguarding Policy
Codes of Conduct	UKA Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy
EA Discipline and Grievance Policy	EA Complaints Policy

Useful Contacts

SUAAC Club Welfare Officers:

Juniors: Alison Gravelsons Seniors: Tony Jackson and Sarah Bland

UKA 07920 532553 / safeguarding@uka.org.uk

England Athletics Club Standards and Compliance Officer
welfare@englandathletics.org or call 07920 532553.

Childline 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

Kidscape 0207 7303300 / www.kidscape.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance www.antibullyingalliance.org

Warwickshire Social Services:	01926 410410
Emergency Duty Team (out of hours)	01926 886922

Police:	01926 415000
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Appendix D



INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT

Report Number:

Date:

Time:

Name of Child:

Date of Birth:

Year Group:

Parent/Guardian:

Address:

Telephone/Contact No:

Name of Coach/Helper:

Location: *e.g. Jubilee Track, Stratford upon Avon High School or other*

Incident/Accident Details: i.e.

- Facts of the allegation or observations
- Description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if it can be given, regarding what has happened and how
- Witnesses to the incident(s) and their account
- The name and address and date of birth of any alleged offender
- Any times, dates or other relevant information
- Endeavour to ascertain a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay

Account Given (*Use Child's Own Words*):

Response Given (*quote your own words*):

Any Others Present:

Action Taken: (*note any action taken, first aid, individuals contacted etc*)

Send to SUAAC Welfare Officer: i.e. within 24 hours of the accident/incident)

Alison Gravelsons : Alison.Gravelsons@stratfordac.co.uk

Nikki Hilliard : Nikki.Hilliard@stratfordac.co.uk

Date & Time

Appendix E



COACHES, OFFICIALS AND VOLUNTEERS' DECLARATION

I understand the nature of my role and responsibilities at:

Stratford-upon-Avon Athletic Club

I confirm that I have received a copy of the Club's Safeguarding & Welfare Policy and Coaching Guidance - Working With Young People documents and have attended the England Athletics Safeguarding course (part of the renewal of the coaches licence every 3 years with a new CRB),

I have read and understood the contents of the documents and I accept my responsibility to care for the young people and young people with whom I come into contact.

Name

Signature

Date

Appendix F



Stratford-upon-Avon Athletic Club

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

You are joining an organisation which is committed to protecting the young people and young people who participate in Athletics.

We welcome your equal commitment to that duty of care.

Your role here is:

Your duties include:

You will be helped and supported in your role here by:

[Insert name of coach or instructor]

Who can be contacted at:

[Insert contact details]

If a Safeguarding or Welfare issue develops you should inform our Safeguarding & Welfare Officers immediately:

Alison Gravelsons : Alison.Gravelsons@stratfordac.co.uk

Nikki Hilliard : Nikki.Hilliard@stratfordac.co.uk

Working with young people and young people is a great responsibility – it also brings great rewards. We hope you enjoy the responsibility and thank you for your contribution to our Club.

Appendix G



Stratford-upon-Avon Athletic Club

SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE POLICY

LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear *(name of parent/guardian)*,

A major part of Stratford-upon-Avon Athletic Club's responsibility for the young people in our care is to ensure their safety and wellbeing at all times.

To help us do this effectively we have implemented a Safeguarding & Welfare policy that is designed to protect your child and all the young people who take part in Athletics.

Stratford-upon-Avon Athletic Club is committed to creating and maintaining a safe environment for your child to enjoy Athletics.

You can obtain a copy of our Safeguarding and Welfare policy from our designated Safeguarding & Welfare Officers or go to the club website:

Alison Gravelsons : Alison.Gravelsons@stratfordac.co.uk

Nikki Hilliard : Nikki.Hilliard@stratfordac.co.uk

Yours Sincerely,