

Collingwood AC - Welfare Policy

The 'golden rule' for all involved in athletics in relation to welfare and protection is that it is not your responsibility to judge whether or not a welfare violation has taken place but it is your responsibility to act on any concerns you may have.

Collingwood AC takes the welfare of all athletes, especially children and vulnerable adults, in its widest sense, 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). See details on the membership page of our website.

Aims

The aims of Collingwood AC in relation to our welfare policy are to:

- > Ensure the **highest possible standard of safety and welfare** for all athletes of all ages and others engaged in athletics activities and events, especially children and vulnerable adults
- > Embed a process of **continuous improvement** in our ongoing work on welfare in our sport
- > Work with UKA to ensure that **quality assured training** is offered to members and volunteers engaged in our programmes or events
- > Adopt and promote **good practice** in the welfare and protection of athletes and other athletics personnel

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 including young people, disabled and/or vulnerable adults

- > 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

We will work with UKA to:

- > Promote adherence to their Welfare Policy through providing education, training and information in line with UK Athletics welfare policy and procedures
- > Develop good practice guidance in relation to recruitment, selection, training of coaches, officials and volunteers
- > Establish a welfare officer within the club to support and oversee the procedures
- > Produce information material on procedures for those involved in working with athletes within the club when necessary
- > Meet our moral and legal obligations in respect of the protection of children and vulnerable adults, our duty of care and standards of welfare for all

Principles

The main principles underpinning this policy are:

- > **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 with the statutory systems** - we will operate within the law, including guidelines and rules set down by the CRB, CRBS. 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 procedure

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

Scope

Collingwood AC, our coaches and members need to respond to four main dimensions of athlete welfare and protection by:

- > **Recognising and referring** to the appropriate agency anyone who has been subjected to poor practice, abuse or misconduct by someone else, whether inside sport (by another staff member or athlete) or outside sport (such as the family or peer group)
- > **Observing and encouraging good practice** when working with athletes in order to avoid perpetrating poor practice, abuse or other types of misconduct
- > **Taking precautions to avoid false allegations** against themselves
- > **Safeguarding the good name and integrity of the sport of athletics** ensuring the procedures adopted by partner athletic organisations should assist with safe practice with respect to all four dimensions of welfare in the sport

Types of Abuse

There are four main types of abuse:

- > **Physical abuse:** This includes being hit, kicked, shaken or punched, or given harmful drugs or alcohol
- > **Emotional abuse:** This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on an individual's emotional development. This includes being called names, being threatened or being made to feel worthless
- > **Sexual abuse:** This is where children and/or vulnerable adults are used by adults or other children to meet their own sexual needs. This includes being touched inappropriately or where the individual feels threatened or uncomfortable, sexual innuendo, being asked or forced to have sex or being exposed to images of a sexual nature
- > **Neglect:** This is when an individual is not looked after properly, including having no place to stay, or not enough food to eat, or clothes to keep them warm. It also includes when a child's or vulnerable adult's safety is not considered or medical attention is not sought immediately when it is required
- > Bullying and racism are also forms of abuse. Bullying is deliberate harmful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time. It includes hitting, threatening violence, taking property or name calling and deliberately humiliating or ignoring the person. Bullying between children typically takes place when adults are not present, such as in a changing room or on the way to or from a meeting. Racist behaviour may take the form of bullying when references are made to ethnic origin, skin colour or religious belief.

Source: Collingwood AC's Welfare Policy and Procedures are based on documents originally prepared on the UKA website

Authorised by: Andrew Stalley (Chairman) on behalf of the committee

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