

# UKPA

## CHILD WELFARE PROCEDURES

Issue 3



**Please note: This is an excerpt from the UKPA Handbook (2014) and should be checked against that publication for issue status**

## CHILD WELFARE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Policy Statement

The UK Polocrosse Association fully accepts its legal (Children's Act, 1989 & 2004) and moral obligations to protect children and safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief or sexual orientation. This policy will be implemented by engendering a culture of care for the child and by developing clear and accessible procedures.

The UKPA has a statutory duty of care to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults involved in the Association's activities. The UKPA Child Welfare (CW) procedures are based on the Safeguarding Policy of the British Equestrian Federation (BEF), which is a requirement of membership of the federation; details of this policy can be found on the BEF website.

UKPA procedures have been developed to apply the BEF policy to the UKPA organisation. The UKPA will endeavour to ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in UKPA activities through adherence to these Child Welfare (CW) Procedures.

All UKPA Affiliated clubs and organisations are required to implement these Child Welfare procedures as a pre-requisite for affiliation.

For the purposes of these procedures the term 'child' shall include 'vulnerable adult'.

Definitions:

Child – any person under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable adult – someone aged 18 or over who is, or may be:

- in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability
- unable to take care of themselves.

The statutory requirements regarding the care of vulnerable adults differs from that for children, but for the purposes of this document the term '*child*' or '*children*' shall include vulnerable adults

Safeguarding – Policies and systems instigated to prevent harm to children

Protection - Policies and systems in place to protect specific individuals who are suffering or likely to suffer harm as a result of abuse.

### 1. UKPA Procedures

1.1. The procedures to be used directly within the UKPA are laid down in Appendix 1 to this Section.

1.2. These procedures shall be managed by the Chief Child Welfare Officer (CCWO) who shall report to the Executive committee through the CEO. The CEO shall be the Executive committee Child Welfare Representative.

### 2. UKPA Chief Child Welfare Officer

2.1. Post description for the role of the UKPA Chief Child Welfare Officer (CCWO) can be found in Appendix 14 to Section 2.3 of this Handbook.

### 3. UKPA Affiliated Clubs – Child Welfare Requirements

3.1. Detailed requirements and information for UKPA affiliated clubs are detailed in Appendix 2 to this Section.

3.2. In summary, all UKPA affiliated clubs shall instigate, manage and regularly review a Child Welfare system which includes the following aspects:

- a. A suitable designated Child Welfare Officer responsible for the overseeing and management of the club CW system.
- b. Clear lines of communication for the reporting of CW concerns

- c. Active promotion of good practice for all members including the acceptance of codes of conduct by coaches and other persons with access to children.
  - d. Carrying out of suitable background checks on all volunteers with access to children, eg. Coaches and child supervisors, including DBS (CRB) checks where required.
  - e. Active education of children, their parents and other members in Child Welfare issues
  - f. Suitable training of all persons with access to children including; good practice, types of abuse, how to spot abuse, what to do if they have CW concerns
  - g. Suitable collection and storage of CW documentation.
  - h. Regular reviews of the efficacy of the club CW system
- 3.3. There shall be demonstrable evidence that the above procedures and actions are in place.
- 3.4. The BEF provides a number of guidance documents and training aids on its website and these are available for use by clubs to meet their requirements. See the BEF rulebook Annex B – *Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults and Their Protection* and other documentation.
- 3.5. The UKPA will also provide advice through the CCWO and supporting documentation which can be downloaded from the UKPA website.
- 4. Reporting of Child Welfare Concerns**
- 4.1. A details of the reporting route for CW concerns is given in Appendix 3 to this section.
- 4.2. Persons with CW concerns should bring them to the notice of the relevant club CW officer and **not** to the person causing the concern. The club CW Officer shall bring the concerns to the attention of the CCWO as soon as practical for advice as to the way ahead.
- 4.3. The CCWO shall seek advice from the BEF before proceeding in a suspected case investigation.
- 4.4. The CCWO is to bring all CW concerns raised within the UKPA to the attention of the BEF.
- 5. Good and Poor Practices**
- 5.1. Details of what constitutes good and poor practice are given in the BEF Safeguarding Children in Equestrian Sport documentation, but also see Appendix 4.
- 5.2. It should be noted that good practices also help protect adults from spurious concerns and complaints.
- 6. Confidentiality**
- 6.1. Confidentiality of information gained during investigations is vital, but it is the duty of all persons to pass on any information they may have regarding possible child abuse to the correct persons or authorities.
- 7. Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)**
- 7.1. A formal DBS check must be completed on persons who teach, train, supervise, or transport children or vulnerable adults once a week or more or 4 or more days in a 30 day period or overnight between 2am and 6am, unsupervised by another adult.
- 7.2. Bullying**
- 7.2.1. Child abuse can also be instigated by children particularly in the form of bullying. See the UKPA Handbook section 3.2 for further details.
- 7.2.2. All members are to be aware of the possibility of bullying and bring any concerns to the attention of the relevant CWO.

## **8. Suspension**

8.1. The UKPA has the right to immediately suspend any member from access with children or to require a non-member to be barred from access to children within the UKPA environment, if there are concerns over their suitability to work with children.

8.2. Further action will be taken in accordance with Section 3.3 of the UKPA Handbook.

Appendix 1 – UKPA CW Procedures

Appendix 2 – UKPA Affiliated Club CW procedures

Appendix 3 – Reporting Routes for Child Welfare Concerns

Appendix 4 – Good and Poor Practices

**Appendix 1 to Section 3.5****CHILD WELFARE PROCEDURES FOR THE UKPA**

1. The procedures detailed below are a summary of the requirements of the BEF CW system relevant specifically to the UKPA. Reference should be made to the BEF CW system to ensure the UKPA's full compliance.
2. **Education in Child Welfare**
  - 2.1. Education is a key aspect of safeguarding and all UKPA members shall be made aware of the following;
    - a. What to do if they have CW concerns
    - b. Communication routes for reporting of concerns
    - c. Good and poor practice by persons in control of children
    - d. Signs of abuse
  - 2.2. This education should primarily come through member clubs and the UKPA shall ensure that clubs are given the necessary support to be able to provide this information.
  - 2.3. The UKPA shall ensure that all its Executive and Appointed officers are given the above information.
  - 2.4. All UKPA officers with direct access to children (such as squad coaches and managers) shall be trained in UKPA CW procedures as well as in CW matters in general suitable for their position.
3. **Managing Child Welfare in UKPA Clubs**
  - 3.1. The CCWO is tasked with monitoring UKPA member clubs to ensure they meet the requirements for affiliation and for ensuring they have sufficient resources and support from the UKPA.
  - 3.2. The use of 'Aware club' checklists by the CCWO to monitor the state of a club's CW system shall be instigated at least every two years. An action plan to rectify any failings is to be produced by the club concerned to the satisfaction of the CCWO.
4. **Recruitment of Persons with Access to Children**
  - 4.1. Background checks shall be carried out on Junior and U21 squad managers and coaches and on open squad managers and coaches when children may be members of the open squad.
  - 4.2. Background checks are also to be carried out on any other persons who may be given unsupervised access to children during UKPA events.
  - 4.3. These checks shall include, but not be limited to, Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS). Details for the requirements for DBS checks can be found on the government website [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check) and associated links. The CCWO is tasked with ensuring suitable background checks, including DBS checks, for the necessary UKPA officers.
  - 4.4. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the CCWO also undergoes suitable background checks.
5. **Child Welfare at Events Organised by the UKPA**
  - 5.1. At every event organised by the UKPA where children will be attending there shall be a suitable designated person acting as the Event CWO as a contact point for any concerns raised at the event. Their contact details shall be made readily available to all attendees.
  - 5.2. The Event CWO shall be fully aware of the UKPA reporting procedures and what to do in the event of being made of a CW concern.

**6. Lines of Communication**

- 6.1. All CW concerns are to be brought to the attention of the CCWO in the first instance, or the UKPA CEO in the CWO's absence.
- 6.2. The BEF requires all CW concerns to be brought to its attention either for advice or for monitoring. The CCWO shall ensure lines of communication are kept open.
- 6.3. The CCWO shall inform the CEO in good time of when they are going to be out of communication, eg. When on holiday, so that lines of communication can be kept open.

**Appendix 2 to Section 3.5****CHILD WELFARE PROCEDURES FOR CLUBS**

1. A pre-requisite for affiliation to the UKPA is that all clubs shall have a suitable CW system in place, including the appointment of a suitably trained club Child Welfare Officer (CWO).
  2. Club CWOs should contact the UKPA CCWO for guidance and support in the carrying out of their duties. Further details of the required CW system can be found on the BEF website under 'Legal and Ethical'.
- 3. Club Child Welfare Officer (CWO)**
- 3.1. Each club shall have a specifically designated adult club CWO tasked with overseeing and managing the club CW system.
  - 3.2. The CWO is to be suitably trained in CW issues and shall be fully conversant with the UKPA and BEF CW procedures. Where the club CWO is not already trained on taking up the post the club shall ensure that they receive suitable training as soon as practical. They should contact the CCWO who may be able to offer access to courses for free or give guidance on which course are suitable.
  - 3.3. The Club CWO has the following responsibilities (taken from the BEF CW Procedures);
    - a. Ensuring their club adopts and promotes the UKPA (BEF) policies and procedures
    - b. Promoting education and training in partnership with the UKPA to support staff, members and volunteers.
    - c. Managing and monitoring the implementation of the policy and procedures.
    - d. Being the first point of contact for club staff and volunteers, young people and parents for any issue concerning child welfare, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse.
    - e. Recording and reporting monitoring information as required.
    - f. Responding to any allegations or complaints by reporting to the UKPA CCWO.
    - g. Maintaining local contact details (Local Area Designated Officers {LADO}) for Children's Social Care, the Police and UKPA CCWO.
    - h. Ensuring confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a "need to know" basis.
- 4. Lines of Communication**
- 4.1. The club shall ensure that there are clear and well advertised lines of communication for the reporting of CW concerns. See Appendix 3.
  - 4.2. The name and contact details of the club CWO shall be freely disseminated to all club members and parents/guardians of child members. A suitable nominated deputy shall be in place when the Club CWO is not available, eg. When away on holiday.
  - 4.3. The club CWO shall ensure that suitable written records are kept of concerns raised for future reference.
  - 4.4. The club CWO shall be fully conversant with reporting routes outside of the UKPA, eg. Police and local Child Services (LADO).
  - 4.5. All members are to be made aware that any concerns about the failure of a club's CW system may be brought to the attention of the CCWO or the UKPA CEO, 'whistle-blowing'. However, all such concerns should be brought to the attention of the club CWO in the first instance, or the club committee.
- 5. Promotion of Good Practices**
- 5.1. The club shall actively promote the carrying out of good CW practices by all persons in contact with children. Specific good practices can be found in the BEF Safeguarding documentation and the UKPA website, but are summarised in Appendix 4. Education documentation will also be available from the UKPA CCWO.

- 5.2. Club coaches and other persons with regular access to children shall be required to abide by codes of conducts, proforma copies of which can be found on the UKPA website for download.
- 5.3. Where examples of poor practice are brought to the attention of the club CWO these shall be investigated and reported to the UKPA CCWO. Persons carrying out poor practices shall be made aware of their failings and suitable actions taken to redress them. Persons who fail to improve are to be prevented from access to children until their conduct has been reviewed.
- 5.4. The requirement to follow UKPA CW procedures is to be laid out in the club's constitution.

## **6. Background Checks**

- 6.1. Suitable background checks are to be carried out on all club personnel who have regular access to children. These checks shall include, but not be limited, to DBS checks where applicable. Where references are obtained these should be followed up to ensure they are accurate.
- 6.2. Completed background checks for UKPA UKCC trained coaches may be available from the CCWO or the Coaching Development Officer (CDO).
- 6.3. Background check forms can be downloaded from the UKPA website.
- 6.4. Copies of checks shall be held by the club until the person leaves the club or ceases to have access to children when they should be sent to the UKPA Secretary for long term retention.
- 6.5. Where a coach from outside the club is used for a training session with children they must be supervised at all times unless background checks have been carried out.
- 6.6. Club CWOs are to regularly assess their members to check those that may need background checks. To obtain DBS checks contact the UKPA CCWO.

## **7. Education**

- 7.1. All club members (and parents/guardians of children members) shall be made aware of the following;
  - a. What to do if they have CW concerns
  - b. Communication routes for reporting of concerns
  - c. Good and poor practice by persons in control of children
  - d. Signs of abuse
- 7.2. This may be by specific club training 'course' or simply by handout/leaflets given to each person.

## **8. Training of Coaches and Others with Access to Children**

- 8.1. The club shall ensure that all club coaches and other persons with unsupervised access to children undergo CW training suitable for their level of access. All level 2 UKCC Coaches will have already undergone the necessary CW training. Club CWOs should contact the UKPA CCWO for guidance on what level of training is necessary for persons and where this may be obtained.
- 8.2. Details of this training shall be kept by the Club CWO and confirmed as accurate and up to date.

## **9. Collection and Storage of CW Information**

- 9.1. Details of background checks along with associated documents are to be kept in hard copy form by the club CWO until the relevant person ceases the activity or leaves the club. Paperwork should then be passed to the UKPA Secretary for long term storage.
- 9.2. All such personal information shall be kept securely with access only by persons with a specific need to know. No information regarding CW issues shall be passed to any person without a need to know, eg. To the media or other club members.

## **10. Regular Reviews**

- 10.1. Club CWOs shall conduct regular reviews of the club CW system to ensure it continues to meet the requirements laid out in this section. This review should be at least two yearly and when the post of club CWO passes to a different person.
- 10.2. The review can take the form of a checklist, a proforma copy of which can be downloaded from the UKPA website.
- 10.3. The UKPA CCWO will, from time to time, conduct reviews of club CW systems.

## **11. Child Welfare at Events Organised by the Club**

12. At every event organised by UKPA affiliated organisations, where children will be attending there shall be a suitable designated person acting as the Event CWO as a contact point for any concerns raised at the event. Their contact details shall be made readily available to all attendees.
13. The Event CWO shall be fully aware of the UKPA reporting procedures and what to do in the event of being made of a CW concern.

**Appendix 3 to Section 3.5****REPORTING ROUTES FOR CHILD WELFARE CONCERNS**

1. In all situations the UKPA CCWO or the CEO may be contacted directly to obtain advice or to report concerns over child abuse. However, in the first instance concerns should be brought to the attention of the relevant Club or event CWO.
  2. All CW concerns are to be brought to the attention of the UKPA CCWO in due course by CWOs. These are to be forwarded to the BEF by the UKPA CCWO.
  3. The BEF provides a Federation Safeguarding Advisory Group (FSAG) who will give quick response advice on what to do in the event of a child welfare concern. This group can be contacted 24/7 through the UKPA CCWO or the CEO in the CCWO's absence.
  4. Concerns should NOT be raised with the person causing the concern before consulting the club or event CWO. Otherwise this may allow the perpetrator to delete compromising texts etc. and hide other evidence.
- 5. Concerns About Poor Practices**
- 5.1. The CWO shall investigate the claims made and if they are simply poor practice speak to the person(s) involved informing them of their concerns and what actions are to be put in place to prevent this poor practice continuing.
  - 5.2. Should the practices continue the person involved is to have their contact with children suspended until further review.
  - 5.3. Written details of the investigation are to be made as suitable in case of further concerns.
- 6. Concerns About Suspected Abuse**
- 6.1. Concerns of abuse could be either;
    - perpetrated by a member or official of the club
    - perpetrated outside of the club but noticed during a club event
  - 6.2. Child abuse is a criminal act and if there are reasonable concerns that a child is being abused then the Police and the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) are to be informed.
  - 6.3. Advice may be sought through the UKPA if CWOs would like guidance.
  - 6.4. Any evidence gained must be written down as soon as practical, including phone calls received or made. Further advice can be found in the BEF Safeguarding documentation and on the UKPA website.

**Appendix 4 to Section 3.5****GOOD AND POOR PRACTICES****GOOD PRACTICE**

- Ensure experience at UKPA events is fun and enjoyable
- Promote fairness
- Confront and deal with bullying
- Never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Be an excellent role model; do not drink alcohol or smoke or when working with young people.
- Treat all young people and vulnerable adults equally; this means providing everyone in a group situation similar attention (within reason), time, respect and dignity.
- Respect the developmental stage of each young person and place their welfare ahead of winning, club or personal achievements. This means ensuring that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional development stage of the rider and that all UKPA guidelines for training intensity and competition are followed. Ensure training and competition schedules are based on the needs and interests of the child, not those of the parents, instructors or club.
- Wherever possible conduct all training and meetings in an open environment and avoid one-to-one coaching in unobserved situations.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with riders; it is inappropriate and, where under the age of 16, illegal to have an intimate relationship with a young person. The UKPA supports the Home Office guidelines that recommend that people in positions of authority should not have sexual relationships with 16-17 year olds in their care. One adult should never share a room with one young person. Occasionally situations may occur when a number of young people and adults share a common sleeping area e.g. Training Camps – although this is not recommended. Always ensure that parents' permission is gained in writing beforehand and riders are given an opportunity in advance to discuss this, air any concerns and agree the logistics of the sleeping arrangements.
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making. Avoid situations in which the instructor or team manager uses their position and power to dictate what the rider should and should not do.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people; if contact is required; for example in demonstrating a technique, keep the contact to a minimum, in open view of others and explain to the child what you are doing. Touching can be okay and appropriate as long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the rider's permission has been given.
- Ensure separate changing facilities are available for riders. Where supervision is required, involve parents wherever possible and ensure that adults work in pairs.
- Communicate regularly with parents, involve them in decision-making and gain written consent for travel arrangements. Secure their consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Be aware of any medical conditions, food intolerances, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given. Ensure you are qualified and up to date in first aid or that there is someone with a first aid qualification in attendance.
- Keep up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance issues within the UKPA.

- When children travel away from home, ensure the guidance contained in the NSPCC publication: Safe Sports Events (available from the NSPCC website <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/safe-sport-events-activities-and-competitions/>), is understood and followed. In particular, if mixed teams are taken away, ensure they are accompanied by a male and female member of staff and safeguard them from the potential of same sex abuse. Adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children on their own into their own rooms.

### **POOR PRACTICE**

The following is deemed to constitute poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel:

- spending excessive amounts of time alone with one child away from the others.
- taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- sharing a room with a child (unless the adult is the child's parent or carer).
- allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- making sexual suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- doing things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves.
- taking children alone on car journeys.
- chastising a child for their behaviour without the permission of the parent, unless an immediate safety situation is of concern

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the person in charge, the child's parent or the Club Child Welfare Officer.