



Shepshed Dolphin Swimming Group

Providing exercise, pool activity and fun for those with a disability or need

SAFEGUARDING - CHILD PROTECTION MEASURES

SDSG recognises that every child, has a right to protection from any kind of abuse be it physical, emotional or sexual. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers working in this club/group to be aware of the correct procedures for dealing with any suggested incidences of abuse. Child Protection is not an isolated issue and we will work in partnership with other organisations to update procedures and adopt current legislation.

All staff and volunteers of SDSG are aware that it is not their responsibility to investigate matters of abuse but to REFER suspicions or allegations of abuse to the designated Person whose responsibility it is then to refer on to the Area Social Work Office or the Police.

The formal definition of child abuse is:

'Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or carer(s)'. The categories commonly used to describe the areas of abuse are:

- Physical Injury
- Sexual Abuse
- Non-organic failure to thrive
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Neglect

Dealing with an incident:

Upon receipt of any information from a child or suspicions, it is necessary to:

- listen to the child and take what they are saying seriously
- inform them that if they continue to tell you information that you cannot keep secret that you will have to pass this on to others who can help
- reassure them that they are doing the right thing by telling you
- remain calm and neutral, no matter what they are telling you
- clarify anything you are unsure of but do not interrogate
- allow them the time they need to speak – it may be very difficult for them to tell you some things and you must let them say it in their own words – remember, they must trust you at this moment
- write down accurately everything that was said or seen and what action you took
- contact Nicola Crowe (Administrator) for advice as soon as possible.
- treat everything said as confidential between you, the child, and the designated person and tell the child this
- pass on all information to the designated person and allow them to deal with it

Dealing with urgent cases

If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or you have serious doubts about the child's safety, contact Social Work Services or the Police immediately.

Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

Those who subject children to abuse look just like any other adult and may seek employment either paid or unpaid in roles which bring them into contact with young people. It is the responsibility of the Management Committee of the group/club/organisation to ensure that all possible steps are taken to check the suitability of those they employ. This will be done in the following way:

- All staff and volunteers with regular access to children will be D.B.S. checked.
- Previous addresses will be requested on application forms
- The names of two referees will be requested so that written references can be provided. We may also interview referees personally
- All prospective volunteers and staff will be interviewed
- All relevant previous experience of staff and volunteers will be noted
- All staff and volunteers will undergo a 6-month probationary period

Training of staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will be aware of the contents of this policy and guidance and will attend appropriate Child Protection training where possible. They will be made familiar with reporting procedures and the identity of the designated person. All staff and volunteers will be consulted on the appropriateness of this document and stated procedures on an annual basis.

The role of the designated person

The designated person is responsible for ensuring that this policy is up to date, that it is clearly displayed (if possible) and that volunteers and staff are aware of its content, have read and understood it.

- Hold a register of every child involved with the club and have a contact name close to hand in case of emergencies
- Remember that some issues are confidential
- Where possible consider activities which involve more than one adult being present or at least within sight and hearing of others
- Remember, someone might misinterpret your actions even if they are well-intentioned
- Respect a child's right to personal privacy
- Provide time for children to talk to you
- Encourage children to respect and care for others
- Take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- Remember to **REFER not INVESTIGATE** any suspicions or allegations of abuse
- Only discuss these concerns with the necessary and appropriate staff or volunteers

- If possible, designate a male and female adult who will be responsible for dealing with concerns around Child Protection and ensure that they are known to those using the group and to parents or carers

The designated person may consider that complaints of a lesser nature (although still serious) such as bullying, cheating etc. may be handled internally without outside involvement. It must be emphasized however, that each case will be thoroughly investigated and remedied to the satisfaction of the young person/reporting person concerned.

Complaint of abuse against a member of staff

Should this type of complaint be made, there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

Issues of misconduct will be dealt with by a committee of Child Protection Officers and the Chair of Shepshed Dolphin Swimming Group. The group will ensure appropriate action is taken and that at all times, we recognise the importance of maintaining confidentiality where this is required in a legal context.

The designated person at this group is: *The coordinator/Admin – Nicola Crowe*

CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

GUIDE TO PROTECTING STAFF

This guide is intended to reduce the situations for the abuse of young people and help protect staff and volunteers by promoting good practice.

1. Adult volunteer and staff are advised not to spend excessive time alone with young people. All adults should always be publicly open when working with young people. Adults should avoid situations where they are completely unobserved. Do not go into the toilet alone with young people.
2. Individual meetings with young people should take place as openly as possible. Avoid making arrangements to meet a young person alone in your home outside organised activities - unless it is with the full knowledge and consent of the parents and that the group management are aware of the meeting.
3. If on occasion, privacy is required, one of the group designated persons should be informed and at least one should be within earshot of the conversation. The door should be left open.
4. When working with mixed groups in an outdoor environment with young people, there should be a male and female adult present. If this is not possible, parents should be requested to stay to help supervise.
5. Adults should avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. On occasion, when an injury occurs or a young person is distressed, the involved adult should explain to the young person what he or she is doing but only with the consent of the injured party and in full view of as many persons as possible. Some parents/guardians are sensitive about physical contact (manual support) and their views should always be carefully considered.
6. All adults should be careful of extending hugs and be in situations where bodily contact is involved. This is important not only for adult protection but for the protection of the young person also.
7. If a young person touches an adult in an inappropriate place record the incident and report it to the group's designated person. While an incident could be purely innocent, efforts should be made to inform the young person concerned that this behaviour is not acceptable in a manner that does not intimidate the young person involved.
8. Car journeys, however short, should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parent/legal guardian of the young person and should always be undertaken by an adult volunteer or trustee. It is not good practice to be alone with a young person in the car and if possible make your pickup point or drop-off point with at least two young people present

9. Never engage with any young person in the group in a sexually provocative manner or indulge in horseplay, which may be construed in the wrong manner.
10. Do not make sexually suggestive comments about, or to a young person, even in fun.
11. Never let any allegations made by a young person go without being addressed and recorded.
12. Never let the use of foul language go unchallenged.

If a complaint is made, one of the child protection designated persons or one of the committee members should be informed immediately and a record of that meeting logged.

Never keep suspicions of abuse by a colleague to yourself. If there is an attempt to cover up you could be implicated by your silence. Inform the current chairperson of the group immediately of your suspicions.

The above rules are designed to be observed for general day-to-day routine and normal group activities that take place as part of the group's normal activities. In addition to the above procedures, additional rules apply to different settings.

Signed

Chair

Date