



LETCHWORTH HOCKEY CLUB

CHILD WELFARE ADVICE AND GUIDELINES

This document contains the current policy regarding advice and guidance to all members of Letchworth Hockey Club to ensure that our child (under 18) members are free from any bullying, intimidation or abuse.

Any future amendments will be updated on the LHC website.

Adult/child ratios

Adult/child ratios during activities such as coaching sessions should be based on the age of the children involved, the degree of risk the activity involves, and whether there are disability needs. The lower the age of the participants, the greater the need for supervision. If the activity is mixed gender, male and female staff should be available.

Changing rooms

For mixed gender activities, separate facilities should be available for boys and girls. If a child feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them to do so, they should be encouraged to shower or change at home or given the opportunity to use the facilities separately.

When children with disabilities use our club, make sure they and their carers are involved in deciding how they should be assisted. Ensure they are able to consent to the assistance that is offered.

Injuries and illness

If any member witnesses an injury to a child the parents must be told as soon as possible. If the child needs medical attention you must arrange this immediately and inform the parents/carers as soon as possible. You should always ensure you have up-to-date contact details at sports activities or events and information about any relevant medical conditions. First aid should only be administered when known to be safe to do so (i.e. aware of allergies).

Collection by parents/carers

Make sure you receive permission from parents/carers for children and young people to participate in any of the games, competitions, training or practice sessions you run. You should provide a timetable of activities at the beginning of the season. You should also notify parents/carers of any changes to this timetable in writing.

Late collection of children

Late collection of children by parents can present adult members with a potentially difficult situation. These are the guidelines for parents explaining our policy for dealing with late collection of children:

Letchworth Hockey Club will not be responsible for transporting children home on behalf of parents who have been delayed.

Parents/carers will be given a staff contact number and an instruction to phone if there is any likelihood of late collection.

Ensure parents provide an alternative contact name or number, for staff to use when they are not available on their usual number.

In cases of late collection adult members **SHOULD**:

Attempt to contact the child's parent or carer on their contact number.

Use the alternative contact name/number if necessary.

Wait with the child at the club, with other adult members or parents present if at all possible;

Remind parents/carers of the policy relating to late collection.

SHOULD AVOID:

Taking the child home or to any other location;

Sending the child home with another person without permission from a parent or carer.

Asking the child to wait in a vehicle or sport facility with you alone.

Discipline

When discipline is used it will only be with the clear intention of teaching or reinforcing appropriate behaviour. It will not be used impulsively, to gain power, or to embarrass or humiliate a child/young person.

Discipline will only be used to:

Develop a sense of responsibility for behaviour;

Develop respect for others and their property;

Reinforce the rules or values of the sport;

Reinforce positive behaviour or attitudes;

Reinforce awareness of health and safety aspects of the activity.

Physical contact

Coaches and adult members may need to use physical contact to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort.

Physical contact during sport will always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adults. Physical contact will only be used if the aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques;
- To treat an injury;
- To prevent an injury;
- To meet the requirements of the sport.

Always explain the reason for the physical contact to the child. Unless the situation is an emergency, ask the child for permission.

The contact will not involve touching genital areas, buttocks or breasts.

Physical contact will not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

All injuries will be fully recorded in the accident book.

Participants with disabilities

Any child or young person with a disability must receive information relating to our clubs policies and procedures taking in to account any communication difficulties.

Specialist advice should be sought for any child or young person with specific needs. For example, when staff need to guide blind or partially sighted children, ask the child for advice or seek the advice of their parents or carers.

When transporting child with disabilities, the vehicles used should meet the needs of the children and be roadworthy. Appropriate and trained escorts should be in attendance in the vehicle.

When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, the individual child will be treated with dignity and respect. Advice must be sought in such cases and relevant trained persons should be used where ever possible.

Inappropriate behaviour:

Sexual activity between adults and children under the age of 16 is a criminal act and immediate action must be taken to report such behaviour to the appropriate authorities.

Any persons witnessing any inappropriate behaviour have a duty to address the matter by either informing a committee member or speaking to the individual(s) involved.

BEING AWARE OF CHILD ABUSE

A child is any person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse can be emotional, physical or sexual and the signs of such suffering are there to be seen if we choose to notice.

If a child is exhibiting age in appropriate sexual behaviour, or displays moods swings, becomes very quiet or suffers unexplained bruising or other injuries.

Sufferers find it very difficult to report or tell their story and this can be because of fear to themselves, a sibling or the actual abuser (parents).

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE CONCERNED

If at any time you become concerned that a child or young person is or maybe going to suffer significant harm then you must take appropriate action.

Depending on the urgency the matter should be brought to the attention of the Club's Child Welfare Officer and other trained members (See notice board)

If the matter is more urgent then contact the police.

If a child discloses such information to you or you need to speak to a child about such a matter take care to use only open questions. Let the child do the talking, and do not attempt to interview them - this could damage any subsequent investigation.

Just remember the 5 Ws:

Who What Where When and Why - Leave the How to the experts.

Make a record of the conversation - time and date - as soon as possible and the content should be verbatim to demonstrate your questioning technique.

For any further advice or information please contact:

Julie Fewings (Child Welfare Officer) Mobile: 07932648475