



**Low Fell Running Club**  
**Safeguarding Adults Policy**

**POLICY OBJECTIVES**

**Duty of care**

All organisations and individuals, including clubs, coaches, paid staff, volunteers and club officials, have a duty of care to safeguard vulnerable adults when they are participating in athletics activities under their auspices.

The committee is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and accepts our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all adults involved in athletics in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

These best practice guidelines are maintained by the committee with a view to promoting the adoption of good and consistent safeguarding practices to ensure that vulnerable adults have a safe experience. These guidelines identify what needs to be done by organisations and individuals to demonstrate their duty of care.

Best practice in athletics benefits everyone - the sport's Home Country Governing Bodies, clubs, coaches and officials, carers and athletes. Most importantly, it ensures that vulnerable adults who choose to participate in athletics have a safe and fun experience.

All adults are entitled to be protected from abuse. Abuse can occur anywhere. With over 100,000 adults involved in athletics in the UK, the chances are very real that there are some individuals abusing their positions in athletics.

The committee is committed to devising, implementing and updating policies and procedures to promote best practice when working with vulnerable adults and to ensure that everyone in the sport understands and accepts their responsibilities to safeguard adults from harm and abuse. This includes taking action to respond to, record and report any concerns about their welfare.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The committee at Low Fell Running Club fully accept their legal and moral obligations to meet their duty of care to all vulnerable adults and to safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief, sex or gender and sexual orientation.

Key principles:

- The welfare of the adult is paramount.
- All adults have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All organisations and individuals involved in athletics understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.

In order to meet their safeguarding obligations, all Affiliated Clubs and organisations must:

- Provide and enforce procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants and protect them from abuse. Club policies and practices must, as a minimum, meet the requirements set out in this guidance. Ensure all vulnerable adults who take part in athletics are able to participate in a safe and fun environment.
- Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of adults.
- Recruit, train and supervise their employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect vulnerable adults from abuse, and themselves from false allegations.
- Require staff/volunteers to adopt and abide by UKA's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, Codes of Conduct and the relevant grievance, investigatory and disciplinary procedures.
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate complaints, adult protection, disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Designate a person in the organisation who is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate DBS checks are completed.
- Review policies regularly.

## PRINCIPLES

The guidance given in the policy and procedures is based on the following six principles which underpin safeguarding of adults as set out in the Care Act:

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.

The committee will seek to ensure that our sport is inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment, we will also commit to continuous development, monitoring and review.

The rights, dignity and worth of all adults will always be respected.

We recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, for example those who have a dependency on others or have different communication needs.

We recognise that a disabled adult may or may not identify themselves or be identified as an adult 'at risk'.

We all have a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all adults and will act appropriately and report concerns whether these concerns arise within UK Athletics for example regarding inappropriate behaviour of a coach, or in the wider community.

All allegations will be taken seriously and responded to quickly in line with UK Athletics Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

The committee recognises the role and responsibilities of the statutory agencies in safeguarding adults and is committed to complying with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Adults Boards.

## **GUIDANCE AND LEGISLATION**

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the principles contained within the UK and legislation and Government Guidance and have been developed to complement the Safeguarding Adults Boards policy and procedures, and take the following into consideration:

- The Care Act 2014.
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The Data Protection Act 1994, 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

## **DEFINITIONS**

To assist working through and understanding this policy a number of key definitions need to be explained:

- **Adult at Risk** is a person aged 18 or over who is in need of care and support regardless of whether they are receiving them, and because of

those needs are unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect. In recent years there has been a marked shift away from using the term 'vulnerable' to describe adults potentially at risk from harm or abuse.

- **Abuse** is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. See section 5 for further explanations.
- **Adult** is anyone aged 18 or over.
- **Adult safeguarding** is protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- **Capacity** refers to the ability to make a decision at a particular time, for example when under considerable stress. The starting assumption must always be that a person has the capacity to make a decision unless it can be established that they lack capacity (MCA 2005).

## TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT - DEFINITIONS FROM THE CARE ACT 2014

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour or issue which could give rise to a safeguarding concern:

- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour: neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. In athletics this could be a player whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear suitable sports kit and deterioration in hygiene.
- **Modern Slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. In athletics you may notice that a participant has been missing from training sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches.
- **Domestic Abuse** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. It also includes so called 'honour' based violence. Sport may notice a power imbalance between a participant and a family member. For example, a participant with Downs syndrome may be looking quiet and withdrawn when their brother comes to collect them from sessions, in contrast to their personal assistant whom they greet with a smile.
- **Discriminatory** – discrimination is abuse which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act. This could be the harassing of a club member because they are or are perceived to be transgender.
- **Organisational Abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation. In athletics this could be training without a necessary break.
- **Physical Abuse** – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions. This could be a coach intentionally striking an athlete.

- **Sexual Abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting. This could be a fellow athlete who sends unwanted sexually explicit text messages to a learning-disabled adult they are training alongside.
- **Financial or Material Abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. This could be someone taking equipment from an athlete with dementia.
- **Neglect** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. This could be a coach not ensuring athletes have access to water.
- **Emotional or Psychological Abuse** – this includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. This could be an athlete threatening another athlete with physical harm and persistently blaming them for poor performance.

## **SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Abuse can take place in any context and by all manner of perpetrator. Abuse may be inflicted by anyone in the club who an athlete comes into contact with. Or club members, workers, volunteers or coaches may suspect that an athlete is being abused or neglected outside of the club setting. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected, these include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- Person has belongings or money going missing.
- Person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions.
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person.
- They may self-harm.
- They may have a fear of a particular group or individual.
- They may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN OR SOMEONE RAISES CONCERNS WITH YOU**

You may become aware that abuse or poor practice is taking place, suspect abuse or poor practice may be occurring or be told about something that may be abuse or poor practice and you must report this to the UK Athletics Lead Safeguarding or the Home Country Welfare Officer, or, if the Lead Safeguarding or Welfare Officer is

implicated then report to the UK Athletics CEO or the relevant Home Country Athletics Federation CEO.

If you are at an international event and have a concern, then speak to the coach or a team official. If you are concerned someone is in immediate danger, contact the police straight away.

It is important when considering your concern that you also consider the needs and wishes of the person at risk, taking into account the nature of the alert.

## **HOW TO RECORD A DISCLOSURE**

Make a note of what the person has said using his or her own words as soon as practicable. Complete an Incident Form and submit to the UK Athletics Lead Safeguarding or Welfare Officer.

As long as it does not increase the risk to the individual, you should explain to them that it is your duty to share your concern with your Lead Safeguarding or Welfare Officer.

Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.

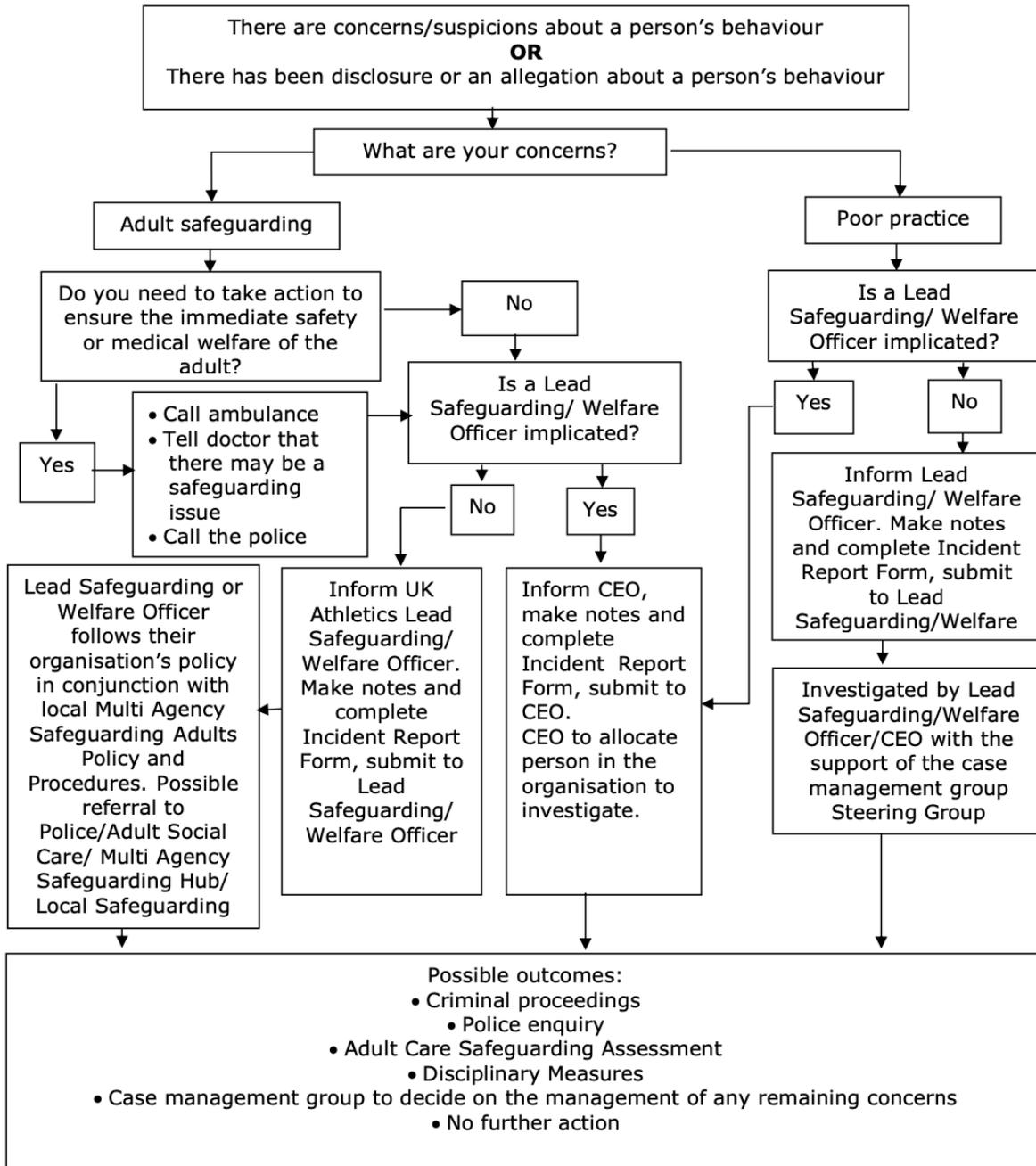
Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate.

Be mindful of the need to be confidential at all times, this information must only be shared with your Lead Safeguarding or Welfare Officer and others on a need to know basis.

If the matter is urgent and relates to the immediate safety of an adult at risk, then contact the police immediately.

## **SAFEGUARDING ADULTS FLOWCHART**

**Dealing with Concerns, Suspicions or Disclosure**



**Remember to involve the adult at risk throughout the process wherever possible and gain consent for any referrals to social care if the person has capacity**

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THOSE WITHIN THE NATIONAL GOVERNING BODIES**

The committee is committed to having the following in place:

- Safeguarding/Welfare Officers to produce and disseminate guidance and resources to support the policy and procedures.

- A clear line of accountability within the organisations for work on promoting the welfare of all adults.
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse or poor practice against members of staff and volunteers.
- A Case Management Group that effectively deals with issues, manages concerns and refers to a disciplinary panel where necessary (i.e. where concerns arise about the behaviour of someone within the national governing bodies).
- A Disciplinary Panel will be formed as required for a given incident, if appropriate and should a threshold be met.
- Arrangements are in place to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, including arrangements for sharing information.
- Appropriate whistleblowing procedures and an open and inclusive culture that enables safeguarding and equality and diversity issues to be addressed.

## **GOOD PRACTICE, POOR PRACTICE AND ABUSE**

It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental.

It is the responsibility of everyone - the sport's Home Country Governing Bodies, clubs, coaches and officials, carers and athletes. To recognise and identify poor practice and potential abuse, and act on this if they have concerns.

### **Good practice:**

UK Athletics expects that coaches of adult athletes:

- Adopt and endorse the UK Athletics Coaches Codes of Conduct.

### **Everyone should:**

- Aim to make the experience of adult athletes safe and fun.
- Promote fairness and playing by the rules.
- Not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances.
- Treat all adults equally and preserve their dignity; this includes giving more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time and respect.

### **Coaches and those working directly with adults at risk should:**

- Respect the developmental stage of each athlete and not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for team or personal achievement.
- Ensure that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the athlete.
- Work with adults at risk, medical adviser and their carers (where appropriate) to develop realistic training and competition schedules which are suited to the needs and lifestyle of the athlete, not the ambitions of others such as coaches, team members, parents or carers.

- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, encouraging adults at risk to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making.
- Always be publicly open when working with adults at risk:
  - avoid coaching sessions or meetings where a coach and an individual athlete are completely unobserved.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with people. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as:
  - - It is neither intrusive nor disturbing.
  - - The athlete's permission has been openly given.
  - - It is delivered in an open environment.
  - - It is needed to demonstrate during a coaching session.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with athletes and avoid forming intimate relationships with athletes you are working with as this may threaten the position of trust and respect present between athlete and coach.
- Be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour.
- Gain the adult at risk consent and, where appropriate, the consent of relevant carers, in writing, to administer emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises.
- Be aware of medical conditions, disabilities, existing injuries and medicines being taken and keep written records of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of treatments provided.
- Arrange that someone with current knowledge of emergency first aid is available at all times.
- Gain written consent from the correct people and fill out relevant checklists and information forms for travel arrangements and trips. This must be the adult themselves if they have capacity to do so.

### **Poor practice:**

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with an individual adult.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Using language that might be regarded as inappropriate by the adult and which may be hurtful or disrespectful.
- Making sexually suggestive comments, even in jest.
- Reducing an adult to tears as a form of control.
- Letting allegations made by an adult go un-investigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Taking an adult at risk alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Inviting or taking an adult at risk to your home or office where they will be alone with you.
- Sharing a room with an adult at risk.
- Doing things of a personal nature that adults at risk can do for themselves.

If, during your care, an adult at risk suffers any injury, seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands/misinterprets something you have done, report these incidents as soon as possible to another adult in the organisation and make a brief written note of it.

## **USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACTS**

### **Useful Information Sexual Offences Act 2003**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents> - The Sexual Offences Act introduced a number of new offences concerning vulnerable adults and children.

### **Mental Capacity Act 2005**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/introduction> - Its general principle is that everybody has capacity unless it is proved otherwise, that they should be supported to make their own decisions, that anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity must be in their best interests and there should be least restrictive intervention.

### **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents> - Introduced the new Vetting and Barring Scheme and the role of the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The Act places a statutory duty on all those working with vulnerable groups to register and undergo an advanced vetting process with criminal sanctions for non-compliance.

### **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dh-mental-capacity-act-2005-deprivation-of-liberty-safeguards> - Introduced into the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and came into force in April 2009. Designed to provide appropriate safeguards for vulnerable people who have a mental disorder and lack the capacity to consent to the arrangements made for their care or treatment, and who may be deprived of their liberty in their best interests in order to protect them from harm.

### **Disclosure & Barring Service 2013**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about> - Criminal record checks: guidance for employers - How employers or organisations can request criminal records checks on potential employees from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). DBS Update Service can be found at [www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service](http://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service)

### **The Care Act 2014 – Statutory Guidance**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/introduction/enacted> - The Care Act introduces new responsibilities for local authorities. It also has major implications for

adult care and support providers, people who use services, carers and advocates. It replaces No Secrets and puts adult safeguarding on a statutory footing.

### **Making Safeguarding Personal Guide 2014**

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Making%20Safeguarding%20Personal%20-%20Guide%202014.pdf> - This guide is intended to support councils and their partners to develop outcomes-focused, person-centred safeguarding practice.

### **USEFUL CONTACTS**

- David Brown CBE,  
Lead Welfare and Compliance Officer, UK Athletics,  
Athletics House,  
Alexander Stadium, Walsall Road, Perry Barr, Birmingham,  
B42 2BE.  
Email: [dbrown@uka.org.uk](mailto:dbrown@uka.org.uk) Telephone: 0121 713 8450 - Option 2
- Ann Craft Trust - Safeguarding Adults in Sport and Activity: Website:  
[www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org)  
Email: [Ann-Craft-Trust@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Ann-Craft-Trust@nottingham.ac.uk)  
Telephone: 0115 951 5400

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Policies, procedures and supporting information are available on the UK Athletics website.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner in the event of legislative changes or revised policies and best practice.