

WARD PARK RUNNERS

CHILD/ VULNERABLE ADULTS PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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Welfare Officers of Ward Park Runners

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NOTE: all committee/ coaches/ volunteers/ officials within the club working with Children/ Young Athletes must have a LiRF/CiRF qualification and/or have a valid CRB certificate completed within the past 5yrs.

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Child Protection Policy

This policy applies to all Coaches, Volunteers, Officials and Committee Members.

The purpose of this policy

- To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who attend Ward Park Running Club. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- To provide staff with the overarching principals that guide our approach to child protection

WPR believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely;

Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995,

Is the primary piece safeguarding legislation and outlines the following,

- Duty to make enquiries to enable them to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote child welfare. Suspicion of a crime must be reported to the PSNI.
- Social Services are responsible for the assessment of the;
 - o Childs needs
 - o Parents capacity to keep the child safe and promote welfare
 - o Wider family circumstances.

Data Protection Act 1998

There is no single law that defines the age of a child across the UK. The Rights of a Child states that a child “means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”

GDPR will be in effect from 25th May 2018, this will replace the Data Protection Act 1998. Children aged 13yrs will have a right to see/ request their own personal data as well as consent to use of images/ access to online apps.

A **child in need** is a child who is unlikely to have, or have the opportunity to have , a reasonable standard of health and development without any support provided by a public authority.

Safeguarding is protecting children from harm, preventing damage to children’s health or development, making sure that children grow up safely and taking action to make sure all children have the best start in life.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and refers to the action taken to protect specific children who are being abused or who are at risk of abuse.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount as enshrined in the children act 1989/2004
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening and respecting them
- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and code of conduct for **volunteers including coaches**
- Providing effective management for **volunteers** through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting **volunteers** safely ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing concerns with agencies that need to know and involving parents and children appropriately.
- **Maintaining a coach:child ratio at all events (training/social etc) in line with the governing body Athletics NI – currently 1:12 for children aged 12-18**

The different categories of abuse

There are 4 main categories of child abuse:

1. **Physical Abuse** – may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
2. **Emotional Abuse** – persistent emotional harm to a child so that it causes a severe and long – lasting impact on a child’s emotional development. “worthless/ unloved/ inadequate”. It may involve seeing or hearing abuse of another including domestic violence.
3. **Sexual Abuse** – involves forcing or persuading a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. May also involve looking at or in the production of sexual images or grooming of a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. (Sexual exploitation)
4. **Neglect** – continual failure to meet a child’s basic physical and emotional needs. Failing to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger or failing to make sure safe people are looking after the child.

Recognising the signs of abuse

Child development is a way of measuring a child’s progress through different stages as they grow from birth to adolescent.

- Large movements
- Fine movements
- Language
- Thinking
- Social behaviour

- Attachment/ bonding (basic motive of an infant to seek closeness to their parent/ carer, especially when they experience danger)

Definitions: Know what abuse is and what to look out for and be vigilant at all times

Our role: It is all of our responsibility to recognise and report abuse.

Have an understanding of the guidance and legislation behind child protection but know that you should report abuse/ concern to a designated safeguarding person (GP)/ PSNI/Social Care in your area.

How to respond to signs or suspicions of abuse

Whether it is obvious or not, you need to respond. Children may tell you or someone else may tell you something bad is happening, you must respond quickly and appropriately.

You must report the concern within 24hrs of it being raised to a designated safeguarding person (DSP), Doctor, Police or Social Care.

Doctor – identifies welfare needs or safeguarding

Police – protect child from harm

Social Care – assess if child is in need of protection from abuse and/ or what services are needed by family.