

Leisure Services

Protecting Children and Young People
in Sport and Active Recreation



NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

www.angus.gov.uk/leisure

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INTRODUCTION

Children have the right to be protected from any abuse and harm at all times and in all situations.

These guidelines and the attached policy document have been designed to help our organisation protect these rights.

Child protection is the responsibility of every adult who has involvement with children.

Angus Council will seek to ensure the protection of all children in their areas.



What is Child Protection?

What can Leisure Services do to ensure Children receive a Good Service?

Sports and Leisure Centres, Community and Town Halls, Sports Development programmes and Countryside Services offer a very valuable service to children, through which they learn about how to take part in the activities offered. They also learn to trust and respect the adults involved. This places staff in a trustworthy position in that child's life. There may come a time when a child feels the need to confide in a staff member or a staff member feels that all is not well in the child's life

Leisure Services has a duty to ensure that staff are well equipped with the necessary information and knowledge to give that child the support, guidance and help needed at the time. This policy has been produced to help staff to think through the issues and provide child protection guidelines for staff. It will also help when considering any training issues and point staff in the right direction for help and advice in the future. This Policy will be used in conjunction with complimentary policies, for example Disclosure Scotland checks through the Recruitment and Selection Policy, the control of Photography Policy and School Use of Sports Centre Changing Facilities Policy to try and ensure a safe environment.

The following principles of good practice apply in child protection for all groups:-

- Every child, regardless of age, has at all times, in all situations, a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice which results in the child being physically, emotionally or sexually damaged.
- The welfare of the child is paramount and staff must all work together to ensure the protection of children.
- Children cannot be guaranteed confidentiality but can be told that you will inform only those people that need to know.



What is Child Abuse?

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 a carer (i.e. the person(s) while not a parent who has actual custody of the child).' Reference 'Protecting Children: A Shared Responsibility'.

This is a very broad definition that encourages open-mindedness and to think about what child abuse is. For those working in the field of Child Protection the definition gets broken down further into categories of abuse, namely :-

- Physical Injury
- Sexual Abuse
- Non-organic Failure to Thrive
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Neglect

More detailed descriptions of these categories are to be found in 'Angus Child Protection Committee – Inter-Agency Guidelines for Professional Staff'.

*NB this means children at risk through either something a person has done to them OR something a person is failing to do for them.



How to React and Listen

Staff must, at all times:

- Acknowledge the age group they work with and deal with any child protection concerns in an age appropriate manner.
- Never trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues.
- Allow the child time to speak and do not interrupt unnecessarily.
- Never prompt the child but reassure the child that you are glad she or he has told what has happened and that it was right to tell.
- Never interrogate or question other than to clarify your understanding of what the child is telling you. If the matter is to be investigated further it will be so done by trained professionals. No matter how well you know the child, spare them having to repeat themselves over and over. Apart from anything else, the child may begin to think that you don't believe them;
- Be honest, tell the child that you cannot keep it a secret, you have to talk to someone else that can help
- Remain calm, no matter how difficult it is to listen to the child - think of how hard it must be for the child. Some things are very difficult to talk about, you've been chosen because the child feels they can talk to you. If you show anger, disgust, disbelief then the child may stop talking for fear of upsetting you further or feel that your negative feelings are being directed towards them.
- Listen to the child - REALLY LISTEN - take what they say seriously. Tell them that they've done the right thing by telling you.
- Refer not investigate any suspicions or allegations about abuse.
- Never discuss the detail of what the child has told you with their parents (remember the parent may be the person who has carried out the abusive act; to do so may compromise any subsequent Child Protection investigation).
- Write down everything the child told you as soon as practically possible (Appendix 2 - Incident Form), but remember that this is a confidential matter between you, the child and the involved professionals. The only person you should be discussing it with in the first instance, is your Facility Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger, who in turn will contact the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger. In the absence of the Facility Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger, go straight to your



Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger. In the absence of the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Senior Ranger use the Centre's, Hall's or Park's emergency contact list, i.e. Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager/Senior Service Manager.

- Observe – are there signs that may give you cause for concern. The child may not speak to you but you may see signs that worry you e.g. appears afraid to go home, unexplained bruising, be acting out in a sexually inappropriate way.
- Observe – an adult in charge of a child or children may be acting in an inappropriate way e.g. acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child, misusing drink or drugs whilst caring for a child.
- Observe – an adult in charge of a child or children may be acting in an inappropriate way e.g. acting in a violent or sexual manner towards a child, misusing drink or drugs whilst caring for a child.
- Only share concerns and seek support from those identified in the Leisure Services Child Protection Policy.
- Report their concerns on the same working day or as soon as is practically possible N.B. It is extremely important that reporting of concerns is not delayed for any reason; doing so might compromise the child's safety and well-being.



Child Protection Policy for Leisure Services - Procedures

- 1) All staff upon the receipt of any information from a child or as a result of an incident or behaviour they have witnessed and which gives rise to child protection concerns, must accurately record what they have seen, heard or know at the time the event occurs.
- 2) Share your concerns with your Facilities Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger at the earliest opportunity (in the absence of the Facility Manager/ Development Officer/Senior Ranger go straight to your Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger. In the absence of the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger, follow the Centre's/Hall's or Park's contact list) and the course of action to be taken will be agreed.
- 3) Never Investigate.
- 4) The Facility Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger will contact the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger (in the absence of the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger follow the Centre's/Hall's or Park's contact list).
- 5) Decide on action to be taken (i.e. referral to Police/Social Work or no further action).
- 6) Contact Social Work Department or Police (see contact details on page 8).
- 7) Inform the Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager.
- 8) Facilitate inter-agency co-operation; you may be interviewed by Social Workers and/or Police regarding the incident to obtain further information.

If you have concerns you must act - it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that child - or you may prevent further children from being hurt.



CONTACT DETAILS FOR ANGUS COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK AND TAYSIDE POLICE

To contact Angus Council Social Work Intake Service please telephone 01307 473769 (Monday – Friday 8.45am – 5.00pm). For Social Work and Health outwith these times phone 01382 432270.

The most local Police Station telephone number will be found in the telephone directory.

Please note it below.

Police Station

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION NUMBER 0800 022 3222



The Role of the Facility Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger

As the Supervising Officer for your staff, you are responsible for ensuring that this policy is in place and that they are aware of the policy, have read it and fully understand it.

The Facility Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger is responsible at all times for ensuring the welfare of children who are using one of our facilities and/or are participating in a programme organised and operated by Leisure Services. In essence staff are expected to :

- create a safe and friendly environment.
- promote the welfare of the children in all activities.
- listen, observe and record if an incident arises or concerns are noted.
- advise the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger of the incident or concerns and keep him/her informed at all stages.
- ensure that the member of staff to whom the child 'disclosed' is available to provide further information to the Social Work Department/Police, if requested.

The Facilities Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger must complete and sign the relevant sections of the incident form without delay and immediately thereafter, forward it to the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger



The Role of the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger

As the Supervising Officer for your staff you are responsible for ensuring that this policy is in place and that the Facility Managers/Development Officers/Senior Rangers are aware of the policy and have read and fully understood it. You should also ensure that Facility Managers/Development Officers/Senior Rangers have made all staff in the Centre/Hall/Park or those involved in the various programmes aware of the policy and that they have read and fully understood it.

You must make sure that you are up to date with the current Inter-agency Guidelines issued by the Angus Child Protection Committee. If you do not have a copy, contact your Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager for one.

Make sure you know who your contacts are. Have to hand the following telephone numbers:-

Area Social Work Office - See book Tel. No

Police - Family Protection Unit Tel. No

Do not be afraid to make contact with these people for advice and guidance - remember - you may not be the only one to have concerns. You must also remember that all referrals are discussed thoroughly by the statutory agencies prior to any action being taken. Your concerns will be genuine and treated as such by them.

The Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger must inform the Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager of all stages of the incident or noted concerns.

The Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger must complete and sign the relevant sections of the incident form without delay and thereafter forward this immediately to the Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager.



Allegations Against Staff – Procedure

- 1) When an allegation of abuse against a member of Leisure Services staff comes to the attention of Management, the member of staff who receives the information must inform the Facility Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger
- 2) The Facilities Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger will inform the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger who in turn will inform the Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager and the Senior Service Manager.
- 3) When an allegation of abuse against a Facilities Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger comes to the attention of Management, the member of staff who receives the information must inform the Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager who will in turn inform the Senior Service Manager. The Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager will then assume the role of Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger as far as this procedure is concerned.
- 4) When an allegation has been made against a member of staff he/she should be informed as soon as possible as to the basis of that allegation. Although the Facility Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger may be present, it is the responsibility of the Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger to inform the member of staff;
- 5) The Senior Service Manager will decide if a cautionary suspension is necessary;
- 6) The Senior Service Manager will also identify what support is available to the member of staff as necessary from the initiation of the investigation;
- 7) All alleged instances must be investigated. The Senior Service Manager will decide the appropriate investigation that should be carried out in discussion with the relevant professionals;
- 8) The outcome of the investigation should be made known to the member of staff as soon as feasible. A report should be sent to the Senior Service Manager under confidential cover. This report would include any disciplinary issues and detail whether a Child Protection investigation by Police/Social Work Department is being undertaken;



- 9) The primary consideration in investigating allegations of abuse is the safety, protection and welfare of the child;
- 10) The rights of the staff member concerned must be considered and support made available if the allegation is unfounded or not proven.

FOR INFORMATION

It is worthwhile noting that a child protection scheme exists that can be used by sports and leisure clubs in the Angus area.

Those clubs that use the council leisure facilities and are members of the Angus Club Excellence (**ACE**) accreditation scheme must have such a scheme in place. This will contain a similar format for dealing with allegations against coaches, club helpers, officials and administrators.

Information on **ACE** can be had by contacting Lee McLean, Development Officer (Physical Activity) on 01307 475364 or by email McLeanL@angus.gov.uk



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

- DO treat everyone with respect.
- DO set an example you wish others to follow.
- DO plan activities that involve more than one other adult being present, or at least which are within sight or hearing of others.
- DO respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- DO provide access for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have.
- DO encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- DO maintain a healthy adult lifestyle.
- DO remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- DO recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying or abuse.



CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

- DO NOT** permit abusive youth peer activities (initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying and sexual intimidation).
- DO NOT** play physical contact games with young people.
- DO NOT** have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- DO NOT** jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- DO NOT** allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as outbursts or crushes.
- DO NOT** exaggerate or trivialise child-abuse issues.
- DO NOT** show favouritism to any individual.
- DO NOT** make suggestive remarks or gestures.
- DO NOT** rely on just your good name to protect you.
- DO NOT** believe 'it could never happen to me'.



FLOWCHART

At all stages consider:

- Seeking Advice
- How Best To Support The Child
- Appropriate Recording Of Information/Evidence
- Contamination Of Evidence



Neighbourhood Services Leisure Services Division

CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. No _____

Please quote on all correspondence

INCIDENT FORM

This form must be carefully completed and sent to the Sports Services Manager (Facilities)/Sports Services Manager (Development)/Countryside Services Manager, in an envelope marked 'Private and Confidential', on completion of incident investigation.

Establishment: _____

Address : _____

Particulars of Incident/Nature of concern

1. **Date of Incident:** _____

Time of Incident: _____

Describe fully the incident/disclosure and the circumstances

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary



- 2. Nature of Concern**
Specify fully the nature of your concerns and why you consider there may be child protection issues



Please continue on separate sheet if necessary

- 3. Date report to Facilities Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger**



- 4. Action Taken by Facilities Manager/Development Officer/Senior Ranger**



Please continue on separate sheet if necessary



5. Date reported to area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger

6. Action Taken by Area Manager/Senior Development Officer/Chief Ranger

Please continue on a separate sheet if insufficient space

7. No further Action Required

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

8. Forward to Head Office

Name: _____
(print in block capitals)

Designation: _____

Signature: _____ **Date** _____

