Welsh Pétanque Association
Safe-Guarding Practice & Procedure

January 2021

Version 2.0

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Welsh Pétanque Association

SAFE-GUARDING PRACTICE & PROCEDURE

Contents

1. **Practice** 1
2. **Promoting Good Practice with Juniors and Vulnerable Adults** 1
3. **Deployment of Volunteers and Coaches** 2
4. **Supervision of Children and Young People** 3
5. **Recognition of Poor Practice, Abuse and Bullying** 3
6. **Indicators of Abuse** 6
7. **Summary** 6

Safe-Guarding Practice & Procedure

1. Practice

The guidance given in this procedure is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of young people and vulnerable adults is the primary concern.
- All young people and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is the responsibility of the child protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.
- All incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the principles of data protection and the human rights.

1.1. Communication

A key principle underpinning this procedure is working in partnership with parents, carers and all others with responsibility for safeguarding children and young people. In order to promote the safeguarding and protection policies and procedures it is important to communicate these as widely as possible.

2. Promoting Good Practice with Juniors and Vulnerable Adults

Abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school, and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with juniors and vulnerable adults in order to harm them.

A coach, officer or volunteer may have regular contact with juniors and vulnerable adults and be an important link in identifying cases where juniors and vulnerable adults need protection. Any concerns should be reported to the National President, the appointed Safeguarding Officer immediately.`

2.1. Good Practice

All coaches, officers and volunteers representing the Welsh Pétanque Association (WPA) as part of the delivery system should demonstrate exemplary conduct within their delivery. A high level of understanding is required always for the well-being of

the juniors and vulnerable adults participating in the activities but also to protect the coach, officer or volunteer from false allegations.

2.2. Practice Never to be Sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room with a young person
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow a young person to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for young person or vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow a young person to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

3. Deployment of Volunteers and Coaches

3.1. Checks and References

All coaches, volunteers and officials working or supporting delivery of activities, with juniors and vulnerable adults, **must** complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in accordance with the WPA DBS check Procedure.
All coaches and volunteers must demonstrate that:

- Their qualifications are substantiated
- Their training needs/aspirations are identified
- They sign up to the WPA Coaching Code of Conduct.
- The expectations, roles and responsibilities are clarified
- The Procedures for Safeguarding and Protecting Juniors and Vulnerable Adults are explained, and any training needs established

3.2. Training

Checks are only part of the process to protect juniors and vulnerable adults from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice/concerns of possible abuse.

3.3. Coaching

All coaching staff working with juniors and vulnerable adults must be up to date or receive training in the following areas:

- **Safeguarding and Protecting Children**
- **First Aid** (e.g. Appointed Persons Emergency Aid Course)
- **Equity** (e.g. sport coach UK - Equity in your Coaching)
- **Coaching Disabled People** (e.g. sports coach UK - How to coach Disabled People in Sport)

3.4. Complaints Procedure

The WPA shall manage complaints against coaches, officers and volunteers in accordance with the WPA Disciplinary Procedure.

4. Supervision of Children and Young People

Prevention is the most important aspect of supervision of children and young people. From the moment juniors or vulnerable adults arrive at the event (or from when they are handed over by parents/carers to be transported to the event), coaches, officers and volunteers are acting *in loco parentis* and have a duty of care towards them.

Appropriate supervision ratios and systems for monitoring the whereabouts of children are essential. It must be clear at all times, who in the team is responsible for supervision. This is particularly important where events are held on large sites and at residential venues.

4.1. Code of Conduct

The WPA requires all coaches, officers and volunteers working with juniors and vulnerable adults to sign up to the Coaching Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct outlines good practice when working with juniors and vulnerable adults.

An environment which allows bullying, shouting, racism, or sexism, is not acceptable. There should be clear guidance about what behaviour is inappropriate in a relationship between adults and young people.

5. Recognition of Poor Practice, Abuse and Bullying

5.1. Introduction

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. The coaches, officers and volunteers within pétanque are not experts at such recognition. However, they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the

behaviour of someone (an adult or another junior) towards a junior or vulnerable adult. The WPA encourages the reporting of any concerns about the welfare of juniors and vulnerable adults.

Any concerns should be reported to the National President or the Safeguarding Officer, immediately.

5.2. Abuse

Abuse can happen wherever there are juniors and vulnerable adults, and young people and vulnerable adults of any age can be abused. The effects of abuse can be so damaging and if untreated, they may follow a person into adulthood.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Adults or other children can abuse children. There is growing evidence to suggest that peer abuse is an increasing concern for young people:

Neglect – where adults fail to meet a juniors' and vulnerable adults' basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development, (e.g. failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment). It may also include refusal to give a child love, affection and attention. Neglect in sport could also include a coach not ensuring children were safe, exposing them to undue cold, heat or to unnecessary risk of injury.

Physical Abuse – where someone physically hurts or injures juniors and vulnerable adults by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting or scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. Examples of physical abuse in sport may be when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body; where drugs are used to enhance performance or delay puberty.

Sexual Abuse – where juniors and vulnerable adults are abused by adults or other juniors, who use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children pornographic material, (books, videos, pictures and sexting), is also a form of sexual abuse. The power of a coach over a young performer, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

Emotional Abuse – is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a junior or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another

person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. There is a growing awareness that children, who live in extreme poverty, are socially excluded, live with domestic violence or where alcoholism or mental health problems exist, may be at greater risk of long-term emotional abuse.

Bullying - It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse, it may not always be an adult abusing juniors and vulnerable adults. It can occur that the abuser may be a young person, for example in the case of bullying. Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, the three main types are physical, (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), Verbal, (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional, (e.g. isolating an individual from activities and social acceptance of the peer group).

Although anyone can be the target for bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive, and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

The bully in sport can be:

- A parent who pushes too hard
- A coach who adopts a win-at-all cost philosophy
- A player, coach or team who intimidates inappropriately
- An official who places unfair pressure on a person

Bullying can include:

- Verbal: e.g. name calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racist or homophobic remarks
- Emotional: e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring.
- Sexual: e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- Physical: e.g. hitting, kicking or theft of personal possessions.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children and vulnerable adults, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm, (including self- harm).

5.3. Disabled People

There have been several studies, which suggest juniors, (or adults), with disabilities are at increased risk of abuse. Various factors contribute to this, such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect them, or adequately communicate that abuse has occurred.

5.4. Race and Racism

Children from black and minority ethnic groups, (and their parents), are likely to have experienced harassment, racial discrimination and institutional racism at some time throughout their lives. Although racism causes significant harm it is not, in itself, a category of abuse. However, this may be categorised as emotional abuse, under this Policy.

6. Indicators of Abuse

Indications that a child may be being abused include the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to injury
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The junior or vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- Someone else, (a child or adult), expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour, (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outburst of temper).
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Has difficulty making friends.
- Is prevented from socialising with other juniors and adults.
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite. Loses weight for no apparent reason.
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is **not proof** that abuse is actually taking place. It is not the responsibility of those delivering on WPA activity to decide whether abuse is actually occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns within the parameters of the appropriate policies and procedures.

The WPA encourages the reporting of any concerns about the welfare of juniors and vulnerable adults. The first point of contact, if appropriate, is the coach and then following on from this the National President should be informed of any concerns.

The WPA Safeguarding Officer should always be consulted and advised of concerns.

7. Summary

The focus of safeguarding is the protection of juniors and vulnerable adults. Any concerns should be reported to the National President and the Welsh Pétanque Association (WPA) Safeguarding Officer, immediately.

If there is an established concern it should be reported to the safeguarding service of the principle council in which the child or vulnerable adult lives,

If there is concern about the behaviour of a member of the association then this must be reported to the WPA Executive Committee.

WPA Executive Committee
January 2021
Review Date: January 2022