



HERTFORDSHIRE GOLF UNION

JUNIOR WELFARE & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Hertfordshire Union of Golf Clubs (HGU) Child Welfare & Protection Policy is for the protection of all children and young people who play and are coached by the HGU. It also provides a framework of protection and advice for all persons, particularly those involved in Junior County Golf in both paid and voluntary positions.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

The HGU is committed to creating and maintaining a happy and safe environment for children and young people,

We do this by:

- Recognising that all children and young people have the right to respect and freedom from abuse.
- Ensuring that all the HGU volunteers and staff are carefully selected.
- Responding swiftly to allegations of abuse of children and young people in our care.
- Appointing a Child Welfare Officer.
- Ensuring access to confidential information is restricted.
- Ensuring all volunteers are given Child Welfare & Protection awareness training.

DEFINITIONS

Young people are defined as those less than 18 years of age. Children are defined as those less than 16 years of age.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AIMS:

The aims of the HGU Child Protection Policy are:

- To keep children and young people safe and free from harm whilst in the care of the HGU
- To allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- To provide guidance on how to avoid situations which may give rise to allegations of abuse and to act pro-actively to ensure that incidents of abuse and allegations are avoided
- To ensure the appointment of a Child Protection Officer.
- To recognise that the HGU volunteers who are concerned with Child Protection, are receivers of information and are not decision makers

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All the HGU volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all children and young people equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each child and young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate for volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children and young people to share in the decision-making process;
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided. Children and young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are very sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Involving parents wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children and young people in the changing rooms or travelling arrangements. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, coaches or volunteers should always try to work in pairs however it is accepted that this may not always be possible.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, a male and female member of staff or volunteer should always accompany them.
- Ensuring that at Golf residential events, adults should avoid entering the rooms of children and young people or inviting children and young people into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis*, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment..
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.
- Avoiding (when possible), the one to one adult/child occupancy of vehicles.
- Parental Consent Forms are attached to this document.

Videoing as a coaching aid: There is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, children and young people and their parents should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and such films should be stored securely and safely.

JUNIOR LEADERS ADVISORY NOTES

Indications to others of abuse include the following:-

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- the child or young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- someone else (a child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child or young person
- unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)

- **The Child or Young Person may :**
 - demonstrate inappropriate sexual awareness
 - engage in sexually explicit behaviour
 - appear distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
 - have difficulty in making friends
 - appear to be prevented from socialising with other children and young people
 - display variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
 - show signs of weight loss for no apparent reason
 - become increasingly dirty or unkempt

Responding to the Child

If a child or young person says or indicates that he is being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that a child or young person is being abused, the person receiving this information should:

- react calmly so as not to frighten the child or young person
- tell the child or young person he is not to blame and that it was right to tell
- take what the child or young person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child or young person who has a speech disability and / or differences in language
- Only ask sufficient questions to establish that an allegation of abuse is being made.
- reassure the child or young person but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- make a full record of what had been said, heard and or seen as soon as possible
- Taking action as soon as possible by following the guidelines below

COMPLAINTS / CONCERNS PROCEDURE

There are a number of ways in which children and young people, or the parents/ guardians or children and young people within the HGU can raise concerns or complaints.

In the first instance, children and young people or their parents or guardians should contact the HGU Junior Manager. If this person is considered to be inappropriate, or involved in the complaint, then the Secretary of the HGU may be approached directly. In all circumstances, the

In extreme circumstances, or situations where concerns cannot wait, **any child, parent /guardian, volunteer or club official** has the right to contact the NSPCC help line or Childline directly. In cases where this has occurred, the Club Manager and Child Welfare officer must also be contacted as soon as possible and informed of the circumstances.

Points of Contact and Sources Of Advice Are As Follows

The Child Welfare Officer	Mr David Hall Tel. 01923 247638
Junior Manager	Mr Chris James Tel. 01438 871310
NSPCC – National Child Protection Help Line	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111

Volunteer Advisory Notes On Responding To Suspicions Or Allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for the HGU in a paid or voluntary capacity, or those working in affiliated organisations to decide whether or not child or young person is the subject of abuse or that abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to protect children and young people in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any action necessary to protect the child or young person.

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, he may have experienced bereavement in the family.

It is the responsibility of the HGU to inform the English Golf Union “person in charge” without delay. All actions taken are to be recorded and a timed log of events is to be maintained

The HGU will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concern regarding the safety of a child or young person

Possible action that appropriate authorities can take as a result of a report are:-

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

RECRUITMENT

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children and young people in some way and therefore it is important that the HGU takes all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young golfers.

The HGU deems it essential that the same procedure is used consistently whether staff are paid or unpaid, part-time or full-time or are volunteers.

When undertaking pre-selection checks the following should be included:

- New Volunteers will be interviewed by the Child Welfare Officer and County Secretary
- Following the interview, the Child Welfare Officer or Junior Manager will
 - Brief the volunteer on HGU child protection measures
 - Initiate CRB Disclosure Checks in conjunction with the volunteer
 - Initiate the taking of references and employment record checks in conjunction with the volunteer

NB: The HGU has measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of information received in relation to applicants.

Training

The HGU recognises that checks are only part of the process to protect young golfers from possible abuse. The checks must be operated in conjunction with appropriate training of staff/volunteers/coaches

All staff and volunteers will be given training on HGU Child Protection measures.

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