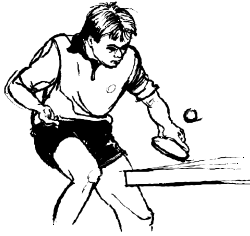


CRAMLINGTON TABLE TENNIS CLUB



Promoting and encouraging community participation in healthy recreation by the provision of facilities for playing table tennis.

Cramlington Table Tennis Club – Child Protection Policy Statement

Cramlington Table Tennis Club aims to create an atmosphere where children and young people feel valued and safe and a place where their welfare is promoted.

Any concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately and will pay attention to what children and young people say and feel.

We will be rigorous and vigilant in protecting the children and young people using the Club facilities from abuse, bullying and intimidation. We will do this through promotion of good practice and providing guidance to volunteers working within the Club on what constitutes appropriate behaviour.

Everyone involved in the Club will have access to our detailed Child Protection Policy and is obliged to make sure that children and young people using the Club facilities are safe.

Cramlington Table Tennis Club – Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction

Cramlington Table Tennis Club exists for the promotion of community participation in healthy recreation by the provision of facilities for playing table tennis and is run on a voluntary basis. The club operates an equity policy welcoming participation within key groups such as young people, women, disabled people and black and ethnic minorities. It welcomes players of all ages and abilities. The club aims to provide an environment in which all members are safe and free from abuse of any sort but especially one in which young people can participate in a fun and safe environment and be protected from neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

The key principles that underwrite this policy are:

- Anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document
- The child's welfare is paramount
- All children whatever their age culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- To ensure that adults working with children are also provided protection and are aware of the best practice so they can be protected from wrongful allegations
- Working in partnership with children and their parents/carers is essential for the protection of the child
- CTTC recognises the statutory responsibility of the Social Services Department to ensure the welfare of children and it is committed to working with the Local Area Monitoring and Reviewing section at Cramlington, and to comply with their procedures

2. Definitions

The term child abuse is used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by those they know and trust.

There are four main types of child abuse, though a child may experience more than one kind at any one time in his/her life.

Physical Abuse - Occasions when parents, adults or other children deliberately inflict injuries on a child or knowingly do not prevent such injuries. It includes injury caused by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting or using excessive force, and giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison, and attempts to suffocate or drown them. Physical abuse may also be deemed to occur if the nature and intensity of training disregards the capacity of the child's immature and growing body, or predisposes the child to injury resulting from fatigue or overuse.

Emotional Abuse - Occasions when adults fail to show children due care and attention or threaten, use sarcasm, taunt or shout at a child causing him/her to lose self confidence or self esteem and become nervous or withdrawn. These may also occur when an adult repeatedly ignores or fails to respond to a child's efforts or progress, or places the child under unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations constantly.

Neglect - Occasions where adults fail to meet a child's essential needs, such as adequate clothing, food, warmth and medical care. It also includes occasions where an adult leaves a child alone without proper supervision, or does not ensure that the child is safe, or exposes them to undue extremes of temperature or risk of injury.

Sexual Abuse - Occurs when males and females use children to meet their own sexual needs. Examples include forcing a child to take part in sexual activity such as sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, fondling or exposure to pornographic material. This also includes suggestions that sexual favours can help (or refusal can hinder) a career.

There is also the **abuse of trust** - Where young people are indoctrinated with attitudes to training, drugs and cheating, or social, political and religious views which are unacceptable to the young athletes family, community or rules of the sport.

The inappropriate use of photographic material taken at sporting events is an area of abuse that is increasing and all those involved within the sport should be aware of this. All forms of bullying, both verbal and physical from other children is also a form of abuse and there is a requirement for all within the sport to ensure that there are sufficient mechanisms to allow children to report instances of bullying.

3. Identifying Abuse

Dealing with child abuse is rarely straightforward. In some cases a child's disturbed behaviour, or an injury may suggest that the child has been abused. In many situations however, the signs will not be clear-cut and decisions about what action to take can be difficult.

Possible signs include:

- Uncharacteristic changes in the child's behaviour, attitude and commitment e.g. becoming quiet and withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Track side gossip
- Bruises and injuries not typical of the sport or injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- Signs of discomfort and pain
- Reluctance to remove tracksuit, or shower
- The child becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt
- The child loses weight for no apparent reason
- Nervousness when approached or touched
- Fear of particular adults - especially those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- The child wishes to switch to another coach without a reasonable explanation
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Children who are always alone and unaccompanied and/or are prevented from socialising with other children
- Children who are reluctant to go home.

The above list is not exhaustive, and the presence of one or more indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place.

It is not the responsibility of those working in table tennis to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is a responsibility to follow through on any concerns.

4. Responding to the child

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

- Stay calm - do not rush into inappropriate action
- Reassure the child - that they are not to blame and confirm that you know how difficult it must be to confide
- Listen and believe - to what the child says and show that you take them seriously
- Allow only one Adult to Talk to the Child - as any discrepancies in statements may lead to legal problems
- Keep questions to a minimum - in many cases it may be more appropriate to nod and acknowledge the child's account. If you must question then use open ended questions i.e. those where more than a yes/no response is required. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed if it appears that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested
- Reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible

5. Responding to suspicions or allegations

It is not the role of anyone in CTTC to take responsibility or decide that child abuse is occurring, but there is a responsibility to protect children in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child. This means ensuring that you involve the appropriate person/s.

The social services department has a statutory duty under The Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of the child. When a child protection referral is made, its staff have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police.

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most situations it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. E.g. if a child seems withdrawn he/she may have experienced a bereavement in the family. However there are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk if such concerns were shared (e.g. when a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations, or where concern still exists, any suspicion, allegation, or incident of abuse must be reported to the person in charge as soon as possible and be recorded.

It is the responsibility of the person in charge to inform the social services department without delay. If the person in charge is not available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact the social services or the police. In these circumstances you do not have to give your name, but it is helpful to do so. The social services department, together with the person in charge, where appropriate, will decide how and when parents and carers will be informed.

The N.S.P.C.C. have a 24 hour freephone helpline on 0800 800500 if you are not sure what to do in any situation and require advice.

6. Roles

For effective implementation of this policy all deliverers of table tennis within CTTC must work in partnership, each with a role to ensure the protection of the children in their care.

The role of the executive committee will be as follows:

- To appoint one Child Protection Officer
- To accept that all Officers and Committee members have responsibilities in this area and be prepared to respond to any indication of abuse
- To ensure that all volunteers who are likely to coach children or assist in the coaching of children within the club's activities complete a personal disclosure form
- To be ready to amend bad practice
- To implement any recommendations of ETTA (English Table Tennis Association) relating to this area
- To maintain confidentiality of the child and the accused

The role of the Child Protection Officer within the Club will be as follows:

- To ensure all club helpers/officials/coaches complete a volunteer reference form
- To send all forms to ETTA if requested
- To receive and advise on reports from other club members
- To initiate action, ensuring all appropriate persons have been contacted
- To monitor the policy

Everyone has a responsibility to maintain awareness and openness with regard to child protection issues.

7. Allegations against coaches and/or volunteers

This includes anyone working with children in a paid or voluntary capacity (e.g. volunteers or helpers in clubs, officials, captains, team managers, assistants as well as qualified coaches).

Child abuse can and does occur outside the family setting. Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child abuse has occurred within table tennis. Recent enquiries indicate that abuse, which takes place within a public setting, is rarely a one-off event. It is crucial that those involved in table tennis are aware of the possibility and that allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken,

The person in charge may be informed of situations where he/she is unsure about whether the allegations constitutes abuse or not, and is therefore unclear about what action to take. There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice rather than abuse, but those responsible should always consult senior colleagues and gain advice from social services or the NSPCC if there is any doubt. This is because it may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern.

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a coach or volunteer is, or may be, abusing a child, will raise concern among other coaches or volunteers. This includes the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters. However, it is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from the abuse or harassment by a coach or volunteer should be reported immediately.

8. Promoting good practice

All children have a right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. CTTC believes that, within the sporting context it is possible to reduce situations for the abuse of children by the promotion of good practice. Good practice begins with the Club having this policy that strives to ensure that children are protected and kept safe from harm, actual abuse is identified and potential abuse prevented.

Factors in the promotion of good practice are:

- Each member of the executive committee is to hold a copy of CTTC's Child Protection Policy. A copy is to be retained in the club locker at the Sports Centre, Sporting Club of Cramlington and a copy is to be posted on the Club's website.
- Volunteers are to be encouraged to read the Policy and in addition to read "The Coaches' Guide to Child Protection Procedures" issued by ETTA (English Table Tennis Association) and "Working with Children" (The National Coaching Foundation), copies of which are to be kept in the Club's locker.
- Volunteers are to be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses in Child Protection and in particular the "Good Practice in Child Protection Workshop" promoted by the National Coaching Foundation.
- All volunteers working within the Club should complete a personal disclosure form (see Appendix C)
- Level 1, 2 and 3 coaches working within the Club and those with substantial access to children should also be vetted with the CRO (Criminal Records Office).

9. Communications

CTTC encourages communications between participants and coaches and volunteers in relation to all club practice and recognises that it is important to listen to the children's views on the merits or otherwise on matters which concern their development.

All participants and parents should be made aware of the availability of contact telephone numbers when first joining. Members, participants and parents should be encouraged to speak to committee members on any matter that concerns them but in particular in respect of matters concerning the protection of children.

This policy was adopted on 27 October 2002 at a meeting of the Executive Committee. Those attending were:

Alan Hedley	Chairman
Sally Shotton	Secretary
Aubrey Drapkin	Treasurer
Joe Swinburn	Member
Les Waters	Member
Jan Graham	Member
Mike Daniels	Member

Appendix A

Code of Conduct for Adults working with Children in Table Tennis

To ensure that all forms of abuse are prevented and to help protect people who work with young table tennis participants the following guidelines should be followed:

- Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid situations where you and an individual child are completely unobserved.
- If any form of physical contact is absolutely necessary, it should be used openly and the child should be asked first. Care is needed. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about touching children and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Where possible parents should take responsibility for their children in changing rooms. If groups are to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure that adults work in pairs.
- Where mixed teams compete away from home ideally they should be accompanied by at least one male adult and one female adult.
- Volunteers and professionals must respect the rights and dignity and worth of all and treat everyone with equality.
- Adults must ensure that the activities which they direct or advocate are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of the performer e.g. they must not break the UKA rules on age group for competitions.
- Adults should always promote the positive aspects of their sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or use of prohibited substances.
- Adults must consistently display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance and avoid use of bad language.
- Adults should never overtly criticise athletes or use sarcasm where it may cause the child to lose self-esteem or confidence.

Everyone should also be aware that as a general rule it does not make sense to:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Take children alone on car journeys, however short
- Take children to your home if they will be alone with you
- If it should arise that such situations are unavoidable they should only take place with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club and/or the child's parents/carer

You should never:

- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room with a child
- Permit or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Permit children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon

- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for itself. However it may be necessary for a volunteer to do things of a personal nature for children particularly if they are very young or disabled. Such tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/carer. There is also a need in these instances to be responsive to the child's reactions - if a child is fully dependant upon you talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible.
- If you accidentally hurt a child, or cause distress in any manner, or the child appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands, or misinterprets something you have done, report the incident as soon as possible. Parents/carers should also be informed of the occurrence.

Appendix B

Useful Contacts

- CTTC Club Welfare Officer / Child Protection Officer
Graeme Dawson
0191 286 4460

- Monitoring and Reviewing
Social Services
Beaconhill
Cramlington
01670 714411

- The N.S.P.C. C.
(National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)
National Centre
42 Curtain Road
LONDON
EC2A 3NH
24 Hour Helpline 0800 800500

- Child Protection in Sport Unit
NSPCC National Training Centre
3 Gilmour Close
Beaumont Leys
Leicester
LE4 1EZ
Tel: 0116 234 7278/7280
www.sportprotects.org.uk

- Childline UK
Freepost 1111
LONDON
N1 0BR
24 Hour Helpline 0800 1111

- Northumbria Police
For Cramlington Station ring the central switchboard at Ponteland
01661 872555

Appendix C
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PERSONAL DISCLOSURE FROM ALL VOLUNTEERS WORKING
WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN CRAMLINGTON
TABLE TENNIS CLUB

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of
a Bound Over Order?

YES NO

If yes please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)

SIGNED

DATE

NAME

Any surname Previously Known By

ADDRESS

POST CODE

DATE OF BIRTH

PLACE OF BIRTH

(You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
(Exceptions) (Amendment Order) Order 1986 you should declare all convictions
including "spent" convictions.)

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