

Collingwood AC - Welfare Policy

Introduction

Collingwood AC takes the welfare of all athletes, especially children and vulnerable adults, very seriously. It has therefore appointed a committee member to manage all welfare matters for the club. They should be contacted if you have any concerns or questions in relation to general welfare (including specifically children and vulnerable adults

All members of our club have a duty of care to one another. This is reflected in our Club Constitution and Codes of Conduct. Our aim is to create a welcoming and supportive setting for our members to enjoy being part of the club and most of all feel safe. We want members to know that there is a safe space to talk to us, if they have any concerns about their own Welfare within the club. We also want to ensure that members feel confident in knowing how to raise any concerns they may have about the Welfare of a member and how this will be dealt with.

As an England Athletics affiliated club we adopt the follow policies for Club Welfare:

- UKA Safeguarding Children Policy
- UKA Safeguarding Adults Policy and Guidance Procedures

These can be found on the UKA Website or through the England Athletics Resource Library.

This process provides details on how we as a club, implement these policies within the Club environment.

Policy Statement

We believe that: Everyone involved in athletics should thrive, fare well and enjoy safety, security and protection from abuse, maltreatment or misconduct

Every individual involved in Collingwood AC is responsible for upholding this belief

We have a positive responsibility to ensure the highest standard of care to all (including children and vulnerable adults) involved in athletics

We will: Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for all people (including children and vulnerable adults) within our sport, safeguard their well-being and protecting them from abuse

Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of people taking part in athletics

Recruit, train and supervise our members and volunteers to adopt best practice in all equality issues, to safeguard and protect all athletes from abuse, and themselves against false allegations

Require members and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Athletics Welfare Policy and Procedures, Athletics Codes of Conduct and Grievance, Disciplinary and Appeals Procedures

Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.

Principles

Safety - the welfare of the athlete will always be paramount

Equality - the right of everyone involved in athletics to equitable treatment, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, ability, sexual orientation or social background, will be upheld

Responsiveness - all allegations or suspicions of abuse or violations of athlete welfare will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately and speedily. Those found to be spreading malicious or false allegations will be disciplined according to the relevant procedures

Consent - those with parental responsibility will be consulted if it becomes necessary to invoke the procedures that accompany athletics welfare

Compliance - we will operate within the law, including guidelines and rules of GDPR and DBS. We will work in partnership with Social Services Departments, Police Child Protection Units and other relevant agencies in order to ensure compliance with this policy.

Fairness - the human rights of staff, coaches, athletes or volunteers facing allegations will be embodied in disciplinary and appeals procedures.

Child Welfare

This policy recognises and builds on legal and statutory definitions of a child.

The distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good practice, in the delivery and management of athletics, a child is recognised as being under the age of 18 years

Adults looking after children in the absence of the person with parental responsibility have to take reasonable care in all circumstances, regardless of the age of the child

The child's welfare is paramount

All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse

All incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately

All children have a right to participate in athletics in an enjoyable and safe environment

Young athletes have a right to expect appropriate management, support, personal and social development with regard to their involvement in all levels of athletics

It is the responsibility of the child protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns

Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the Data Protection Acts 1984 and 1998, and the common law of confidentiality and rules of GDPR.

Welfare Concerns

There are three types of Welfare Concerns that can be raised at the Club

- A Welfare Concern that requires immediate action
- A Welfare Concern regarding a situation outside of the Athletics Environment
- A Welfare Concern regarding a situation within the Athletics Environment

There are different ways in which you may become aware of a concern

- A member may confide in you about a concern they have about themselves
- You may witness something that causes you concern

- A member or parent may confide in you about a concern they have about another member

When you become aware of a concern it is important that you do not:

- 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

Reporting a Concern

All members have a duty to raise the concern with a Club Welfare officer to ensure that matters are appropriately managed and recorded by the club. It is not the members responsibility to investigate concerns. If the concern does not require immediate action, it should be reported in writing to the Club Welfare Officer so that an accurate record is logged which may be required at a later time.

In the case of an Adult Welfare concern, it is important that you also consider the needs and wishes of the person at risk, taking into account the nature of the alert.

Our Club Welfare Officers are:

Lorraine Turner - welfarelorraine@collingwoodac.org.uk

Jonathan Sharrock - welfarejonathan@collingwoodac.org.uk

When a concern is raised that requires immediate action

If there is an immediate risk to the safety of an individual, you need to contact the Police immediately and report your concerns. Please consider your own safety as well as that of the individual at this time.

When it is appropriate to do so, you should inform a Club Welfare Officer of the action taken for official club records and will use this to consider what, if any further action is required by the club.

When a concern is raised regarding a setting outside the Athletics Environment

If you become aware of a Welfare concern that is not directly related to the club environment, you still have a duty of care to share this information. If the concern does not require immediate action, you should report the matter to a Club Welfare Officer, in writing as previously described.

The Club Welfare Officer will refer to the flow charts located in the appropriate policy (UKA Safeguarding Children / UKA Safeguarding Adults) and take the appropriate action.

The Club Welfare Officer may be required to make contact with local services to report this concern.

Contact details of these services can be found here:

- *Croydon Children's Services* childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk; 020 8255 2888
- *Croydon Children's Services (Out of Hours)* 020 8726 6400
- *Croydon Adult Services* 020 8726 6500

Managing a Concern within the Athletics Environment

Report your concern to a Club Welfare Officer in writing. The Club Welfare Officer will then refer to the flowcharts located in the appropriate policy (UKA Safeguarding Children / UKA Safeguarding Adults) to decide if the concern meets the threshold of being reported to UKA

If the threshold is met for reporting the matter to UKA, the Welfare Officer is required to follow this process:

- Email dbrown@uka.org.uk or call the UKA Welfare Department on 0121 713 8450 (selecting option 2).
- UKA Welfare Staff will talk you through the process that will subsequently follow and are on hand to answer any questions/concerns you may have.
- UKA Welfare Staff will also offer you advice in relation to reporting back to club officials and managing your club environment appropriately.

If as a Welfare Officer, you are unsure if the concern meets the threshold you should contact UKA using the means above to check.

Managing a Concern that does not meet the threshold for reporting to UKA but still requires intervention at club level.

If the concern does not meet the threshold for being reported to UKA, it does not mean that the concern will be dismissed. It is possible that this concern is still causing distress to a member or members and requires intervention at a club level.

In this instance the Club Welfare Officer may need to speak to another member of the committee. In the first instance this should be another Welfare Officer or if this is not appropriate the Chair or other senior Committee member. An agreement will then be formed on what action should be taken. It may be the case that some mediation is required. If as part of the concern, a formal complaint has been raised, the club will use its Disciplinary Process to manage the complaint.

If there is uncertainty regarding what action to take the Club Welfare Officer may sense check the proposed action with the England Athletics Club and Compliance Manager or their local Club Support Manager.

Support available for Club Welfare Officers

Occupying the role of welfare officer can be challenging at times, mainly due to the vast and unpredictable nature of issues/concerns that can and may arise within your club setting. Please always ensure that you place the importance of your own health and wellbeing at the forefront of your work. If you find that a particular matter or simply a build up of issues are causing you a degree of upset/stress, please ensure that you reach out to one of the following organisations that will be more than happy to talk the matter through with you and offer you the reassurance, guidance and support you rightly deserve.

- England Athletics Athlete & Club Compliance & Wellbeing Manager – 0121 713 8450 (option 3)
- UKA Welfare Department – 0121 713 8450
- Mind – 0300 123 3393
- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000
- Ann Craft Trust – 0115 951 5400

Date: 2/9/2021

Authorised byAnnette Helliwell (Committee Chair)

This process should be reviewed and updated every 3 years by Club Committee.