



Silson AC

## Safeguarding Policy

All members, volunteers and club officials of Silson AC have a duty of care to safeguard children and Adults at Risk when they are participating in athletics activities under their auspices.

Silson AC has adopted the UK Athletics best practice policies and procedures for Safeguarding. Full details of the policies can be found at the following website links:

### Safeguarding and Child Protection

<https://www.englandathletics.org/clubhub/resource/child-safeguarding-policy/?from=1>

### Safeguarding Adults at Risk

<https://www.englandathletics.org/clubhub/resource/adult-safeguarding-policy/>

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### **Reporting a concern**

Safeguarding concerns relating to the behaviour of any Silson AC members, officials or volunteers towards children or Adults at Risk (previously referred to as Vulnerable Adults) should be reported to Silson AC Welfare Officer, Jay Smith, or in his absence, Helen Heley (Silson Chairperson) who will deputise.

Reports should be made in person or via [silsonwelfare@gmail.com](mailto:silsonwelfare@gmail.com) or [silsonchairperson@gmail.com](mailto:silsonchairperson@gmail.com)

In the event of any safeguarding concerns, the Welfare Officer will follow the England Athletics Reporting a **Safeguarding Concern Pathway Document** found at the link below:

<https://www.englandathletics.org/resources/view/reporting-safeguarding-concerns-with-the-athletics-environment/?from=1>

If necessary, the Welfare Officer will complete a **Child Protection Referral Form**:

<https://www.uka.org.uk/submit-a-concern/>



## **Key points about Safeguarding Children**

The following guidance has been extracted from UK Athletics best practice policies and procedures for safeguarding children, but does not replace the full guidance.

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All organisations and individuals involved in athletics understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

To provide everybody with the best possible experience and opportunities in athletics it is important that everyone operates within an accepted ethical framework and demonstrates exemplary behaviour.

### **Best practice** includes:

- Being open and conducting all interactions with children in a public place and with appropriate consent.
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with one child.
- Challenging bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language or controlling behaviour that could upset individuals or reduce them to tears.
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children; being friendly and open and ensuring that relationships are appropriate for someone in a position of power and trust.
- Treating children fairly, with respect and avoiding favouritism.
- Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances physical contact is perfectly acceptable and appropriate, as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the child/athlete and that consent for contact has been given by the individual and appropriate parental consent.
- For coaches, run leaders and volunteers: being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching and ensuring that your licence remains valid. Ensure that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each athlete.

### **Poor Practice**

The following are examples of poor practice and should be avoided:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.
- A coach / run leader / volunteer shouting comments at athletes when they are not working hard enough.
- A coach/ run leader / volunteer using harassing and discriminatory language such as '*you run like a girl.*'
- A coach/ run leader / volunteer engaging in an intimate relationship with one of his/her athletes.
- A group of athletes ganging up on a new athlete and refusing to talk to him/her.
- A coach run leader / volunteer taking a group of children away to a weekend event on his/her own.



The list above is not exhaustive and many other examples exist.

If a child athlete:

- is accidentally hurt;
- appears distressed in any manner;
- appears to be sexually aroused by the actions of another; or misunderstands or misinterprets the actions of another.

Then the incident should be reported immediately to another colleague/volunteer, a written note must be made of the incident and parents and/or appropriate adults informed. The Club Welfare Officer should also be informed.

### **What is Abuse?**

Abuse can occur wherever there are children.

There are four main types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express his/her views, deliberately silencing him/her or 'making fun' of what he/she say or how he/she communicates. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, which especially applies to when a child shares a protected characteristic e.g. racist, sexual or homophobic bullying or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.



- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensuring adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensuring access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Disabled children are particularly vulnerable to abuse and are at least three times more likely to be abused than non-disabled children. Those working with them must be aware of this and willing to acknowledge their concerns. There can be a tendency to make allowances for families with sick or disabled children. Organisations and individuals may over identify with the child's parents/carers and be reluctant to accept that abuse or neglect is taking or has taken place, or seeing it as being attributable to the stress and difficulties of caring for a disabled child. When suspecting abuse, always ask: "*Would this be acceptable if the child were not disabled?*"

### **Disclosures**

While it is not the responsibility of UKA, the Home Countries Governing Bodies, volunteers or Silson AC club members to decide whether a concern constitutes abuse, it is their responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare of a child. These concerns may arise due to:

- A child disclosing that they are being abused.
- The behaviour of an adult towards a child.
- A number of indicators observed in a child over a period of time.

### **How to respond to a disclosure**

#### **Don't**

- 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.

All suspicions and disclosures must be reported appropriately to the Welfare Officer.