



Aberdeen Snowsports Club – Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

Aberdeen Snowsports Club is fully committed to ensuring the care and protection of all children who engage with any and all provisions of the club, at any venue including activities and events.

2. Principles and responsibility

- i. The club recognises the principles of 'Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)' (Scottish Government) <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/> and is committed to promoting the wellbeing of children through their engagement with club activities and events.
- ii. The club recognises the principle of 'child protection - it's everyone's responsibility' and will provide children with a safe environment within which to engage with club activities and events.
- iii. The club recognises that children can experience harm either as the result of acts of commission or omission on the part of others and this results in the need for protection.
- iv. The club recognises its responsibility to respond to any care or protection concerns about any child in a manner which promotes their safety and wellbeing.

3. Framework

This policy should not be seen in isolation and should be considered as one component in a broader framework of child care and protection material.

This policy has been created in accordance with:

- i. National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Scottish Government 2010) <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland/>
- ii. Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport: Guidance for Clubs (Safeguarding in Sport - Children 1st) <https://sportscotland.org.uk/safeguarding-in-sport/child-wellbeing-and-protection/standards-for-child-wellbeing-and-protection-in-sport/>
- iii. Local guidance provided by the area Child Protection Committee. <http://www.childprotectionpartnership.org.uk/>

All those who are connected with the club in any manner (members and non-members) are encouraged to engage with the material identified above in order to further their understanding of the protection needs of children and of individual and organisational responsibilities towards keeping children safe.

4. Principles

For the purpose of this policy and in accordance with good practice, the following are considered as key underpinning principles:

- i. A child will be considered as someone under the age of 18.
- ii. In accordance with Article 12 of UNCRC, children have a right to have their views taken seriously.
- iii. The wellbeing of children is the paramount consideration at all times.
- iv. The policy will apply to all those who have a 'connection' with the club including (but not limited to): participants, staff, volunteers, parents and carers.
- v. The policy will apply to any venue where club activities or events take place
- vi. Where protection concerns have been identified, information must be shared with those agencies who have a responsibility to conduct enquiries (Police and Social work).

5. Responding to concerns about a child

The following is the outline procedure for responding to concerns that arise in respect of a child. The procedure recognises that concerns could be of either or both a child protection nature or a wellbeing nature.

The response to both concerns is based on three steps; *respond, record, report*.

5.1 Information about a child at risk (child protection)

Child protection means protecting a child from abuse or neglect, which may cause significant harm.

Abuse is often recognised under one of the four following categories:

- i. Sexual abuse
- ii. Physical abuse
- iii. Emotional abuse
- iv. Physical neglect

It is important to note that abuse can be a single event or can be multi-faceted and cumulative in nature.

In light of any information being received which suggests that harm has occurred to a child or the potential for harm exists, it is important that you do not investigate. Known information should be provided to the club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer with immediate effect.

Please note: if there is any sense that the child is at imminent risk then contact must be made (without delay) to the Police or Social Work through the following contacts:

- 01224 306877 (Joint Child Protection Team)
- 0800 731 5520 (Emergency Out of Hours – Aberdeen City Social Work)
- 101 (Police Scotland)

Once contact is made with these agencies, advice will be offered by them in respect of the 'next-steps'.

Where there are concerns that parents/ carers may be responsible for, or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with them may place the child at further risk. In such cases advice must

always be sought from the Police or Social Work as to when and who should inform the parents/ carers.

It is important that these agencies are made aware of the nature of the concern even if there is uncertainty about whether the situation constitutes child protection. It is their responsibility to conduct enquiries in order to assess and understand the situation.

A record of all relevant information including discussions held and decisions made will be recorded by the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer.

5.2. Disclosure of information by a child (child protection)

If a child shares information with you which suggests that they or any other child has been harmed or is/ are at the risk of harm, then again it is important that you do not investigate. Instead it is important that you:

- React calmly
- Reassure the child
- Provide them with the opportunity to share information without interruption (only ask questions in order to gain basic information. Any questions should be open-ended and non-leading in nature)
- Take seriously what is said
- Do not offer confidentiality or make promises
- Inform the child that the information will need to be shared with others
- Make a record of what was said by the child and by anyone else present – this should, where possible, be verbatim in nature

The full record of the information should be made available to the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer as soon as is possible.

Please note: if there is any sense that the child or any other child is at imminent risk then immediate contact must be made with Police and/ or Social Work as outlined previously.

Where there are concerns that parents/ carers may be responsible for, or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with them may place the child at further risk. In such cases advice must always be sought from the Police or Social Work as to when and who should inform the parents/ carers.

A record of all relevant information including discussions held and decisions made will be recorded by the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer.

5.3 If there is a 'wellbeing' concern for a child

The concept of wellbeing is used to identify and to discuss any specific needs or concerns arising for a child at a given time.

In determining whether a child has a wellbeing need or concern, reference is made to the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators.

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/wellbeing-indicators-shanarri/>

The aim of the indicators is to enable the identification of need in a timeous manner and to facilitate the provision of support.

The indicators are:

- Safe
- Healthy
- Achieving
- Nurtured
- Active
- Respected
- Responsible
- Included

Any wellbeing concerns should be reported to the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer as soon as is possible.

As the threshold for wellbeing needs and concerns is at a lower level than child protection concerns, they can be discussed with parents/ carers. This can be done by the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer if it is not appropriate for this to be done by the person to whom the concern or need was identified to.

It can be difficult to determine the difference between a wellbeing concern and a child protection concern, particularly when considering 'safety'. In any situation where this doubt exists, the aforementioned child protection process must be followed.

A record of all relevant information including discussions held and decisions made will be recorded by the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer.

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