

RIPON RUNNERS CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

Ripon Runners acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and UK Athletics requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at Ripon Runners in a safe and child centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in running and fitness training or outside of the activity.

Ripon Runners acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy Ripon Runners will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in Ripon Runners. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, UK Sport and/or Home Country Sports Councils and UK Athletics.
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

Our aim at Ripon Runners is to provide all young people under the age of 18 years with the best possible experience and opportunities in athletics in an enjoyable and safe environment.

All members of Ripon Runners, including volunteers, coaches, club officials and paid staff have a duty of care to safeguard children when they are participating in athletics or other club activities under their auspices.

For the purpose of the policy all young people under the age of 18 years are defined as Children and are entitled to protection under the Children Act 1989.

All children regardless of their gender, racial background, religion, capability and sexual orientation have the right to protection from abuse and bad behaviour.

Key Principles

- a. The welfare of the child is paramount.
- b. All children have the right to protection from abuse.
- c. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately and where necessary referred to the responsible Social Services Officer.
- d. All members of Ripon Runners involved in the supervision of young athletes under the age of 18 years must have DBS clearance and understand and accept their safeguarding responsibilities, including the reporting of concerns to the Club's Welfare Officer responsible for child protection.

2. BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All individuals should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary conduct by observing best practice guidelines in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The adoption of these examples will promote the implementation of safe and consistent safeguarding procedures.

- a. Being open and conducting all interactions with children in an open environment and with appropriate consent.
- b. Avoiding situations where you are alone with a child.
- c. Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children.
- d. Always putting the welfare of each child first.
- e. Treating children fairly, with respect and avoiding favouritism.
- f. If you are travelling alone with a child gain appropriate parental consent, avoid consistently having one child alone with you in the car.
- g. Always challenge bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language or controlling behaviour by adults or other children taking place in your activities. Listening to and supporting the person being bullied.
- h. Being friendly and open, maintaining an appropriate relationship based on mutual trust and encouraging children to share in the decision making.
- i. Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances physical contact is acceptable and appropriate as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the child and consent for contact has been given by the individual and where possible parental consent.

- j. Ensure you are qualified and insured for the activities you are conducting and that your practice is suitable for the age and development stage of each young athlete.
- k. Make your activities enjoyable, encouraging fair play and giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback.

3. POOR PRACTICE

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

- a. Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- b. Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.
- c. Transporting a child to or from an activity without a parental consent form, unless a medical emergency occurs or normal transportation by the parent is not possible. In this case it should be done with the full knowledge of the club person in charge and/or the child's parents.
- d. Use foul, discriminatory or harassing language at a child.
- e. Engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- f. Make sexually suggestive remarks to a child.
- g. Engage in an intimate relationship with a child.
- i. Permit allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or acted upon.
- j. Share a room with a child or invite children to visit your home unsupervised.

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

4. RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES, SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

Introduction

An adult may become aware of a complaint from any of the following ways:

- a. A disclosure made by a child to them.
- b. A third party may report a suspicion or incident to them.
- c. The adult may have seen an incident or have strong suspicions themselves.

How to respond to a Disclosure or Complaint

Listen carefully to what the child or person is telling you, reassure them that you take him/her seriously, communicating at a pace slow enough for the child or person to relate the details.

At the end of the conversation, ensure you clearly understand what the child or person has said and explain to them what action you now intend to take after listening to their account.

As soon as possible make out a written report recording the following details:

- a. The referrer's and/or the child's name, address and date of birth.

- b. The date and time of the incident.
- c. The facts about the allegation.
- d. Your factual observations of the behaviour and emotional state of the alleged victim and any marks or injuries.
- e. The child's own account of what occurred using exact words if possible.
- f. A record of any action you took, including any comments/advice that was given to the child or person making the complaint. You should also state if the parents have been informed.

Don't

- a. Probe for more information than is offered.
- b. Speculate or make assumptions.
- c. Make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made.
- d. Make promises or agree to keep secrets.
- e. Give a guarantee of confidentiality.
- f. Do nothing, delay or take sole responsibility for follow up action.

Reporting Procedures

Any person with information of a complaint, disclosure or allegation should immediately report it to the club's designated Child Protection Officer.

All complaints, disclosures and allegations must be dealt with appropriately and in confidence. It is acknowledged that strong emotions can be aroused particularly with cases of sexual or physical abuse.

Misconduct or Poor Behaviour

If the allegations are found to be of a minor nature the complaint can be dealt with internally under the club's disciplinary policy as a misconduct case.

Child abuse or Serious Misconduct

Allegations of a more serious nature should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who can be contacted via Children's Social Care or in extreme cases to North Yorkshire Police.

Documentation

All documentation and records created during an investigation should be securely kept for at least three years.

5. A YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO CHILD PROTECTION

You have rights

Sport should be fun. You should feel safe and enjoy your sport. You can't do this if you feel unhappy because someone is bullying or abusing you.

Something is wrong if someone

- a. Threatens, hits, kicks or punches you.
- b. Touches you, or does something in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- c. Makes suggestive remarks or tries to pressurize you into sexual activity.
- d. Does something that makes you feel lonely, worried, unsafe, hurt or embarrassed.

If you are being bullied or abused it is not your fault

If this happening try to

- a. Be firm and tell the person to stop, if not close to other people make a lot of noise to attract attention
- b. Get away from the situation quickly, if outside go to a public place and get help.
- c. Tell the senior person in charge of your group or your parent/carer or an adult you can trust what has happened as soon as possible.
- d. Keep a record of the date, time and place and what has happened, and any witnesses to the incident.

Keeping Safe

To keep safe always

- a. Avoid being alone or with just one other person.
- b. Do not become over familiar towards those who work with you in athletics.
- c. Avoid going to other people's homes by yourself.
- d. Travel with a friend and avoid travelling in someone else's car by yourself.
- e. If you have to leave a group, tell the person in charge where you are going and how long you are likely to be away.
- f. Trust your instincts about the people you meet.
- g. Listen carefully to the advice of your parent/carer or someone you can trust to help you.

(Last reviewed Mar 2020)