

For the purposes of this document and in general, children and young people are defined as individuals under the age of 18. It should be recognised, however, that many of the guidelines and good practices contained in this document are relevant to coaching practice with individuals of all ages and for vulnerable adults.

Instructors are in a position of trust and responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries of the working relationship with the children and young people in their care and should ensure that they maintain a professional relationship with them at all times. This professional relationship should also extend to adults.

Instructors must take care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought particularly when working with children and young people.

- **Instructors should:**

- treat everyone with respect.
- respect an individual's right to personal privacy.
- refrain from showing favouritism to any individual.
- 'Crushes' on instructors do occur from time to time and these need to be handled very sensitively. Instructors should not encourage or joke about these incidents as they may unintentionally hurt the feelings of the child or young person and cause an adverse reaction in the form of an accusation. It may give rise to gossip which a parent/carer may decide to investigate.

- No matter how conscientious instructors are in carrying out their duties, there will be occasions when their actions may be misconstrued. Where physical contact between an instructor and any student is a necessary part of the coaching process, instructors must ensure that no actions on their part could be misinterpreted. This is particularly important when the student is a child or a young person.
- There may be occasions where a distressed child or young person needs comfort and reassurance. Avoid physical comfort such as hugging.
- Instructors administering First Aid to a child or young person should ensure wherever possible another adult is present or that First Aid is carried out in view of others, as the necessary physical contact could be misconstrued.
- Instructors should recognise that caution is required in all one-to-one situations and instructors should not:
 - Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children or young people away from others.
 - Take children or young people alone in a car on journeys, however short.
 - Take children or young people to their home.

If emergency situations arise where these are unavoidable, try and ensure that they occur only with the full knowledge and consent of the child or young person's parent/carer.

- **Instructors must never:**

- Engage in rough physical, sexually provocative games or horseplay.
 - Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
 - Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun.
 - Allow children or young people in their care to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
 - Let any allegations a child or young person makes go unchallenged or unrecorded, **always act**.
 - Do things of a personal nature that children can do themselves. However, it may sometimes be necessary for instructor to do things of a personal nature for children or young people particularly if they are very young or disabled. These should only be carried out with the full knowledge and consent of their parents/carers in an emergency situation which requires this type of help.
- **Whilst it is unlikely that as an instructor you will ever be involved in a reported incident of either bad practice or abuse, it is unwise to rely upon your "good name" to protect you or to believe "it could never happen to me".**

REPORTING INCIDENTS

It is not up to the instructor to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. There is, however, a responsibility to protect children in order that appropriate agencies can then

make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child.

The Children's Services Department of each local authority has a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child. When a child safeguarding referral is made its staff has a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. Inquiries may be carried out jointly with the Police.

What to do if there are Concerns

1. There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced bereavement in the family. **However**, there are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk were such concerns to be shared, e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately.
2. Where such concerns exist, discuss them first with your child safeguarding officer before approaching carer or parent. **The safeguarding officer is Master Cook. He can be contacted on 07753 985681 or by e-mail at mastercooktkd@gmail.com**
3. If Master Cook is not available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact the Children's Services Department or the Police. If you are not sure about what to do, you can also obtain advice by telephoning the **NSPCC freephone Helpline**.

The number is **0800 800 5000**

The NSPCC voice Helpline is currently available 10am – 4pm Monday to Friday or you can email help@NSPCC.org.uk 24/7 - you don't have to say who you are, but it is helpful if you can.

In these circumstances the Children's Services Department, together with the person in charge, where appropriate, will decide how and when parents or carers will be informed.

Contact numbers for local authorities:

Newcastle

Initial Response Service – 0191 277 2500

Emergency Duty Team – 0191 278 7878

Northumbria Police – 101 (in an emergency always dial 999)

North Tyneside

0345 2000 109 (office hours) or
0330 333 7475 (evenings and weekends).

Gateshead

0191 433 2653 (office hours: Monday - Friday, 8.30am to 5pm)

0191 477 0844 (out of hours, at night, at weekends and bank holidays)

Recording and Information

Information passed to the Children's Services Department or the Police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record. Information should include:

- The nature of the allegation

- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if he or she can give them of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- Any times, dates, or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay
- Reporting the matter to the Police or Children's Services Department should not however be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.
- Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the Children's Services Department should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should also be made of the names and designation of the Children's Services member of staff or Police Officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is needed.

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