

Club policy of Coalville Wheelers CC for safeguarding children/vulnerable adults

Introduction

This policy applies to Coalville Wheelers Cycling Club and Coalville Wheelers Swifts, hereafter referred to as 'the club'.

The club is very conscious of its responsibilities for ensuring children are kept as safe as possible during all club activities. This applies to potential abuse as well as general and road safety.

We have adopted the policy of British Cycling, which is readily available on their website as a PDF document under the link of:-

https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/membership/article/bcst_Safeguarding-Children

Policy Summary

All club members and potential new members are recommended to read the full policy document. As this runs to 25 pages, here follows a summary highlighting the essential points:-

- Child is anyone under 18
- A vulnerable adult is 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation
- The use of the word child below also includes vulnerable adults
- Policy applies to all those involved in the club – riders, officials, coaches and volunteers
- All have a responsibility to recognise and report poor practice and potential abuse
- Coaches have a particular responsibility to maintain high standards of professional practice and to have completed child protection training
- Poor practice includes:-
 - Unreasonable excessive contact with children
 - Spending excessive time alone with children
 - Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
 - Inappropriate touching
 - Inappropriate language to a child or allowing children to use this language unchallenged
 - Making sexually suggestive comments, even in jest
 - Reducing a child to tears
 - Letting allegations made by a child go uninvestigated, unrecorded or not acted upon
 - Doing things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves
 - Taking a child alone on a car journey, see exception below.
 - Taking a child to your home/office where they will be alone with you
 - Sharing a room with a child
 - In exceptional circumstances, it may be impractical to avoid poor practice, in which case, parent's consent must be sought and a club official/Welfare Officer must be made aware and gives approval.
- Abuse is a broad term and can range from name calling/ridiculing to serious neglect or physical attacks. The effects can be so damaging on a child.

- Abuse may not always be easy to recognise, but can range from unexplained or suspicious injuries to unexplained changes in a child's behaviour (very quiet, withdrawn, outbursts of temper...) to becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Abuse includes bullying, which is deliberately hurtful behaviour and can range from emotional to physical to racist to sexual behaviour
- Bullying in any form is unacceptable and all should be able to tell of such behaviour and know it will be dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Bullying in cycling can include:-
 - Parents who push their child too hard
 - A coach who adopts 'a win at all costs' philosophy
 - A rider who intimidates or ridicules a peer
 - A club official who places unfair pressure on another person
 - A spectator who constantly shouts abuse
- Cyber bullying refers to bullying and harassment through email, texting, social networking, websites... It is meant to cause emotional distress and includes:-
 - Intimidation using social networking sites
 - Negative feedback from a coach/others via personal texts
 - Negative comments - club member to member on club forums
- It is essential that allegations of abuse are taken seriously, investigated and dealt with appropriately
- The policy provides guidelines on receiving evidence of possible abuse, recording this, reporting and investigation, involvement of parents, British Cycling and Statutory Authorities and Actions and Sanctions
- The club has two Club Welfare Officers (CWO) (one male, one female) who have specific roles and responsibilities, including:-
 - A source of advice on child protection matters
 - Co-ordinating action on receipt of any concerns or referrals
 - Ensure the club follows the BC child safeguarding policy
 - Keep records of training and vetting/DBS checks
 - Receive information from all about child protection concerns
 - Assess this information promptly, carefully and clarifying or obtaining more
 - Reporting any referrals/concerns to club officials/BC
 - Promote a child-centred approach within the club
- Codes of conduct indicate the expected behaviour of everyone involved in cycling. These include:-
 - Separate changing rooms for male and female should be used.
 - No changing is allowed in areas where people of the opposite sex are present
 - Where practical, children should be supervised in changing rooms by two adults of the same sex
 - No photographic equipment should be used in the changing rooms
 - Coaching ratios depend on age/ability of children, type of training, children's independence, environment of training and risk assessment
 - Residential trips should follow advice and checklists given by NSPCC
- Anyone has the potential to abuse children. Anyone who has significant access to children in the club must be vetted and complete a self-declaration form and provide two referees who will vouch for the suitability of that person to work with children.
- DBS checks needed for the roles of:-
 - CWO
 - Coaches who regularly coach children
 - Drivers
 - Volunteers who regularly spend time away with children at events/training camps
 - Website Administrators/Forum moderators

And the following if there's significant access to children/vulnerable groups:-

- Club officials/committee members
 - Volunteers/helpers
 - Event organisers
 - Race officials/commissaries
- Awareness and training should be provided at an appropriate level for these roles

The BC policy for safeguarding and protecting vulnerable adults is similar to that for children. The primary difference relates to the adult's right to self-determination, see below. Again, the full policy should be read, but the main additions include:-

- The separate policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010 to promote equal opportunities and to provide a clearer framework for vulnerable adults
- Vulnerable adults are reluctant to report abuse in a sporting setting for fear of losing a positive and important part of their lives. It is therefore important to recognise and act appropriately to protect potential victims
- If an adult chooses not to act at all to protect themselves (self-determination), the law will only intervene in extreme circumstances. Assertive persuasion is needed to encourage the individual to report or take action against abuse, always recognising that this could be detrimental to their overall wellbeing.
- A complex area requiring an understanding of protecting vulnerable adults with a more supportive and advisory approach. The involvement of carers needs to be carefully considered and often a working partnership is required between the club and carer/parent.